



TESTIMONY
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS
HB 313
APRIL 15, 2013

The League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX), a nonpartisan organization with 29 local Leagues and approximately 1950 members across the state, encourages active, informed participation by citizens in government and believes that such participation is vital to a vibrant democracy.

LWV-TX supports HB 313 (Strama, et al.) which would allow electronic voter registration and provide important convenience for voters as well as efficiencies for government. HB 313 would facilitate voter participation by making it easier for those with internet access to register to vote and by reducing errors in processing voter registration applications. Electronic voter registrations are simpler and cheaper for voter registrars to process while generating more accurate records.

Unfortunately, Texas is consistently among the states with the lowest voter participation, lagging in both voter registration and voter turnout. Voter registration rates for Texas citizens age 45 and over are close to national averages, but the voter registration rates for Texas citizens younger than 45 are below national averages by about 4%. The gap is considerably greater when Texas is compared to states with high voter registration rates. For example, the percentages of younger Texas citizens registered to vote are 15-17% lower than percentages for equivalent Louisiana citizens¹.

LWV-TX believes that improving voter participation in Texas is imperative, and registering younger eligible voters is essential if Texas is to improve. Younger eligible voters are more likely to have internet access and take advantage of online voter registration. For LWV electronic voter registration is a priority, and we believe it should be a priority for Texas.

LWV-TX urges the Committee to support HB 313 and appreciates the opportunity to share our views.

1 US Census Bureau, *Reported Voting and Registration by Age, for States: November 2010*, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/socdemo/voting/publications/p20/2010/tables.html>