



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

March 25th , 2024

Honorable Chair of the House State Government and Elections
82 Smith St.
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for H-7756 3-day transmittal period mail ballot applications

Dear Chairman Shanley and Members of the House State Government and Elections Committee:

I am writing today in my capacity as manager of the Board of Canvassers in Woonsocket in support of H-7756, particularly regarding changes to **17-20-2.1. Requirements for validity of mail ballot and mail ballot applications.**

The RITCCA unanimously voted in favor of this item because its impact would be felt by local elections offices immediately. According to page 2 of 9, H-7756 would enable election administrators to accept mail ballot applications that arrive to the local Board of Canvassers office via the U.S. Postal Service not later than 3 days after the mail ballot application deadline. Current law requires local boards to reject any applications that arrive via the mail after 4:00PM on the 21st day before the upcoming election. The rejection is not based on the voter's eligibility to participate in that election but instead a factor that voters cannot control – the speed at which a letter travels through the mail stream.

During the 2022 midterm elections in Woonsocket, a quarter of all mail ballot applications were submitted to the Board of Canvassers office in the last five days before the deadline. Many will get their application in on time, but without fail every election cycle we see applications trickle in after that deadline.

Let's take a note out of our own playbook. Upon passage, this three-day transmittal period would mirror the procedure already in place for voter registration forms received in the mail right after the deadline to register to vote for an upcoming election. It is a practice that has served us well thus far.

Sincerely,

Giana Savastano
Manager of the Woonsocket Board of Canvassers