



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

TESTIMONY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & CIVIL JURISPRUDENCE

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 497. 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 497. 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 upends our established legal rules either to subject business owners to strict legal liability for choosing to prohibit handguns or to provide special legal protections to businesses that allow handguns on their property.

A business owner and/or its management has no way of knowing whether all persons concealing a handgun or openly carrying a handgun has a License to Carry or has had proper firearm training.

Approximately 1.7 million incidences of workplace violence occur annually in the U.S.ⁱ While the majority of incidents are considered "minor" assaults, an average of 564 workplace homicides occurred each year from 2004 to 2008.ⁱⁱ

In stark contrast to License to Carry applicant training, police officers receive hundreds of hours of training in marksmanship and non-violent conflict resolution, including role-playing real-life scenarios, to ensure that their firearms are carried safely and not fired carelessly.

HB 497 has the potential to increase incidences of workplace accidents, violence and homicides by giving business owners no choice but to allow handguns on their property.

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 Cornell HR Review, April 13, 2013, Workplace Violence: Why Every State Must Adopt a Comprehensive Workplace Violence Prevention Law; www.cornellhrreview.org/workplace-violence-why-every-state-must-adopt-a-comprehensive-workplace-violence-prevention-law/

ⁱⁱ Workplace Shootings Fact Sheet, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; July 15, 2010; available at www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/cfoi/osar0014.htm