



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

### **ACTION ALERT: Don't make it too expensive to get open records**

CSSB 669, a bill making its way through the Legislature, would punish ALL citizens in an effort to stop a few vexatious Public Information Act requestors. Take a moment to make your voice heard to prevent Texas' Public Information Act from being further weakened by allowing current public information to be locked away in darkness - or requiring you to pay excessive fees for exercising your right to know.

#### **Requested action:**

Support open government and transparency by phoning, emailing or faxing Representative Todd Hunter, Chair of the House Calendars Committee, asking that CSSB 669 not be put on the House Calendar. Also contact your state representative with the same request. Get contact information at <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us>.

#### **Who should receive the Action Alert:**

League members. Members should also share this information and contact their friends, asking them to make calls and to contact their friends.

#### **When:**

Make these contacts as soon as possible. Things are moving quickly in these last few weeks of the session.

#### **Talking Points:**

- CSSB 669 punishes ALL citizens in an effort to stop a few vexatious Texas Public Information Act (TPIA) requestors. The average citizen already pays taxes, which go to pay governmental bodies to perform their jobs. If you force your constituents to pay again when governmental employees perform their jobs in retrieving "public information," this is essentially double taxation.
- Providing Internet access to public information is ONLY an acceptable alternative when the information is required to be posted online in multiple formats to accommodate all users; SB 669 does not provide for the information to be available in multiple formats, i.e. raw data, pdf, etc.

In Section 552.276(c), the current law, which allows a requester to view materials prior to payment, is being completely overturned. This section reads such that one has to pay before even seeing what they are paying for. At a minimum, requestors should be allowed to "view" the information online at no charge - with confidential data shielded from public view.