



Testimony

House Privileges and Elections - Election Administration Subcommittee
January 29, 2024

[HB26](#)

Voter identification; accepted forms of identification, private entities licensed or certified.

The League of Women Voters supports HB 26. This bill adopts an additional form of photo ID that voters can use to verify their identity when they vote in-person. Specifically, this bill recognizes that many voters have photo IDs issued by a private entity that is licensed or certified by one of four additional Virginia agencies listed in the bill. Like our Department of Motor Vehicles, these private entities, by being licensed or certified by Virginia agencies, can provide the same assurance that the voter is registered.

[HB43](#)

Polling place; assistance for certain voters, expands definition of disability.

The LWV-VA supports the inclusive definition of disability in HB43 because it will enhance voter access. We recommend adding the training for Officers of Elections found in HB441.

[HB69](#)

Vacancies in elected local offices; interim appointments, notice requirement.

The LWV-VA supports HB 69. While we agree that seats on an elected local governing body or an elected school board should not remain infilled, citizens should have an opportunity to participate in a hearing to be given i

nformation on each candidate under consideration for such an interim appointment. Thank you for considering this important bill.

[HB441](#)

Polling place; assistance for certain voters, clarifies definition of "person with a disability."

"LWV-VA supports the fundamental right to vote and supports measures that seek to enhance voter access and voter participation" Therefore the LWV-VA supports HB441 because it will enhance voter access with an inclusive definition of disability *and* with training for Officers of Elections.

WRITTEN STATEMENT:

The League of Women Voters of Virginia supports the fundamental right to vote and supports measures that seek to enhance voter access and voter participation. Curbside voting is one of the ways that Virginia localities ensure that having a disability is not a barrier to voter participation. The current law focuses on physical disabilities, but those are not the only disabilities that can be barriers to voting inside a polling place. HB1222 would add developmental disabilities which is a step in the direction of increasing voter access. HB43 and HB441 are more inclusive and would cover mental and emotional health which can fluctuate unpredictably. The League of Women Voters of Virginia supports the greatest degree of inclusion for persons with disabilities. Additionally, HB441 provides for training of Officers of Elections on how to aid voters outside the polling place. Therefore, the League of Women Voters of Virginia supports HB441 as providing the most help to the largest number of voters with disabilities.

[HB463](#)

Polling places; prohibited activities or conduct, application to locations for absentee voting.

The League of Women Voters supports HB 463. Many League Members work at their local Registrar's office or at satellite sites during the Early Voting period before an election. The risks to our voters and election officials at these locations are exactly the same as on Election Day. This bill simply recognizes this unfortunate fact.

[HB904](#)

Voter registration; list maintenance activities, cancellation procedures, required record matches.

ORAL STATEMENT:

The League of Women Voters supports HB 904, a bill that will improve Virginia's voter list maintenance activities and show the public many steps that are taken to ensure accuracy and security. This bill's provisions will go a long way toward preventing incorrect voter purges. Record matching will be more precise, helping to protect eligible citizens from disenfranchisement and prevent those who are no longer eligible from voting in Virginia. The bill codifies in detail security and list maintenance procedures that are already in place throughout the Commonwealth. The bill also strengthens record keeping requirements. The bill achieves a better list maintenance and rebuilds confidence in elections.

WRITTEN STATEMENT:

The League of Women Voters supports HB 904, a bill that will improve Virginia's voter list maintenance activities and show the public many steps that are taken to ensure accuracy and security. This bill's provisions will go a long way toward preventing incorrect voter purges, which [at least] 3,400 voters experienced last year. Qualified voters should not be disenfranchised for nonexistent felony convictions nor for technical violations after their rights have been restored.

Virginia should not be subject to other states' errors either. Record matching will be more precise, helping to protect eligible citizens from disenfranchisement and prevent those who are no longer eligible from voting in Virginia. The bill also strengthens record keeping requirements so that a mistakenly disenfranchised voter can find out what happened.

The bill codifies in detail security and list maintenance procedures that are already in place throughout the Commonwealth. Every locality has a security plan in place, subject to annual reconsideration. The Department of Elections' IT team can assist any locality that needs help in reaching minimum standards. Change of address procedures are already in place but the bill spells out standards.

This bill accomplishes two things, better list maintenance so that qualified voters can vote and people who should not vote here cannot, and it rebuilds public confidence in elections.

