



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

**TESTIMONY
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS
HOMELAND SECURITY & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
HB 2583
Monday, April 10, 2017**

I am Aimee Mobley Turney testifying as a member and on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Texas IN SUPPORT OF HB 2583. We appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to share the League of Women Voters of Texas' position on this bill.

We support HB 2583. 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 supports this proposed legislation with its innovative step of creating an offense under Texas penal code Chapter 22, Section 22.055 If the person knowingly discharges a firearm and is reckless in regard to lacking a reasonable target at the time of discharge.

According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, there were a total of 3492 trauma hospitalizations with an injury due to firearm in 2014. The hospital charges for firearm injuries ranged from \$54 – \$5,618,050 per hospitalization. 770 (22%) of those injuries were unintentional.ⁱ

Texas' State Department of Health Services has shown that death by firearm was the leading cause of suicide in both Texas and the United States in 2014. The rate of firearm suicide was 6.75 per 100,000 in Texas vs. 6.37 per 100,000 in the United States.ⁱⁱ Though guns are not the most common method by which people attempt suicide, they are the most lethal. About 85 percent of suicide attempts with a firearm end in death.ⁱⁱⁱ

HB 2583 is an effective measure for saving lives and protecting the general public.

For additional information, please contact: Aimee Mobley Turney, Gun Safety Issue Chair, president@lwwhouston.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 Texas Department of State Health Services Texas EMS and Trauma Registries Hospital Data Request

ⁱⁱ Texas Department of Health 2014 Suicide Data Briefs

ⁱⁱⁱ Drexler, Madeline. "Guns and suicide: The hidden toll" *Harvard School of Public Health News*, Spring 2013