



TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

HB 151 - Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights - Repeal

POSITION: Support

BY: Lois Hybl and Richard Willson – Co-Presidents

Date: February 9, 2021

On June 25, 2020 at the National Convention of the League of Women Voters of the United States the following resolution was adopted: The League of Women Voters shall advocate against systemic racism in the justice system and, at a minimum, for preventing excessive force and brutality by law enforcement. We also call for prompt actions by all League members to advocate within every level of government to eradicate systemic racism, and the harm that it causes.

Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights (LEOBOR) grants protections to law enforcement officers that no other public employee is enjoys. Because of the provisions around investigations of misconduct, limits on discipline, time limits to lodge a complaint, and allowing law enforcement officers to investigate each when accused of misconduct, only a very small percentage of complaints actually result in discipline.

In addition to the nearly 100 organizations that endorsed repeal of LEOBOR the Workgroup to Address Police Reform and Accountability in Maryland chaired by Delegate Atterbeary also recognized that it is standing in the way of ever addressing our deeply rooted problems in policing. However, we believe that this bill is the most impactful one that has been submitted. Until law enforcement officers can be held accountable for their actions, we will never be able create the trust between communities of color and police that is essential for doing the job that law enforcement should be doing, which is to keep communities safe.

We urge a favorable report on HB 151.