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TESTIMONY: H. 4776 BEFORE THE SPECIAL LAWS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

February 23, 2022

The League of Women Voters of South Carolina opposes H. 4776, which would permit anyone working for a health care facility to refuse any type of service to any patient on religious, ethical, moral or philosophical grounds. The bill would further prevent hospitals and other health care facilities from changes in personnel responsibilities to try to accommodate refusals while protecting their patients.

It is the position of the League of Women Voters that:¹

Every U.S. resident should have access to a basic level of care that includes the prevention of disease, health promotion and education, primary care (including prenatal and reproductive health), acute care, long-term care, and mental health care.

This bill would inhibit the patient access to care that the League believes is essential. It is so broadly written that it would allow anyone in a healthcare setting to deny care or even processing of paperwork to facilitate care. This would be especially hard on those who live in rural areas or who lack financial resources, potentially eliminating the only source of medical assistance normally accessible to them.

The League's position is not radical politics. It is consistent with the traditional values of generations of South Carolinians, especially its medical professionals. Patients seeking care may have had too much to drink (for years), eaten too much, had more babies than were good for them (with or without matrimony), abused their families, or even refused lifesaving vaccines, and yet healthcare workers have provided the medically accepted standard of care for them. That must continue. All of us deserve that, not just some of us.

There is no virtue and no morality in denying medical services to those who need them. On behalf of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina, I ask you to reject this bill.

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¹ League of Women Voters of the United States. *Impact on Issues*, P. 129. <https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/LWV-impact-2020.pdf>.