[HB939](#)

Note: This bill might be combined with [HB 1023](#). The first statement addresses only HB 939; the second statement addresses both if they are combined.

Elections administration; prohibits possession of firearm within 100 feet of certain locations.

The League of Women Voters supports HB 939. We strongly supported the General Assembly's recent decision to restrict firearms in polling locations. This bill would provide the necessary extension of existing law to locations in which ballots are processed and counted.

If combined with HB1023:

The League of Women Voters supports HB 939 and HB 1023. Certain activities or conduct, such as electioneering or carrying a firearm within 40 feet of a polling place are currently prohibited because they can intimidate or harass voters and/or officers of election. The same prohibitions should apply wherever voters may cast their ballots in person or drop off their completed ballots. The combined bill would provide the necessary extension of existing law to locations in which ballots are processed and counted. We urge you to report the bill.

[HB940](#)

Note: This bill might be combined with [HB 1003](#). The first statement addresses only HB 940; the second statement addresses both if they are combined.

Elections administration; change to location of polling place, additional notice requirement.

The League of Women Voters supports HB 940. Many League Members have experience serving as election officers, including experience where the location of a polling place is changed. We know how important it is to voters to be given details on a new polling location, if they unknowingly go to the location that they last used for their polling place. Voting should not seem like a puzzle for Virginia voters.

If combined with HB1003:

The League of Women Voters supports HB 940 and HB 1003. Many League Members have extensive experience serving as election officers, including experience where the location of a polling place is changed. We know how important it is to voters to be given timely notice on a new polling location, as well as information on the new polling location if they unknowingly go to the location that they last used for their polling place. Voting should not seem like a puzzle for Virginia voters.

[HB942](#)

Note: Three bills address the use of satellite locations during Early Voting: HB942, HB1172, HB1408. Our written statement below covers all three bills. The oral statements are separate for each bill

Polling places and voter satellite offices; locations, restrictions, requirements, & considerations.

ORAL

HB942 addresses several satellite location concerns. The League supports language requiring consideration of proximity to public transportation, parking, proximity to historically underrepresented or underserved communities, and population distribution. The League recommends that the bill be amended to establish guidance on the number of satellite locations. Additionally, the League supports the bill's rules limiting the use of police or sheriff offices for all voting locations including satellites and requiring tribal voting locations.

Thank you for considering our input in support of Virginia's voters.

WRITTEN FOR HB942, HB1172, HB1408.

The League of Women Voters' mission is to Empower Voters/Defend Democracy. The LWV of Virginia supports and welcomes no-excuse early voting to empower voters to participate in the voting process. We recognize that in-person early voting has been implemented in many different ways in different localities and that it is time to provide standards to ensure that all voters are equitably enabled to cast a ballot during the early in-person voting period.

The question of number and locations for satellite voting is complex and varies based on a county or city's geographic size, population distribution,

public transportation options, general registrars' office location within the locality, voting patterns, and underserved communities.

Chapter 18 of the GREB (General Registrar and Electoral Board) Handbook provides guidance for operation of satellite locations but only states that localities "may" establish them. No standards or Code exist to require or provide guidance for the number or placement of satellite locations.

Three bills before this committee [HB942](#), [HB1172](#), [HB1408](#), offer opportunities to set standards to broaden the access of voters to early voting at satellite locations.

HB1408 requires a standard developed by the Department of Elections. Standards exist for many aspects of elections and the number and distribution of satellite voting locations should be no exception. Standards can be detailed descriptions of various scenarios and how the number and location of satellites should be determined in each. The League supports passage of this bill.

HB1172 sets a minimum of one satellite (operating in addition to the Registrar's office) during the early voting period for any county or city with a population over 50,000. The League supports this attempt to set a minimum number of satellite locations but has concerns that it might not be adequate for all localities based on geographic size, population distribution, and underrepresented or underserved communities.

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Thank you for considering our input in support of Virginia's voters.

[HB943](#)

Voter registration; protected voter status, elections officials.

The League of Women Voters staunchly supports HB943. Although elections in the Commonwealth are secure, transparent, and accurate, trust in elections has deteriorated both here and nationwide. Fortunately, Virginia's

election officials have thus far not experienced some of the trauma wreaked on officials in other states. Nevertheless, it is prudent to offer the identified election officials the option to withhold their residential addresses from the public voter list. These protections could be extended to cover statewide election officials, but this bill is a necessary start.

