



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

MICHIGAN

EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

December 2, 2015

Members of the House Elections Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Michigan opposes SB 13. This bill eliminates the choice of straight-party voting by citizens and undermines the citizen's right to vote their conscience.

We would remind legislators that, in the 2002, voters already used their vote to speak to this issue and nearly 60% of voters said, "No," to the elimination of straight party voting.

There are a number of reasons why the elimination of straight party ticket voting is bad for voters:

- it minimizes options available to voters who clearly draw lines down partisan lines – this applies to both parties and across the state in urban, rural and suburban precincts,
- it leads to longer lines at the polls, which disenfranchises voters – according to the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks, Michigan ranks 6th in the nation for longest wait in line,
- it leads to incomplete voting that suppresses the vote – the Citizen's Research Council reports that, "A single voter is asked in an election cycle to vote on between 54 and 150 officials of state government and the judiciary and from 23 to 37 local government officials" and;
- it increases the cost for elections because additional machines need to be purchased and more staff.

The League of Women Voters supports election laws that make voting accessible and convenient for all citizens to participate.

Sincerely,

Judy Karandjeff
President