



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

TESTIMONY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS BUSINESS & COMMERCE COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2017

I am Brenda Koegler, testifying as a member and on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Texas IN SUPPORT of BILL 666. 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 BILL 666. Our position on Human Trafficking, 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.

Our League position on human trafficking, adopted in 2014 after two years of comprehensive study, states that we consider human trafficking to be a form of modern-day slavery. We support human trafficking awareness programs. This includes signage such as this that reads: WARNING! OBTAINING FORCED LABOR OR SERVICES IS A CRIME UNTER TEXAS LAW. CALL THE NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE, 1-888-373-7888, OR TEXT, BEFREE, 233733. YOU MAY REMAIN ANONYMOUS

The need for human trafficking awareness is a major concern in Texas. The UT Austin 2016 Research shows that there are currently an estimated 313,000 victims of human trafficking in Texas.

We compliment Senator Kolkhorst for her understanding of the need for increased awareness of this vulnerable population of victims of forced labor and sex trafficking

We request that you approve SB 666.

For additional information, please contact: Marguerite (Meg) Scott-Johnson, LWV-TX Human Trafficking Issues Chair, megdscott@earthlink.net, C: 713-724-4168.

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.