



**TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

**HB 465 Election Law - Campaign Material - Disclosure of the Use of Bots**

**POSITION: Support**

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

**Date: February 11, 2020**

The League of Women Voters supports campaign finance regulations that enhance political equality for all citizens, ensure transparency, protect representative democracy from distortion by undisclosed contributions and combat corruption. This legislation defines a “BOT” as an automated online account where all or substantially all the actions, or posts, of that account are not the result of a person. “Online” is defined as a public-facing website, web application, or digital application including a social network or publication.

HB 465 would require anyone who uses a bot to influence an election to disclose in a clear and conspicuous manner on the campaign material that a BOT is being used. The State Board of Elections would be authorized to ask for removal of the BOT for failure of disclosure. Online service providers will not be responsible for knowing when a BOT is in use. The person who is found guilty of violating the disclosure requirement would be subject to a fine, jail time, or both and would be ineligible to hold any public or party office for 4 years after the date of the offense.

Because we believe campaign material should be free of distortion and transparent, we urge a favorable report on HB 465.