



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS EDUCATION FUND

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LWV-Richardson writes:

The letter that appears online has been drastically edited, and is materially different from the one submitted to the paper with the LWV-Richardson board's approval. The letter submitted was 199 words in length, and had two main purposes: first, to let the public know that we must cancel a forum we had planned due to the fact that Mr. Goolsby had declined to participate; and second, to urge both Mr. Goolsby and Mr. White (the Libertarian candidate in the other race) to reconsider their decisions not to participate in our forums.

When the letter appeared in the Sunday paper, the last paragraph had been omitted. When it appeared online, it had been edited even further, and was down to 135 words. In addition, the headline the DMN (*Dallas Morning News*) added to the newspaper version, "Texas House forum canceled" had been changed to the much more pointed "Goolsby refuses to debate."

Here is the text of the letter as submitted, with the text deleted from the newspaper version in bold, and with added text in brackets. Text omitted from the online version is in italics.

This election season, the League of Women Voters of Richardson planned two forums for Texas House races of great interest to our community: District 112, with candidates Angie Chen Button, Sandra Phuong VuLe, and Philip M. White; and District 102, with candidates Carol Kent and incumbent Tony Goolsby.

Unfortunately, our District 102 forum – *the only forum scheduled for this race* – must be canceled. It is the **L**[League's long-standing policy that at least two candidates for a given office must be present to proceed. **Rep.** [Mr.] Goolsby has declined to participate, despite the **L**[League's attempts to find a mutually agreeable date.

Although Mr. White has also declined to participate, we will hold the District 112 forum with the two major party candidates, [Ms.] VuLe and [Ms.] Button, on **Wednesday**, October 1st.

As an organization that seeks to educate the community it serves, we expect candidates for office to participate in nonpartisan public forums. By declining to participate, candidates deny the community an opportunity to learn more about them and their positions on the issues.

We strongly urge both Rep. Goolsby and Mr. White to reconsider their decisions not to appear. Voters should have an opportunity to question the candidates in these important races.

It was not the intent of the LWV-Richardson board to use this letter merely to criticize Mr. Goolsby, but rather to put public pressure on him (and other candidates) to debate when called upon to do so. However, once the letter was submitted, it was no longer under our control as to how the DMN chose to edit it.