September 8, 2017

TO MUNICIPAL CLERKS HOLDING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ON NOVEMBER 7, 2017:

Re: Preparation of Absentee Ballots

This letter describes the procedures for preparing the <u>absentee ballot</u> for your upcoming municipal election, once you have all the final nominees and questions. Absentee ballots must be available beginning October 6, 2017.

PREPARING THE ABSENTEE BALLOT

The following material must appear on the face of an absentee ballot:

1. The name of your town, city or borough.

2. The applicable district numbers (e.g. "District A" or District 2", <u>etc</u>.) This is important when some of the offices are elected from political subdivisions -- different districts having different ballot configurations. This step is unnecessary if all of the offices are elected town-wide or city-wide.

3. The type of election (e.g., "Town").

4. The date of the election (November 7, 2017).

5. The number of pages (e.g. "Sheet 1 of 1 Sheet").

6. Designate local questions, if any, by number and text. If no questions are to be voted upon, no question boxes should be inserted.

> a. Each question designation must be separated from the next question designation, if any, by insertion of a black line. Questions may be listed horizontally at the top of the ballot, vertically on the right side of the ballot or listed separately on an additional page if necessary.

> b. Each question should be numbered.

> c. <u>Above</u> each such question must be inserted two small ovals with the word "YES" printed immediately to the right of the first oval and the word "NO" printed immediately to the right of the second oval.
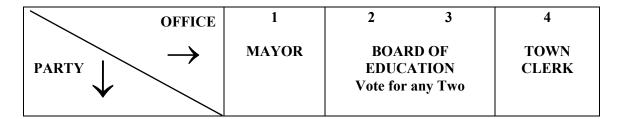
<u>**EXAMPLE 1:**</u>

Vote on the Questions $\longrightarrow$	**0** YES **0** NO **1. Shall the town appropriate dollars for the renovation of Town Hall?**		**0** YES **0** NO **2. Shall there be a dollar increase in taxes?**	
List of Offices $\longrightarrow$	1	2	3	4

7. Place <u>the title of each office to be filled</u> within the appropriate numbered box in the first horizontal row of boxes--Boxes 1, 2, 3, etc.--<u>just below such numerals</u>. The <u>order of offices</u> on the ballot label is the same as set forth in the "List of Offices to be Filled" which you have previously filed with this office. Any required supplementary language, such as "To Fill Vacancy for Two Years" or "Vote for Any Two" <u>etc.</u>, must also be placed <u>within</u> these boxes, <u>below</u> the title of the office so placed.

If the numbered box containing the title of any office includes the supplementary language "Vote for Any Two"--(for example)--then two vertical columns must be allocated to such office. Black vertical lines must be inserted at the appropriate places on the office title row to separate different office titles, and these lines should also be extensions of the lines already on the enclosed ballot. Thus, you must allocate to a multiple-opening office a number of columns equal to the number of candidates for whom any elector may vote.

<u>**EXAMPLE 2:**</u>

OFFICE $\longrightarrow$ PARTY $\downarrow$	1 **MAYOR**	2 3 **BOARD OF EDUCATION** **Vote for any Two**	4 **TOWN CLERK**

     Please remember that in those towns which have adopted the provisions of Section 9-204a, authorizing full voting and full nomination for <u>Board of Education</u>, the office designation must include the following supplementary language:

          "Vote for any ____.
           ___ to be elected -- Not more than ___ from one party."

<u>**EXAMPLE 3:**</u>

OFFICE → PARTY ↓	1 MAYOR	2 3 4 5 6 BOARD OF EDUCATION VOTE FOR ANY FIVE Five to be Elected--Not More Than Three from One Party

Refer to this office's written response to your "List of Offices to be Filled" if you have any questions concerning other supplemental language which must appear on the printed ballot.

Do not split a multiple-opening office between two pages, if you use a multiple page ballot. When the remaining columns on the enclosed absentee ballot cannot accommodate all the columns required for a multiple-opening office, leave such columns blank and go to the next page. Either you or your printer will, **in addition**, have to **delete all** the numbers in the columns left blank and renumber the boxes on Page Two of the enclosed ballot.

8. Fill in the designations of all parties entitled to a place on the ballot, in the order prescribed by statute (Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-249a), including, if applicable, the designation "Petitioning Candidates". Except in boroughs holding elections without party designations under special act, in accordance with §9-249a, the names of the parties shall be arranged on the ballot in the following order:

Democratic Party
Republican Party

EXAMPLE 4:

OFFICE → PARTY ↓	1 MAYOR	2 TOWN CLERK
DEMOCRATIC PARTY	JOHN JONES **0** 1A	PAUL SMITH **0** 2A
REPUBLICAN PARTY	RON JONES **0** 1B	RON SMITH **0** 2B
A CONNECTICUT PARTY	AL JONES **0** 1C	JACK SMITH **0** 2C
LIBERTY PARTY	BOB BROKER **0** 1D	2D
PETITIONING CANDIDATES	JOE SHOE **0** 1E	LEN TABLE **0** 2E

SPECIAL NOTE: Those municipalities holding a non-partisan election for an office or offices must also omit party names.

