

February 13, 2019

Chair & Rep. Raymond Dehn  
House Subcommittee on Elections  
c/o Amanda Rudolph, Committee Administrator  
503 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

**Re: Testimony in Support of HF 40**

Dear Chair Dehn,

My name is Ellen Silva, and I am a volunteer with the League of Women Voters Minnesota. The League of Women Voters is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public. We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.

LWV Minnesota supports the restoration of voting rights as described in HF40 because:

- The bill has bipartisan support, with co-authors from both sides of the aisle.
- Thousands of citizens that are part of our society, working with us, paying taxes, and living in our communities would regain the right to vote. Their voices are important.
- Re-enfranchisement correlates with a lower rate of recidivism.<sup>1</sup>
- HF40 will make our election system less complicated and will reduce election administration costs.
  - The 2012 Task Force on Election Integrity report concluded that there was significant confusion and frustration among the public, among individuals

---

<sup>1</sup> Guy Padraic Hamilton-Smith and Matt Vogel, The Violence of Voicelessness: The Impact of Felony Disenfranchisement on Recidivism, 22 La Raza L.J. (2015).  
<https://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1252&context=blrlj>

convicted of felonies, and among election judges and administrators on when re-enfranchisement occurs.<sup>2</sup>

- Last year's Office of the Legislative Auditor report on voter registration highlights the ongoing challenge of maintaining accurate voting roles, especially in the complicated situation of felony convictions.<sup>3</sup>

HF40 creates a bright, clear line that is easy for voters and election judges to understand. It reduces election costs, and it will improve the integrity of our elections. I urge you to vote YES on HF40.

Sincerely,

Ellen M. Silva  
Minnetonka, MN

---

<sup>2</sup> First Interim Report and Initial Recommendation of Task for on Election Integrity. (2012). <https://www.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2012/other/120134.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Voter Registration, Office of the Legislative Auditor. (2018). <https://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us/ped/2018/voterreg.htm>