



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND, INC.

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

HB 27 – OPEN MEETINGS ACT – MINUTES – REQUIRED INTERNET POSTINGS

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

BY: BARBARA SCHNACKENBERG AND NANCY SORENG, CO-PRESIDENTS

DATE: FEBRUARY 1, 2017

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation in government and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by among other requirements giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records understandable and accessible. This has been a principle of the League since our founding in 1920.

This legislation seeks to identify the votes cast by each individual member of a public body who votes on legislation, to cite the amendments passed by the public body and to require that a reprint of legislation as introduced with amendments specifically identified be made available. It further requires that such information be posted "promptly" on the internet. We support making available all information about the actions of any public body, especially a record of legislation introduced and the votes of each member of a public body, and we support posting it where it is easily accessible. We are concerned that the effect of the modification of current law as proposed would appear to make such posting an alternative to live streaming or a video recording the meeting.

We would support this legislation without reservation if it required both the live streaming or video recording of the meeting **and** posting on the internet. As drafted, the video provision is an alternative, not a requirement. How long the record of the actions of the public body might be accessible on the internet under this legislation of concern to us.