



TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SB 361 Public-Private Partnerships – Process and Oversight

POSITION: Support

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The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) supports proposed legislation SB 361 that creates a board to help oversee Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) and offers the public assurances and protections. LWVMD believes in wise environmental, fiscal, land use, and governmental guidelines that are transparent so prudent planning decisions may be made for the Maryland population and those decisions also follow through with a set course of action.

Previously, a bill was enacted to help implement the Purple Line with its P3 agreement. This proposed legislation helps to clarify and expand concerns that have developed since all projects that may involve a P3 do not have the same terms, financial commitments, or state involvement. We don't know how P3s may evolve and what may next be proposed, but the guidelines set forth in this bill help set prudent procedures with timelines for implementation that promote good management.

The composition of the board proposed in this legislation draws from a broad spectrum of both governmental officials and appointees who have experience in transportation law, public policy, finance or management consulting. The Oversight Review Board has the potential to add much valuable knowledge to the P3 process.

The positions of LWVMD clearly say that state government should help enable the compliance with state goals. Our transportation systems should reflect local concerns, promote environmental protection, aid economic development, and encourage cooperative working relationships. Wise decisions are difficult to make.

SB 361 helps make government more effective and transparent for P3 projects, by incorporating public input, protections and assurances with clear guidelines and stipulations. LWVMD urges a favorable report.