



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF TEXAS**

**TESTIMONY
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS**

**SENATE BUSINESS AND INSURANCE COMMITTEE
February 28, 2017**

I am Amber Boudreault, 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 SB 20**. Women's health and access to comprehensive reproductive 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 supporters throughout the state of Texas.

SB 20 threatens women's health by prohibiting *all* health insurance plans from providing coverage for abortion -- not only plans under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, but also private insurance policies which do not use tax dollars, state-issued insurance, and employee and group insurance policies.

Enactment of SB 20 would put an unreasonable financial burden on most women seeking an abortion – and thus impose an unconstitutional impediment to a constitutional right. Although the bill allows private individual insurance providers to offer coverage through supplemental policies at extra cost, that extra cost would be prohibitive for most women. Without insurance coverage for abortion, many will be forced to turn to cheap and unsafe methods and providers, endangering their lives.

Nationwide, the majority of private insurance plans cover abortion care. Singling out abortion for exclusion from coverage under the health insurance policies is both unconstitutional and harmful to women's health.

LWV-TX appreciates this opportunity to express our views and urges the Committee to vote against SB 20.

For additional information, please contact Julie Lowenberg: 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.