



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Transportation
In support of H.3075/S.2035 An Act relative to congestion relief in East Boston
By Tanya Roy, LWVMA Transportation Specialist
October 15, 2019**

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts supports H.3075/S.2035 An Act relative to congestion relief in East Boston. This bill seeks to influence driver behavior by implementing variable toll pricing. It represents an important step towards encouraging creative solutions to relieving traffic congestion. The Commonwealth must take action to reverse the trend of growing congestion, a problem in East Boston and many urban areas across the Commonwealth that causes highly-polluting emissions, hampers productivity, and hinders economic growth.

The League endorses experimentation and project evaluation processes which include, among other things, analysis of costs and benefits of alternative solutions. Variable tolling under this legislation is a strictly-controlled trial with a set limit on revenue loss. The post-trial evaluation required by the Department of Transportation will be extremely valuable in informing whether and/or how to implement variable tolling on a permanent basis.

The League believes the possible success of this experimental initiative has broad ramifications for the potential application of variable toll pricing across the Commonwealth.

We support this legislation because we have always been in favor of promoting smart environmental policies, reducing air pollution and carbon emissions, and supporting environmental justice. The League is a strong believer in conservation, and conservation efforts must be encouraged through governmental action and incentives.

The League of Women Voter of Massachusetts, which represents 47 local Leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, urges the Transportation Committee to report this bill favorably.

Thank you for your consideration.