

## **\*Action Alert: Health & SB 837**

April 18, 2007

The League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX) urges your support of SB 837 (Watson et al.) that would expand access to preventive health care services and education programs to help reduce unintended pregnancies, prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STI's) and promote healthy families by improving women's access to health care – all while saving scarce public health funds.

LWV-TX is a nonpartisan, political organization with 32 local Leagues across the state. The League believes that all Texas women should be eligible for basic health care services, including maternal and child health care and preventive care. Access to these services is critically important to the health and well-being of women, children and families.

SB 837 would increase outreach for Texas' family planning program through print and broadcast media, websites and a toll-free telephone number. By increasing enrollment in effective and cost-saving programs, such as the Women's Health Program created in the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislature, Texas would increase access to health care and family planning services for Texans in need.

From a bottom line standpoint, family planning and preventive health services are also very cost effective. The Texas Department of State Health Services estimates that it costs less than \$170 per year per woman for family planning services, while it costs more than \$8500 per woman for Medicaid delivery, postnatal and infant care. The Women's Health Program is estimated to save Texas \$278 million over five years, and the federal government matches Texas' investment in this program at a ration of 9 to 1.

Thank you for your commitment to the health of Texas women and children and your leadership in moving SB 837 through the Health and Human Services Committee.

Sincerely,



Darlene Hicks  
President