



CAPITOL Action Report

Empowering all Texans to engage in a more responsible and responsive democracy!



News from The Capitol

Greetings!

Spring break didn't slow the League down. We provided testimony on Voting Rights, Drug laws, Human Trafficking, and Immigration. Review LWV-TX testimony [here](#). YTD Actions taken on 58 bills, 152 recorded legislative visits.

And yet, it is still the calm before the storm. On the left is the Senate floor while [Cinde Weatherby](#) was testifying on SB 5 -voter ID laws. It will get much busier!

Thank you for writing and calling your legislators and keeping the pressure up!

Grace Chimene, LWV-TX Vice President

Good News! Maybe...

Folks in the Texas Legislature will need to find a new way to gerrymander...I mean redistrict!

Texas's Redistricting Maps and Voter-ID Law Intentionally Discriminated Against Minority Voters; Federal courts have now found that the state's voter-ID law and redistricting maps purposefully targeted black and Latino voters. [Read article](#) by Ari Berman

Interested in the Redistricting Issue? Join the League U.S. Google group to discuss redistricting, share information and plan for the future. Here's the link to sign up. <https://groups.google.com/forum/m/#!forum/lwv-redistricting>. Please share this widely. Any League member who is interested is encouraged to join.

Read about the LWV-TX [Redistricting position in Texas here](#).

Bad News!

SB 6, "the potty bill," passed the Senate. The [League's Equal Opportunity position](#) allows us to vehemently oppose the discriminatory SB 6 bill. Read the Texas Tribune's article: [Here is what the Texas Bathroom Bill Means in Plain English](#).

SB 4, the anti-sanctuary city bill was heard in the House State Affairs Committee. Kudos to **Barbara Frandsen** and her husband **Chris** who stayed at the Capitol until 8:00 pm to provide testimony written by **Gloria Suarez Sasser** for the League.

ACTIONS FOR THE WEEK!

Oppose Vouchers!

Contact your senator and the members of the [Texas Senate Education Committee](#) to **oppose Senate Bill 3**. Senate Bill 3 is a deceptive voucher proposal that would use taxpayer dollars to subsidize private school education without accountability. Call today! The committee hearing is at 9:00 am, Tuesday, March 21st.

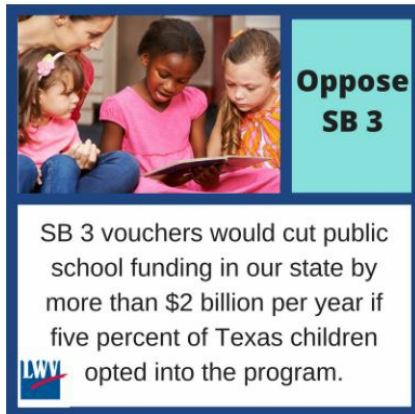
Take action for Gun Safety!

Contact your representatives and members in the [House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee](#). Tell them you **Support HB 866** (Moody) which creates a lethal violence protective order for families living with a loved one at risk of harming themselves or others. Call right now! The committee hearing is at 2:00 pm, Monday, March 20th.

Women's Health Action!

Contact your state senator NOW and express your opposition to [SB 8](#), [SB 25](#), [SB 258](#) and [SB 415](#); tell your senator that these proposed bills impose unnecessary prohibitions and requirements on women seeking abortions and their physicians.

Social Media Action



The graphic features a photograph of three young girls looking at a tablet. To the right of the photo is a teal box with the text "Oppose SB 3". Below the photo and text is a white box with a blue border containing the text: "SB 3 vouchers would cut public school funding in our state by more than \$2 billion per year if five percent of Texas children opted into the program." The LWV logo is in the bottom left corner.

Social media posts with images get much more play. After you make your calls to your legislators, go to the [League Facebook page](#) and share the Capitol Action Report and these images with your comments. Get your friends involved, too!



The graphic has a teal header with "Oppose Vouchers!" in red. Below it is a blue box with white text: "Contact your Texas State Senator & members of the Senate Education Committee today! Tell them to oppose SB 3!". A white box with a blue border contains a list of names and phone numbers: Larry Taylor (512) 463-0111, Eddie Lucio, Jr. (512) 463-0127, Paul Bettencourt (512) 463-0107, Donna Campbell (512) 463-0125, Bob Hall (512) 463-0102, Don Huffines (512) 463-0116, Bryan Hughes (512) 463-0101, Kel Seliger (512) 463-0131, Van Taylor (512) 463-0108, Carlos Uresti (512) 463-0119, and Royce West (512) 463-0123 (TEL). The LWV logo is in the bottom left corner.

