



## **TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **SB 23 Equity in Transportation Sector – Guidelines and Analyses**

**POSITION: Support**

**BY: Nancy Soreng President**

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The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) supports proposed legislation SB 23 that helps to promote equity in the transportation sector. LWVMD believes that visions should reflect local concerns, a good working relationship among agencies, and promote mass transit all while incorporating an equitable environment for all people. Maryland society has a broad range of population and the rules which govern them should be inclusive as well.

It is often difficult to set goals and then measure their attained progress. By having communities of racial and ethnic disparities included and impacts on persons with disabilities involved, greater equity is possible in the setting of goals. Much of the transit system is used by divergent populations, yet many of the goals are developed by those who do not use public transportation. By creating ways to measure goals that incorporate a diverse population, and then evaluating them, a more equitable basis can be reached.

Another feature of this bill is to consult and collaborate with communities on scheduling modes of transportation. It seems all too often that locals who know and use public transportation may either not be consulted at all, or be afterthoughts in a process. This bill specifically addresses the importance of gaining local feedback early in any decisions that are made. Burdens that any community carries should be recognized and then minimized by our government.

The positions of LWVMD clearly say that the state government should help enable 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 23 helps make government more effective by incorporating public input equitably, and provides protections and assurances with clear guidelines and stipulations. LWVMD urges a favorable report.