



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Election Laws
In support of
H.769/S.475 - An Act Supporting Parents Running for Public Office
By Linda Freedman, LWVMA Election and Voting Legislative Specialist
September 15, 2021**

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts supports amending Massachusetts General Law to exempt expenses relating to the provision of childcare services for a candidate while working or campaigning from the restrictions on personal use of campaign contributions.

This corrects a significant omission in Massachusetts campaign finance law. This bill would add expenses for childcare as eligible to be reimbursed from the candidate's campaign funds. Why are items such as expenses for bullet-proof vests and ball gowns deductible as campaign expenses while child care is not?

Current policy is not helpful to parents of young children who are candidates for public office in Massachusetts. However, federal law allows candidates for the U.S. Senate and House to claim childcare as a campaign expense.

The League of Women Voters strongly supports the active participation of citizens in government. This bill could help more parents to become candidates for public office. It is time to make this change.

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, with 47 local Leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, urges this committee to report this bill favorably without any further delay.

Thank you for your consideration.