



TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE GOVERNMENT, LABOR, AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

**HB 1379 Corporations and Associations - Limitations on Election and Ballot Issue Activities
(Maryland Corporate Power Reset Act)**

Position: Support

By: Linda Kohn - President

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The League of Women Voters believes that methods for funding elections should protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns; ensure transparency and the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections; enable candidates to compete equitably for public office and combat corruption and undue influence in government. The Citizen's United decision that ruled that corporations are people and have the right to participate in election activity has created a flood of money entering campaigns through murky channels that are far from transparent.

HB 1379 allows the State of Maryland to determine its own definition of the rights of corporations and certain associations and revoke any prior implied authority for artificial persons to engage in election or ballot issue activity. It also contains provisions for the State Department of Assessments and Taxation, in coordination with the office of the Attorney General, to adopt regulations that provide for the determination of violations and procedures for forfeiture and reinstatement of charter privileges.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB1379.