



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF MARYLAND, INC.**

**TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HEALTH AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**SB 671 PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT-PERSONNEL AND INVESTIGATORY
RECORDS-FORMAL COMPLAINTS AGAINST PUBLIC EMPLOYEES**

POSITION: SUPPORT

BY: BARBARA SCHNACKENBERG AND NANCY SORENG, CO-PRESIDENTS

DATE: MARCH 3, 2016

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation in government and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible. This includes avoiding the inaccurate classification of certain records relating to a complaint of job-related misconduct against a public employee as personnel records to avoid allowing a person in interest to know the outcome of his or her complaint against the public employee.

This legislation seeks to provide citizens with the right to learn of actions taken against a public employee as a result of a formal complaint filed by the citizen. Public employees are paid by all taxpayers, including the person who files a formal complaint. Under this legislation, records of investigations into alleged public employee misconduct are not personnel records barred from disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA). Instead the person who files a formal complaint becomes a person in interest with respect to records relating to that complaint and under the MPIA has greater access to the records related to that complaint.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on this legislation.