



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MASSACHUSETTS

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The Honorable Robert DeLeo  
Speaker of the House  
The State House, Room 356  
Boston, MA 02133

March 26, 2018

Dear Mr. Speaker:

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA), on behalf of our thousands of members and supporters in 46 local Leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, urges you to support and bring to the floor for a vote the bill to authorize Automatic Voter Registration in Massachusetts, H.4320.

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) is the next logical reform to the voting process, creating an opt-out system to replace the current opt-in voter registration system and helping to assure that all eligible citizens in the Commonwealth are registered to vote. Such a system would particularly benefit those who move frequently, including young people, people in traditionally underserved communities, and military families. We estimate that 680,000 eligible voters would be brought onto Massachusetts voting rolls through adoption of AVR.

AVR has already been adopted in 11 states and the District of Columbia, always on a bipartisan basis. It's been approved in blue states like Oregon, red states like Alaska and West Virginia, and New England states like Connecticut, Rhode Island and Vermont. We would like to add Massachusetts to that list.

H.4320 has been carefully crafted to assure that non-citizens are not accidentally registered to vote and that citizens have the opportunity to decline to register if they wish to do so. Because automatic voter registration happens in state offices and involves eligible voters showing documentation, it actually increases security and decreases errors, especially over processes conducted by third parties. In addition, the legislation requires Massachusetts to join ERIC to further eliminate duplicate or other inaccurate registrations.

H.4320 is endorsed by over 60 organizations, including environmental, civil rights, consumer, community, labor, and good government groups, and has also won the backing of Secretary of the Commonwealth Galvin. Additionally, the tenets in the Automatic Voter Registration bill have been endorsed by the Massachusetts Town Clerks Association, and adoption of AVR should ease the task of municipal election officials by reducing the spikes in voter registration just before elections.

The League was founded almost 100 years ago to assure the right to vote for all citizens. AVR is the next logical step in continuing to make sure all citizens have ready access to the ballot box. We look forward to the passage of Automatic Voter Registration in this session of the legislature and seek your assistance in making that happen.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Ann B. Ashton".

Mary Ann B. Ashton  
President