



**TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
COMMITTEE**

**HB 42 Public Information Act - Applications for Inspection - Responses and Time  
Limits**

**POSITION: Support**

**BY: Lois Hybl and Richard Willson – Co-Presidents**

**Date: February 11, 2020**

The League of Women Voters has long believed that a democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

Current law says that a custodian of information that has received a request for public records in accordance with the Public Information Act has thirty days to deny or provide the information requested. This bill would shorten that to 7 days. Current law also says that if the custodian reasonably believes it will take more than 10 working days to produce the public record, the custodian shall inform the party making the request within 10 working days after the receipt of the request.

This legislation requires the custodian to indicate within 5 working days the amount of time that the custodian anticipates it will take to produce the public record, an estimate of the range of fees that may be charged to comply with the request for public records, and the reason for the delay. This bill also reduces the amount of time that the custodian has to deny a request and explain the legal authority for the denial.

This requirement of a more timely response to a request for public information will improve access to public information and the ability to advocate in the public interest.

We urge a favorable report on HB 42.