

Martha J. Tetreault, *Chair*  
Giana Savastano, *Manager*



Jeffrey A. Gaulin, *Clerk*  
John P. Cunningham, *Member*

**CITY OF WOONSOCKET**  
**BOARD OF CANVASSERS AND REGISTRATION**  
169 MAIN ST P.O. BOX B  
WOONSOCKET RI 02895

February 26, 2025  
The Honorable Representative Evan P. Shanley  
Chair, House State Government and Elections Committee  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: Support for 2025 H5516 – An Act Relating to Elections - Conduct of Election and Voting Equipment and Supplies**

Dear Chairman Shanley,

I am writing in my capacity as an election administrator and on behalf of the Woonsocket Board of Canvassers asking for your support of H5516. This bill seeks to modernize election results reporting without placing an undue burden on voters or administrators. H5516 is presented on behalf of the RI Town and City Clerks Association, with the support of the RI League of Cities and Towns and the RI Board of Elections.

The close of an election presents an elections administrator with a litany of tasks that are non-negotiable. Transmit results from every precinct. Receive and secure ballots and official documentation from polls. Deliver the results USB's to the Board of Elections. Review and adjudicate all provisional ballots and write-ins cast. Return our polls to working order for school, mass, what have you. Compensate our poll workers for their 13-hour day. Provide updates to media. Be responsive to incoming calls and messages from voters and candidates.

Naturally, these tasks are competing for our time. And we do not practice discretion when it comes to the law. It all gets done. But current law regarding writing tabulation doesn't make much sense to what we're trying to accomplish - accurate and timely results reporting.

H5516 can deliver more accurate results reporting. Our ballot tabulators capture a digital image of every single write-in cast and the Board publishes this document for public review. Since this report comes right from the election equipment, the information is accurate and timely. H5516 would codify this reporting practice by requiring the BOE to publish the write-in images, as well as require local boards to adjudicate each write-in vote when the number of write-ins cast could impact the outcome of that race. Ballot tabulation technology has revolutionized results reporting and H5516 would modernize our election law to reflect current capabilities.

H5516 would lead to faster results reporting. As the law stands, local election officials are completing write-in and provisional ballot adjudication at the same time under the same deadline. The opportunity cost of manually reviewing each precinct's write-in tape is foregoing time spent on the timely adjudication of provisional ballots. Provisional ballots are highly

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consequential. They are live ballots that still need to be added to the unofficial election results and the voters who cast them may be anxious to know the status of their ballot.

Live ballots should not be competing with write-in tallying when that process can be automated in a really resourceful way that still maintains the integrity of those ballots cast. I appreciate your consideration of H5516.

Sincerely,

Giana Savastano  
Manager  
Woonsocket Board of Canvassers