



**TESTIMONY  
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS  
HB 582  
APRIL 8, 2013**

The League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX) believes that elected officials should use their elected office for the public good. We worked to codify appropriate civic behavior when we joined the coalition that helped establish the Texas Ethics Commission and when one of our members sat on its Rules Advisory Task Force to evaluate TEC's authority to create rules that pertain to lobbyists.

Our membership-approved positions include support for:

- Strengthened financial disclosure and reporting requirements for candidates and lobbyists
- Requiring lobbyists to disclose gifts to candidates
- A minimum time before a former elected official can become a paid lobbyist

Civic-minded Texans expect an elected official to work for the public good and not use elected office as a means to secure a future high-paying job as a lobbyist.

Public perceptions of government corruption have multiple sources, including certain lobbying practices addressed in this bill. We do not believe that this measure would impinge on any legislator's ability to do her/his job.

Voters should have the assurance of common-sense laws that reduce the incentive for an elected official to put allegiance to a possible future employer above the public good. Voters should not have to be sleuths to discern the myriad ways in which a politician can use political office for personal gain. We feel strongly that separating governing from lobbying is a vital part of the path that will restore the people's faith in their government.

In past sessions, bills similar to this have died in committee. LWV-TX hopes this session and this Elections Committee will be different, and we urge your support for HB 582 (Howard).

Thank you for considering our comments on this very important bill.

Stewart Snider  
Chair, Campaign Finance