Tell our Texas legislators that you support quality public schools for all Texas children! Our children are our future!

Watch and share our weekly LWV-TX [One Minute Capitol Action YouTube videos!](#)

LEAGUE PRIORITY ISSUES:

Click on the links below to learn more about issues you are interested in.

[Voter Rights and Election Laws in Texas:](#) The League provided [testimony ON SB 5 the Voter ID bill](#) by Sen. Joan Huffman and [testimony in SUPPORT of HB 450](#) by Rep. Pat Fallon that will allow use of mobile phones in the polling place to use downloaded

information.

We registered in SUPPORT for Rep. Diego Bernal's [HB 199](#) that would allow all counties to consider use of a countywide polling place program and we registered in OPPOSITION to Rep. Greg Bonnen's HB 1462, allowing fewer hours of operation at temporary branch polling places.

Women's Health and Reproductive Choice: Four dangerous bills have been reported out of Senate Committees and could go to the full Senate for a vote at any time:

SB 8 (Schwertner) OPPOSE that bans the donation of fetal tissue for research,

SB 25 (Creighton) OPPOSE that eliminates the claim of wrongful birth, thus imposing an unreasonable restriction on a woman's right to make an informed decision, in consultation with her health care providers and family, about whether to have an abortion.

SB 258 (Huffines) OPPOSE that requires embryonic and fetal tissue be buried or cremated.

SB 415 (Perry) OPPOSE that bans a specific procedure (known as "dilation and extraction") that forces doctors to practice substandard care.

Public Education: LWV-TX opposes SB 3, relating to the establishment of an education savings account [ESA] program and a tax credit scholarship and an educational expense assistance program. The primary purpose of the bill is to provide parents with tax monies that can be used for private and/or religious school tuition and expenses. These are variations on vouchers, which LWV opposes...

OTHER UPDATED TEXAS ISSUES:

Air Quality/Climate Change: The big news is the HB 2, the supplemental appropriations bill that was introduced by the House, specifically written by Huberty is getting such praise!

Early Childhood: House leaders revised their budget proposal that included ending the high-quality prekindergarten grant program. They instead would make a one time allocation to all school districts with pre-K classrooms, without insisting on any additional reporting or credential requirements. The move would bring pre-K funding up to \$147 million over the next two years.

Human Trafficking: Support – S.B. 1859 Lucio Relating to the establishment of a human trafficking unit with the DPS. Support – H.B. 29 Thompson Relating to recommendations by the AG to improve the OAG's Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force.

Land Use & Water: Encourage members to use the 2017 Action Paper "[Protect Water Quality in Edwards Aquifer](#)" to advocate in support of SB 1796 (Menendez) and HB 3467 (Howard), companion bills that would prohibit the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) from authorizing the discharge of domestic sewage effluent into any water in the contributing or recharge zones of the San Antonio or Barton Springs segments of the Edwards Aquifer.

Payday & Auto Title Loans in Texas: See the updated list of bills on the webpage.

Redistricting: Well, things are a-poppin' (sort of) in the Redistricting world in Texas. Read about the 5 bills before the House and Senate that relate to redistricting (HJR 32 Howard, H.B. 369 Howard, HJR 74 Anchia, SB 209 West and HJR 118 Neave.

Transportation: A record vote was taken on HB 62, which would implement statewide restrictions on cell phone use while driving. The League supports this bill. Distracted driving is a serious safety issue, and we all need to have our eyes on the road! It also makes fair provisions for cell phone use for emergencies.

Other issues we are following...

Behavioral Health

[Capital Punishment](#)

[Child Abuse and Neglect](#)

[Child Health](#)

[Drug Laws and Policies](#)

[Equal Opportunity/Income Assistance](#)

[Financing State Government: The Budget and Taxes:](#)

[Gun Safety](#)

[Hazardous Waste](#)

[Immigration](#)

[Juvenile Justice](#)

[Open Government](#)

[Natural Resources](#)

Hey, Texas Political Nerds!

Love these videos by Impact Texas starring our own LWV-Austin member **Betsy Singleton**! [Betsy Goes to Austin](#) & [Telling your story at the Capitol.](#)

LWV-TX loves elections! Excellent Report: [“2016 America Goes to the Polls”](#) by Nonprofit Votes.

Capitol Calendar

[Equality Texas Lobby Day](#) March 20

[Save Texas Public Schools Rally](#) March 25

[Planned Parenthood Lobby Day](#) April 5



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