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BYSIEWICZ PRAISES COMMITTEE'S OVERWHELMING PASSAGE OF BILL TO FILL U.S. SENATE VACANCIES BY SPECIAL ELECTION

SECRETARY OF THE STATE URGES FULL PASSAGE OF SENATE BILL # 913 TO
RESTORE DEMOCRATIC RIGHT OF VOTERS IN CONNECTICUT TO CHOOSE U.S.
SENATORS

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz today praised the Connecticut General Assembly's Government, Administration and Elections Committee for its overwhelming passage of a bill that would mandate that future vacancies in the U.S. Senate in Connecticut be filled by special election. Senate bill # 913, approved by the GAE committee by a vote of 11-3, would set up a special election for U.S. Senate 150 days after a vacancy occurs in Connecticut.

"Only the voters of Connecticut should have the right to choose a successor if a U.S. Senate seat goes vacant," said Secretary Bysiewicz. "We have seen cases of nepotism, cronyism and corruption when governors abuse the awesome power to appoint a U.S. Senator. All you have to do is look to the examples of states like Illinois and Alaska and you will find reason enough to make this simple but long overdue change to our state's election laws. This decision should rest in the hands of the people alone. I commend the GAE committee for its overwhelming vote of support of this bill, and thank co-chairs Rep. Jamie Spallone and Sen. Gayle Slossberg for their hard work to advance this through committee. I urge the full Senate to adopt this measure and send it onto the House."

Under current law, the governor can appoint a successor if a Senate vacancy occurs. That successor either serves out the rest of the previous senator's term, or until a special election can be called to choose a replacement. Senate bill # 913 would remove the authority of the governor to name a U.S. Senator. The bill would also provide enough

time, with some exceptions, for parties to hold nominating conventions and primaries if necessary to determine their candidate for U.S. Senate.

In Connecticut, U.S. House vacancies are filled by a special election within 60 days or 120 days in the case of a primary. Senate bill # 913 would restore Connecticut law to what it was prior to 1947, when U.S. Senate vacancies were filled by special election.