EXAMPLE 5:

OFFICE → PARTY ↓	1 MAYOR	2 NON-PARTISAN BOARD OF EDUCATION See Below	3	4	5
DEMOCRATIC PARTY	John Jones **0** 1A	2A	3A	4A	5A
REPUBLICAN PARTY	Ray James **0** 1B	2B	3B	4B	5B
A CONNECTICUT PARTY	Peter Smith **0** 1C	2C	3C	4C	5C
	1D	NON-PARTISAN BOARD OF EDUCATION VOTE FOR ANY THREE			
	1E	Jim Jackson **0** 2E	Roy Lane **0** 3E	Len Leroy **0** 4E	Pat Ruckus **0** 5E

In the foregoing example, please note that the office title should appear in <u>two places</u> for nonpartisan offices, with the more specific supplementary language related to the office on the next available lower horizontal row. Also, please note that candidates for such offices appear in alphabetical order on the ballot.

Party designations must all be in identical size and style of type and must include the word "Party" after each designation. (Public Act 13-180)

9. Place the names of all duly nominated candidates in the appropriate party designation rows under the applicable office title. The order of candidates' names, for a multiple-opening office, is determined by lot. For each multiple opening office, be sure to notify your printer of the order of major and minor party candidates determined in a public ceremony conducted by the registrars of voters under Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-253. Where necessary, be sure to list nominating petition candidates for multiple opening office in the order determined in a public ceremony conducted by the registrars of voters under Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-453r. (In the case of nominating petition candidates with no party designation, you may have to ask us the order in which petitions were requested before the lottery is held because determining the order for such Petitioning Candidates for multiple-opening office can be a two-step process.) EACH CANDIDATE MUST HAVE THE SAME OVAL NUMBERS (1A, 3E, ETC.) ON THE ABSENTEE BALLOT AS THE OVAL NUMBER ON THE REGULAR BALLOT.

You may eliminate those ovals which are not needed on the enclosed form and enlarge those ovals which you are using.

All candidate names must be in identical size and style of type. The name of each candidate must appear on the ballot as it appears on the certificate of endorsement file with you by each

major or minor party or as they are certified to you by our office in the case of a petitioning candidate.

IMPORTANT PRINTING SPECIFICATIONS FOR ALL ABSENTEE BALLOTS PRINTED BY MUNICIPAL CLERKS

In accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-135a the Secretary of the State prescribes that the state seal shall be printed on each absentee ballot.

After the printer has "set up" the ballot, based upon the materials which you have provided him, and prior to the actual printing, you should inspect the camera-ready copy with the utmost care in order to verify its accuracy.

Your printer must also print the Absentee Ballot Voting Instructions on the reverse side of the ballot or on a separate page if you are printing on both sides of the ballot. **In towns which have a ballot of two or more pages, the absentee instructions may be printed on the reverse side of the last page of the ballot or on a separate page,** and you must issue the ballots with both sheets numbered and stapled together. It is not necessary to include the Spanish instructions on your printed absentee ballot, unless you are a town in which this has been required by law -- presently only Bridgeport, East Hartford, Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Waterbury and Windham. However, you are encouraged to do so if you have a Spanish-speaking community of any size.

AFFIDAVIT OF TOWN CLERK RE NUMBER OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS PRINTED

Under Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-135b(c), immediately upon receiving the printed absentee ballots, the municipal clerk must file with this office a printed absentee ballot for the municipality, or where there are different absentee ballots printed for different political subdivisions, an absentee ballot for each such political subdivision, and an affidavit as to the number of ballots printed. A copy of the affidavit (ED-629) is enclosed; you may make additional copies as necessary. If following such filing, any correction or other alteration is made on an absentee ballot, §9-135b(c) requires you to file with this office the corrected or altered ballot as soon as available, together with an affidavit as to the number of corrected ballots printed.

May we point out that local questions explanatory texts and/or summaries of arguments in favor of, and opposed to, local questions may be enclosed with each official absentee ballot **only if** the legislative body of your municipality has authorized these under Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-369b.

Please remember to use the **postage-free** serially-numbered envelopes (ED-11) for both the military, their spouses and dependents, **and for any civilian absentee ballot applicant who has asked that the ballot be sent outside of the country to a bona fide personal mailing address**.

The order of offices and candidates on the official ballot label at the election is, of course, the same as on the absentee ballot.

ACTIVE AND INACTIVE REGISTRY LISTS

If you receive an application for an absentee ballot from an elector on the Inactive Registry List (and such person is not an elector residing outside the United States, or a serviceman, spouse or dependent), we advise that you send the applicant the Notice to Absentee Ballot Applicant (ED-660), prescribed by this office under Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-140(c), and an Application for Voter Registration for Restoration of the Elector to Official Check List. (If such person is an elector residing outside the United States, or a serviceman, spouse or dependent, see our prior letters sent to you.)

We hope that this letter, notwithstanding its length, will be of assistance to you in performing the critically important duty of preparing your absentee ballots -- a task which demands careful attention to every detail. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at (860) 509-6100.

Sincerely,

SUSAN BYSIEWICZ
Secretary of the State

By:
       Theodore E. Bromley
       Staff Attorney

Enclosure - ED-629

cc: Registrars of Voters