

Dear Denise:

The following letter was sent to each member of the House Gov. Ops. Committee. Please enter it into the record.

Thanks.

Kate Rader

Dear Rep:

For nearly 100 years, the League of Women Voters has worked for transparent, responsive and accountable government at every level. Since 1973 money in politics has been one focus of the League's efforts to assure good government. After initial study and consensus of the question of campaign finance, and review over time, in 2016 the position was amended to read in part,

"The League of Women Voters believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should:

- Enhance political equality for all citizens.
- Ensure maximum participation by citizens in the political process; protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns.
- Provide voters sufficient information about candidates and campaign issues to make informed choices; ensure transparency and the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections.
- Enable candidates to compete equitably for public office; ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public; and combat corruption and undue influence in government."

The complete position can be found at <http://lwv.org/files/Impact%20on%20Issues%202016-2018%20Representative%20Government.pdf>, p. 22 et seq.

Based on that position, the LWV of Vermont opposes the passage of H.66 for the following reasons:

- This narrowly-focused bill is not useful in the context of larger campaign finance reform and ethics discussions.
- The proposed exemption would add complexity to administration of the campaign law.
- The exemption could even become a loophole to mask contribution levels per candidate.
- The effect of the bill is to favor incumbents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Catherine Rader

Board Member, LWVVT