[HB998](#)

Note: This bill might be combined with [HB 1238](#). The first statement addresses only HB 998; the second statement addresses both if they are combined.

Electoral board to meet to ascertain results; permitted period of adjournment.

If not combined with HB1238:

The League of Women Voters supports HB 998, which extends local electoral board certification of elections until seven calendar days after absentee ballots are returned by mail. Sorting mail ballots by precinct is burdensome. Registrars need time to verify same day registrants and count their provisional ballots. Compounding the workload is that no mail is delivered on Friday when it is a federal holiday, as it was in both 2022 and 2023. Tackling these tasks right after the election means tired administrators can make mistakes. The largest localities barely finished in time last year. Remember this: extending the certification deadline at the local level by three days does not affect the timing of the final certification by the State Board of Elections. This bill makes sense.

If combined with HB1238:

The League of Women Voters supports both HB 998 and HB1238, which extend local electoral board certification of elections until either seven calendar days after absentee ballots are returned by mail or ten calendar days after the election.

Sorting mail ballots by precinct is burdensome. Registrars also need time to verify same day registrants and count their provisional ballots. Compounding the workload is that no mail is delivered on Friday when it is a federal holiday, as it was in both 2022 and 2023. Tackling these tasks right after the election means tired administrators can make mistakes. The largest localities barely finished in time last year. Remember this: extending the certification

deadline at the local level by three days does not affect the timing of the final certification by the State Board of Elections.

[HB1003](#)

Precincts and polling places; notice of changes mailed at least 30 days prior to election.

The League of Women Voters supports HB 1003, extending the notice requirement to 30 days. Many League Members have extensive experience serving as election officers, including experience where the location of a polling place is changed. We know many voters need time to obtain transportation to their polling location. Current law's 15 days does not give these voters enough time to adjust their plans, particularly if their mail is delayed.

[HB1023](#)

Polling places; prohibited activities or conduct, application to locations for absentee voting.

The League of Women Voters supports HB1023. Certain activities or conduct, such as electioneering or carrying a firearm within 40 feet of a polling place are currently prohibited because they can intimidate or harass voters and/or officers of election. The same prohibitions should apply wherever voters may cast their ballots in person or drop off their completed ballots. We urge you to report the bill.

[HB1172](#)

Absentee voting; voter satellite offices, minimum number required.

HB1172 sets a minimum of one satellite in addition to the Registrar's office during the early voting period for any county or city with a population over 50,000. The League supports this attempt to set a minimum number of satellite locations but has concerns that it might not be adequate for all localities based on geographic size, population distribution, and underrepresented or underserved communities.

Thank you for considering our input in support of Virginia's voters.

[HB1177](#)

Voter registration; list maintenance, data sharing.

The League of Women Voters strongly supports HB 1177 and appreciates Delegate Sickles' extensive efforts to convince ELECT to rejoin ERIC. Particularly in a year when we have a Presidential Election, our voter rolls must be accurate and secure. ERIC provided Virginia residents the assurance that our voter rolls did not include voters who moved away, died, or voted in other states. After withdrawing from ERIC, the Commonwealth's current workarounds risk jeopardizing the security of our voters' personal information and do not provide any information from dozens of states. This bill would require ELECT to regain efficient access to that important data.

[HB1222](#)

Assistance for certain voters outside of the polling place; expands definition of disability.

Because the LWV-VA supports measures that seek to enhance voter access, we appreciate the step in that direction taken by HB1222. However, we support the more inclusive definition and training in HB441.

[HB1238](#)

Local electoral boards; certification and abstract of results, extends deadline

If not combined with HB998:

The League of Women Voters supports HB 1238, which extends local electoral board certification of elections until ten calendar days after the election. Sorting mail ballots by precinct is burdensome. Also, registrars need time to verify same day registrants and count their provisional ballots. Compounding the workload is that no mail is delivered on Friday when it is a federal holiday, as it was in both 2022 and 2023. Tackling these tasks right after the election means tired administrators can make mistakes. The largest localities barely finished in time last year. Remember this: extending the certification deadline at the local level by three days does not affect the timing of the final certification by the State Board of Elections.

[HB1408](#)

Voter satellite offices; standards for determining number and location.

HB1408 requires a standard developed by the Department of Elections. Standards exist for many aspects of elections and the number and distribution of satellite voting locations should be no exception. Standards can be very detailed descriptions of various scenarios and how the number and location of satellites should be determined in each. The League supports passage of this bill.