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TO: Senate Education Subcommittee

FROM: Dr. Janelle Rivers, Education Advocacy Specialist

SUBJECT: Testimony on S.70 School Board Ethics

January 21, 2026

The League of Women Voters of South Carolina (LWVSC) appreciates the opportunity to support improvements in training of school board members on the principles of ethical behavior. The League is known primarily as an organization that supports good government. Ethical behavior of elected officials at all levels is critical for representing the interests of citizens, and a strong public school system is essential for a healthy, functioning representative democracy.

School boards are charged with overseeing large budgets for the community and managing employment contracts, as well as procurement, land acquisition, building construction, and maintenance of facilities. The League agrees that school board members, as elected representatives of the community, should receive mandatory training at the beginning of their service to ensure that they are aware of the potential hazards and relevant ethical principles that should govern the operation of schools and school districts. Establishing a minimal model policy and strengthening training requirements to ensure that school board members are aware of their ethical responsibilities from the beginning of their terms are not merely wise suggestions; they are strong preventive measures that will promote better management of school district finances and contracts.

Please report this bill with a favorable recommendation.

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