



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF TEXAS**

**TESTIMONY  
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS**

**SENATE STATE AFFAIRS**

**February 27, 2017**

I am Margaret Johnson testifying as a member and on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Texas. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on **SB 25** and speak to you today.

The League of Women Voters of Texas **OPPOSES SB 25**. 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 nearly 5,000 members and supporters throughout the state of Texas. SB 25 would create an unreasonable impediment to the constitutional right to an abortion.

. Under this proposed statute, parents of a child born with severe defects would be prevented from bringing a lawsuit against a physician or other health professional who withheld information that would have allowed them to make an informed decision. Eliminating a wrongful birth claim deprives such parents of the right to sue for monetary damages to cover the lifetime costs of caring for their child. These cases are rare but are appropriate redress for parents in such situations.

Eliminating the "wrongful birth" claim is an unreasonable restriction on the constitutional right of a woman, in consultation with her physician and family members, to make an informed decision about whether to have an abortion. SB 25 is a not so subtle way of giving medical personnel the opportunity to impose their religious beliefs on pregnant women by withholding information about the condition of the fetus – and depriving women of making an informed decision about continuing the pregnancy.

The League again thanks this Committee for the opportunity to express our views.

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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.