



PO Box 101345  
Anchorage, AK 99510-1345

March 17, 2026

Co-Chairs Himschoot and Story  
and Members of the House Education Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Co-Chair Himschoot, Co-Chair Story and Members of the Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Alaska supports the passage of SB 23: Civics Education in Alaska Schools and appreciates Senator Stevens introducing this legislation. The League is nonpartisan and does not support or oppose candidates or parties, but it does take positions on issues after reaching a consensus based on careful study.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has noted that "civic knowledge and public engagement are at an all-time low." AFT indicates that a 2016 survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center found that only 26 percent of Americans can name all three branches of government. This was a significant decline from previous years.

We believe that the inclusion of a semester-long civics focused class as a requirement for graduation, with a variety of student assessment tools, will build youth's civics knowledge base and enthusiasm for lifelong civics engagement.

From the League's statement of position on Government/Civics Education: The study and practice of citizenship and government is vital to the continuation of American democracy....The effective citizen of the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be able to analyze, compute, create, act, participate, and communicate in an informed manner about the social, political, and economic issues of the day...The study of government and citizenship is vital in a society as diverse as Alaska's. It teaches students that differences can be managed and discussed within the decision-making frameworks established by tribal, local, state, and national governments.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather Arnett". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a thin blue horizontal line.

Heather Arnett  
On behalf of the League of Women Voters of Alaska Board