



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

TESTIMONY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY & PUBLIC SAFETY

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

I am Aimee Mobley Turney testifying as a member and on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Texas AGAINST HB 375. We appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. Thank you for allowing us to share the League of Women Voters of Texas' position on this bill.

We oppose HB 375. Our position on gun safety, like other League positions, is derived through a lengthy and thoughtful process involving the participation of 25 local Leagues representing more than 5,000 members and supporters throughout the state of Texas.

The League of Women Voters of Texas opposes this proposed legislation because it removes virtually every safeguard currently in place to ensure that dangerous individuals are prevented from carrying handguns in public by

- repealing requirements that people carrying handguns apply for a permit and
- repealing certain eligibility standards, such as passing a background check and demonstrating proof of firearms safety training.

The Second Amendment is one sentence. It reads in its entirety:

A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Justice Antonin Scalia wrote in his majority opinion in *District of Columbia v. Heller*: "There seems to us no doubt, on the basis of both text and history, that the Second Amendment conferred an individual right to keep and bear arms. Of course the right was not unlimited, just as the First Amendment's right of free speech was not... Thus, we do not read the Second Amendment to protect the right of citizens to carry arms for *any sort* of confrontation, just as we do not read the First Amendment to protect the right of citizens to speak for any purpose." As an example of a lawful limitation Justice Scalia states that "*prohibitions on carrying concealed weapons were lawful under the Second Amendment...*"ⁱ

HB 375 encourages individuals to act unsafely and provocatively and reduces the ability of the community to prevent acting out or terrorist acts.

For additional information, please contact: Aimee Mobley Turney, Gun Safety Issue Chair, president@lwvhouston.org, 713.784.2923

The League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX) is a nonpartisan citizens' organization that has fought since 1919 to improve our government and engage all citizens in the decisions that impact their lives. It represents more than 5000 members and supporters throughout Texas.

The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes candidates for office or political parties. The member-driven organization of women and men encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and seeks to influence public policy through education and advocacy of positions based on extensive issue study and consensus.

ⁱ District of Columbia, et al., *Petitioners v. Dick Anthony Heller*, 554 U. S. 570 (2008)