



**League of Women Voters
of Texas**

**Testimony
HJR 19
House Committee on Redistricting
April 16, 2009**

On behalf of the state-wide members of the League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX) we thank you for the opportunity to present comments on the redistricting process. The League is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The LWV-TX strongly supports HJR 19 and enabling legislation HB 104 that will allow the citizens of Texas to vote for or against a constitutional amendment that will require the state legislature to appoint non-elected members to an independent commission tasked with a redistricting plan. This plan would overcome some of the partisan wrangling over drawing of district lines that has occurred in the past. Fairness in the process and prevention of past problems is more feasible with an independent bipartisan commission tasked with the responsibility of formulating a redistricting plan.

The LWV-TX position for an independent commission for redistricting includes drawing lines for state senate and house districts as well as U. S. House of Representatives. LWV-TX supports Representative Strama's bills HB 104 and HJR 19 as they will be a step forward in making the process more orderly, less partisan, and more focused on protecting the weight of each vote. The legislature will have the final say in approving the redistricting plan

Your work in supporting HB 104 and HJR 19 is vital in strengthening the democratic process. The focus is protecting the citizen's vote, not partisan gain. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.