



TESTIMONY

Wednesday, 03/29/2023

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

SENATE JURISPRUDENCE COMMITTEE

I am testifying as a member and on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Texas IN OPPOSITION to Senate Bill 27 . We appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. Thank you for allowing us to share the League of Women Voters of Texas position on this bill.

The League of Women Voters of Texas OPPOSES SB 27, that would create a special Business Court having statewide jurisdiction at the trial level over cases involving complex business law.

It is especially concerning that the seven judges on the proposed Business Court, with the power to try and decide important cases, would be appointed by the governor, rather than elected, bypassing the judges elected by districts who currently decide such cases. In effect, the power of Texas citizens residing in these districts to choose judges would be shifted to the governor. Taking these important cases away from home districts also has the effect of putting the appointed judges at a remove from the home districts of litigants and jurors.

It is also of great concern to the League that the system for appointment of judges set forth in SB 27 has no provision for ethnic diversity among the judges and contains only scant provision for geographic diversity ("no more than three judges may reside in the same county"). Such an appointment system is inappropriate in our ethnically and geographically diverse state.

Questions have also been raised as to whether SB 27 would violate the Texas Constitution. Its passage could lead to years of costly litigation for the state.

Please reject SB 27 which would create unnecessary barriers to the public's access to the civil justice system.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

For additional information, please contact: Julie Lowenberg, Judicial Selection and Judiciary Issue Chair, jmlowenberg@sbcglobal.net.

The League of Women Voters is one of America's oldest and most trusted civic nonprofit organizations. Formed in 1919, the League of Women Voters of Texas represents over 13,000 grassroots advocates and 34 local Leagues across the State of Texas.

The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes candidates for office or political parties. We encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government and seek to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to people 16 and older of all gender identities.