



# League of Women Voters of Alaska

P.O. Box 22048, Juneau, Alaska 99802

April 14, 2019

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Alaska opposes SJR 3, a proposed constitutional amendment that would give the Legislature confirmation authority over six of the seven members of the Alaska Judicial Council (AJC). SJR 3 would politicize the merit-based system envisioned by the authors of the Alaska Constitution. The current system, which has served Alaska well since statehood, requires that the six members of the AJC be composed of three lawyer members appointed by the Alaska Bar Association and three non-lawyer members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Alaska Legislature. In this way the Legislature has voice in the selection of the non-lawyer members, and the Alaska Bar has voice in the selection of lawyer members to add legal expertise to this decision. Such a process balances the need for legal expertise with accountability to the public. To change the Constitution to require Legislative approval for all six members would risk increasing political bias and weaken trust in the judiciary, a trust that is vital in protecting the rule of law. The League of Women Voters of Alaska strongly urges the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to vote against this proposed constitutional amendment. Thank you.

Judy Andree, President  
League of Women Voters of Alaska