



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF TEXAS**

**TESTIMONY  
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS**

**HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**March 8, 2017**

I am Jane MacFarland, testifying as a member and on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Texas. We appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today.

The League of Women Voters of Texas **OPPOSES HB 35** concerning disposal of fetal remains. Women's health and access to comprehensive health services, including safe, legal abortions, are priority issues for the League and its members around the state. Our position on this issue, like other League positions, is derived through a lengthy and thoughtful process involving the participation of 24 local Leagues representing more than 5,000 members and supporters throughout the state of Texas.

This proposed bill would impose unnecessary prohibitions and requirements regarding disposition of embryonic and fetal tissue on women seeking abortions and on their health care providers. Healthcare providers such as hospitals and abortion clinics currently follow accepted standards for the sanitary disposal of medical waste including embryonic and fetal tissue. The addition of these non-medical requirements to current medical practice serve only to interfere with a patient's autonomy and decision making in her own medical care.

HB 35's mandate that fetal remains be buried or cremated has nothing to do with the safe practice of modern medicine. Every woman makes the decision to have an abortion for her own reasons based on her own situation and life experiences. Instead of further complicating patients' decisions regarding abortion and forcing them to consider burial rituals, the focus should be on making sure that women are supported and respected in their decision to have an abortion.

The League again thanks this Committee for this opportunity to express our views and urges the Committee to vote against HB 35.

For additional information, please contact: Julie Lowenberg ([jmlowenberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jmlowenberg@sbcglobal.net); 214-352-4667)

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 5,000 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.