



TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

HB 153 Election Law - Voter Registration - Age and Notification to Minors

POSITION: Support

BY: Linda T. Kohn, President

Date: January 21, 2025

The League of Women Voters of Maryland believes in elections that are fair, equitable, and, most importantly, increase voter participation. HB 153 aims to lower the voting age of registration to match that of the current age at which future voters are receiving their learner permits.

Election after election, LWVMD grows concerned over the lack of voter turnout in the youth vote, particularly those in the age range of 18-24. While no singular factor has been identified as to why youth turnout is a challenge every election cycle, what is known is that the earlier people are brought into the democratic process, the more likely they are to become voters for life. By allowing that extra time and building it into a process that they are engaging in, there is more of an opportunity to engage those voters.

LWVMD believes that elections should be accessible and understandable and allow as many eligible voters a path to the polling place as possible. This is a small but easily implemented step to begin involving younger voters in the voting process.

LWVMD urges a favorable report on HB 153.