

Michael Mason

From: Judy Andree <jagster42@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2022 12:24 PM
To: House State Affairs; Michael Mason
Subject: League of Women Voters support for HB 66



April 21, 2022

Dear Representatives Kreiss-Tompkins, Claman, Tarr, Story, Vance, Kaufman, and Eastman:

On April 21, 2021, the League of Women Voters of Alaska wrote a letter of support for HB 66, a bill relating to voting, voter qualification, voter registration, poll watchers, and absentee and questioned ballots. A year has passed since that letter of support, and much has changed in HB 66 in the ensuing efforts to provide a bill that would bring together disparate features of several bills that would benefit voters while providing election security. LWVAK felt it was important to restate the League's support for the bill as it stands today.

There is much concern about voting, particularly the security of the voting process. However, there is little evidence that the voting process is rife with fraud. There are anomalies that occur based on voter misunderstanding of dates and elections; there are errors innocently made by election workers who are hard-working humans. But deliberate fraud is rare and usually caught given the security measures built into the voting process.

When there is little to no evidence of fraud, it is undemocratic to make it more difficult for eligible citizens to vote. Fortunately HB 66 does the opposite by making it easier to vote while outlining safety measures that do not place undue burdens on the voters.

The one measure that the League questions in HB 66 is found in Section 59, Version O of HB 66. The League is not convinced that open-source software is by itself necessarily an election security feature. Matt Bishop, professor of computer science at UC Davis and writing for Lawfare in 2017, says that open-source software has some good points but won't by itself solve election fraud. He writes, ". . . assuming that open source systems are more secure than other systems is a dangerous fallacy." Rather Bishop goes on to say that the key to security is determining if the system, whatever type it might be, is doing what it is supposed to do through a voter-verified paper trail and manual auditing of that paper trail. These are processes currently in place in Alaska. Given that current election practices include these safeguards, the experts at the Division of Elections should have the freedom to select the best software available for Alaska's elections.

The League of Women Voters of Alaska applauds the ongoing efforts of Alaska's Division of Elections to secure voter access to the voting process and to secure the voting process itself. HB 66 will assist with both of those goals.

Sincerely,
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