



TESTIMONY TO THE ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY COUNCIL

RE: Resolution No. 47-20 Resolution supporting law enforcement agencies and their leaders, officers, and deputies who serve the communities of Anne Arundel County, Maryland and disapproving the efforts to delegitimize the honorable profession of law enforcement

POSITION: Oppose as introduced

DATE: November 16, 2020

BY: Alfa Stevens, President LWVAAC

As a fundamental principle, the League of Women Voters believes in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States. In its public policy, the League works to protect individual rights, facilitate citizen participation in government decision-making and promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

We commend the County Council for providing County residents the opportunity to respond to proposed Resolution 47-20. There are communities who have a significant lack of trust when it comes to law enforcement and its officers, all the more reason for transparency in publicizing this measure to the broadest audience and welcoming public comment.

The League of Women Voters of Anne Arundel County (LWVAAC) extends utmost respect, appreciation and support for all those who serve honorably in the law enforcement profession, to include the leaders, officers, and deputies who serve the communities of Anne Arundel County. Just as strongly, we support and advocate for the Constitutionally-guaranteed rights of private citizens who seek governmental transparency and accountability.

It is unfortunate that efforts to reform policing are seen as an attack on law enforcement rather than as a good faith effort to make it better, garner more trust, and build and strengthen police-community relationships. The Constitution doesn't prioritize the rights of one category of citizens over another. Nor should our County Council.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that all persons living and working in Anne Arundel County are treated with respect and free from harassment, insults, threats and violence. The "efforts, best practices, and beneficial policy changes that have been put forth and adopted" as referenced in the resolution may well serve as models in our County's effort to effect needed reform and accountability.

Community response to this resolution demonstrates that there's more work to be done. LWVAAC urges County Council to vote against Resolution 47-20 as introduced.

Support _____ Oppose X No position _____