



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy
In support of
H.3846 An Act relative to GreenWorks
By Launa Zimmaro, LWVMA Climate Change and Energy Specialist
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The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts supports H.3846 and welcomes this important bill from the House intended to address the impacts of climate change, already evident and expected to increase at an accelerated and exponential rate.

It is particularly important that, in his February 2019 announcement of the GreenWorks proposal, Speaker DeLeo said this proposal is “not meant to supplant any other ideas that are out there.” This statement opens a door to bi-partisan, bi-cameral and gubernatorial collaboration on the climate emergency that is the greatest threat facing our civilization. Knowing the vulnerability of coastal states, the Governor is working to fund adaptation measures. The Governor is also working to mitigate climate change through the Commonwealth’s engagement regionally with partner states in the Transportation and Climate Initiative, focused on curbing emissions from the transportation sector – the largest source of global warming greenhouse gas emissions in the state and region. Given the excellent climate change bills pending in the Legislature this session, as last, having this major GreenWorks bill from the House presents a welcome opportunity for a united and determined effort to address the climate emergency.

As written, H.3846 provides a mechanism for funding mitigation, resilience and adaptation measures at the municipal level, with a strong tilt toward funding for adaptation. While there is no doubt that adaptation measures are needed, they can be compared to an ambulance at an automobile race, necessary but not sufficient to deal with the climate crisis. We need mitigation. “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” and mitigation strategies are the closest we can come to prevention in the age of climate change. At this very late stage in the deadly warming of our earth—a process that cannot be reversed, only stemmed—what is desperately needed are the strongest possible preventative measures to bring down emissions, working in concert with efforts to strengthen infrastructure and resilience to reduce the severity of the impact.

We must band together to address this crisis. If you care about clean air, clean water, and healthy soils, you are an environmentalist whether you claim that label or not. But this is not about environmentalism. This is about a crisis that requires a large-scale, robust and rapid response to a circumstance that threatens every aspect of our lives – our health, our food system, our economy, our children, life itself. The kind of response government is designed for and meant to provide. We have the tools. We have the means. School children are taking to the streets because they care about this issue. We cannot and should not expect our children to clean up our mess. We need to join them in this fight as the only responsible and right thing to do.

Supporting the GreenWorks bill and the comprehensive climate change legislation that has been filed is a step the legislature must take this session. The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, representing 47 local leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, asks this committee and the entire legislature to take action now.

Thank you for your consideration.