



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

TESTIMONY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS CRIMINAL JURISPRUDENCE COMMITTEE

Monday, March 20, 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 866. 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 support HB 866. 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 steps of:

- Temporarily suspending a person's right to purchase or possess a firearm until a mental health evaluation is completed.
- Restoring the individual's gun rights whenever the crisis or threat to self or others has passed.

According to Texas' State Department of Health Services, death by firearm was the leading causes 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.ⁱ 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.ⁱⁱ

HB 866 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@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 Texas Department of Health 2014 Suicide Data Briefs

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