



## Testimony

Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections  
January 30, 2024

### [SB147](#)

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Election administration; recommended number of deputy general registrars.

The League of Women Voters urges you not to report SB 147 as it stands. Local registrars and electoral boards know their staffing needs, their populations, and other variable considerations specific to their localities. They are best situated to determine the appropriate number of deputy registrars. The League does, however, favor the establishment of a work group of key stakeholders to develop staffing standards for elections offices.

### [SB196](#)

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Voter registration; list maintenance data standards, challenges to a voter's registration.

The League of Women Voters supports methods to improve the accuracy of Virginia's voter list and to avoid improper disenfranchisement of valid voters. SB 196 would achieve this purpose. Putting one court in charge of hearing challenges to voter registration denials means challenges are more likely to be treated consistently. We urge the Committee to report this bill.

### [SB270](#)

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Presidential primaries; ranked choice voting.

Oral

The League of Women Voters of Virginia supports the expansion of ranked choice voting to Presidential Primaries, as described in SB270. We believe that ranked choice voting, or RCV, would make our elections more accessible, would promote nominees with broad support, and would ensure that every voter's voice is heard. The League of Women Voters of Virginia asks this Committee to report out SB270 to full Senate consideration.

### Written

The League of Women Voters of Virginia supports the expansion of ranked choice voting to Presidential Primaries, as described in SB270. We believe that ranked choice voting, or RCV, would make our elections more accessible, would promote nominees with broad support, and would ensure that every voter's voice is heard.

RCV often results in a more diverse slate of candidates who can run for office without the fear of being a "spoiler" or splitting the vote. RCV allows voters to express their choice of candidates fully, without worrying about "wasting their vote" if a preferred candidate drops out before election day, and without worrying about voting for the likely winner, rather than the candidate that most closely represents their personal views. RCV ensures that the winning candidate has the broad support of the majority of voters, rather than just a 22% or 34% plurality of voters.

We also appreciate all the work that this bill has received. The bill requires the Department of Election to confirm that all localities have the ability to conduct an RCV election. Additionally, the bill provides detailed processes, providing guidance to localities and the Department of Elections, on how to conduct an RCV election for a Presidential Primary.

The League of Women Voters of Virginia asks this Committee to report out SB270 to full Senate consideration.

### SB301

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Campaign finance, required reports, extension of deadlines and appeal of fines.

While the League of Women Voters of Virginia generally supports the need for updating current rules for candidates' filings, including the passage of a more rational system for allowing candidates to utilize exceptions for catastrophic problems, we are concerned that some on the terms in this bill,

such as “reasonable considerations” are not defined. We welcome an opportunity to work with Senator DeSteph on this critical issue.

### [SB315](#)

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Voter registration; registration of Department of Motor Vehicles customers, automatic update.

The League supports SB 315 because it will help ensure that voters who are already registered to vote in Virginia are registered in the correct precinct. Many people forget to update their voter registration addresses but remember to update their addresses for their driver’s licenses. While it is true that eligible citizens can opt out of automatic voter registration, once they are registered, this proposal would make it easier for them to keep their registration current and accurate. Not only would the bill help voters, but it would also assist in maintaining clean voter rolls.

### [SB428](#)

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Elections; allows for any local or constitutional office to be conducted by ranked choice voting.

The League of Women Voters of Virginia supports the expansion of ranked choice voting to all locally elected offices, as described in SB 428.

We believe that ranked choice voting, or RCV, would make our elections more accessible, would promote nominees with broad support, and would ensure that every voter’s voice is heard. RCV often results in a more diverse slate of candidates who can run for office without the fear of being a “spoiler” or splitting the vote. RCV allows voters to express their choice of candidates fully, without worrying about “wasting their vote” if a preferred candidate drops out before election day, and without worrying about voting for the likely winner, rather than the candidate that most closely represents their personal views. RCV ensures that the winning candidate has the broad support of the majority of voters, rather than just a 22% or 34% plurality of voters.

The League of Women Voters of Virginia asks this Committee to report out SB428 to the Senate floor.

## SB606

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Voter registration; list maintenance, data sharing.

### ORAL STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters strongly supports SB 606 and appreciates Senator VanValkenburg's extensive efforts. 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

### WRITTEN STATEMENT:

The League strongly supports SB 606 and commends Senator VanValkenburg's extensive efforts. Virginia was a founding member of ERIC, the Electronic Registration Information Center. ERIC is easily the best tool for securely maintaining accurate voter lists. It is managed and directed by its member states, each of which has a seat on the board. ERIC developed sophisticated safeguards that secure and protect all member states' voter registration information. It informed our Department of Elections of voters who moved to any of 31 other states and the District of Columbia, those who might have voted in more than one state, and those who died. Virginia cannot replicate the benefits of ERIC, certainly not for the price and not in any reasonable time. Its current agreements with a handful of other states leave unanswered questions about the security of our voters' personal information. The Commonwealth should rejoin ERIC as soon as possible and encourage all other states that are not current members of ERIC to join or renew their membership.