



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary  
In Support of S.787/H.873 An Act to protect fundamental freedoms and prohibit  
discriminatory registration programs  
By Carolyn Lee, LWVMA Good Governance Specialist  
October 16, 2017**

This bill will assure that our Massachusetts government systems remain free from statutory discrimination or establishment of registration systems based on any identity characteristics of citizens. It will also assure that Massachusetts does not use its resources on behalf of the federal government for the collection of any information on residents' protected First Amendment activities — their speech, associations, or religious beliefs — except when law enforcement has reasonable grounds to suspect a person is involved in a crime and their protected activities are directly relevant to the investigation.

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts supports this bill.

This bill is well-crafted to address invasive data collection and registration systems without limiting the proper functions of government, especially law enforcement and appropriate immigration controls. It is unfortunate that we need such legislation, but, given historical precedents in this country and current events, we do. We like to think we live in a different sort of state where the problems this bill addresses do not occur. As recently as 2012, however, it was found that the Boston Regional Intelligence Center created and retained detailed records of non-criminal political acts by peaceful anti-war protesters.

Sponsored by Sen. Harriette Chandler and Rep. Jay Kaufman, this bill addresses the protection of all individuals and the limited use of Massachusetts resources, while maintaining the proper authority for law enforcement in criminal investigation situations.

Since its founding, the League of Women Voters at both the state and national levels has had the upholding of the First Amendment rights of all residents as a top priority. This bill ensures those rights will continue to be upheld in Massachusetts. We ask your support in passing this bill by reporting it favorably out of committee.

Thank you for your consideration.