



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Election Laws  
In support of  
S.422/H.669 - An Act supporting parents running for public office and  
H.3579 An Act empowering parental participation in elected office  
By Nell Forgas, LWVMA Election and Voting Legislative Specialist  
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The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts strongly supports S.422/H.669 and H.3579—simple bills that would allow candidates for state and local office to use campaign funds to pay for childcare expenses.

Passage of these bills will not involve any taxpayer money being used to pay for childcare for the children of Massachusetts candidates; it simply makes childcare an allowed use of funds raised by a candidate's campaign.

Since 2018, a Federal Election Commission ruling has allowed campaign funds to be used for childcare expenses that arise as a direct result of running for federal office. The FEC clearly recognizes the value that working parents can provide to our society by participating in government.

We hope that Massachusetts will recognize this value as well.

Currently, federal candidates running for Congress in Massachusetts can use campaign funds to cover childcare expenses, but candidates running for state legislature or local office cannot. This proposal would modernize the uses of campaign funds to include the many families with working parents and shared child-rearing duties serving our Commonwealth and its communities.

The League also encourages the legislature to further modernize campaign finance by amending these bills to expand the allowable uses of campaign funds to include dependent care expenses for aging parents, spouses and adult children with disabilities, or any other person for whom the candidate is a primary caregiver.

This would support candidates serving in the “sandwich generation” as well as those candidates whose spouses or adult children require exceptional care. No candidate should be prevented from participating in government and serving the Commonwealth or their community because they cannot afford the dependent care services required to campaign.

The League has been supporting this proposal since 2019. It's time for Massachusetts to join a growing group of states that have modernized their use of campaign funds for childcare and dependent care. Sixteen states have currently authorized the use of campaign funds for childcare through legislation, and 10 additional states have authorized it through ethics or Attorney General rulings. And 6 states – Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia – have authorized the use of campaign funds for dependent care expenses through legislation.

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, which represents 44 local Leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens, including parents and other caregivers.

We urge you to amend this proposal to include dependent care and to report a version of S.422/H.669 and H.3579 quickly and favorably out of committee.

Thank you for your consideration.