



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TENNESSEE

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League of Women Voters commends the 2016 Tennessee Election Process

The League of Women Voters of Tennessee commends the election process in Tennessee. Their assessment is based on a statewide poll watching project. During the November election, League volunteers observed polling precincts in districts across the state and saw no evidence that illegal votes were cast. The league's observers also overwhelmingly reported well run precincts with professional and courteous workers.

This week Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett noted a few irregularities that were reported by county election commissions in Tennessee during the three 2016 election cycles. More than 4.3 million votes were cast by Tennesseans in 2016; county election commissions identified only 42 allegations of irregularities during that time period. How many of these few cases are actual voting fraud will be determined through investigations by local district attorneys.

"Based on the observations of our volunteers in 2016 and earlier election cycles, we know that many of these reported issues stem from voter misinformation or confusion rather than fraudulent intent. For example, there are situations in which elderly voters come on Election Day, having forgotten that they have already voted during the early voting period," stated Marian Ott, President of the League of Women Voters of Tennessee.

These cases have been mischaracterized as "voter fraud." However that term should be limited to situations in which there is a clear intent to defraud. The League also noted that none of the identified irregularities were situations involving voter impersonation.

As the U.S. League of Women Voters president, Chris Carson stated emphatically, "We know that wide-spread voter fraud is a myth perpetuated to push election laws that restrict voting. We cannot allow false claims to drive policies that will limit participation in our election process. ... The issue has been studied and put to rest."

The League of Women Voters of Tennessee is a non-partisan organization that believes the hallmark of our country's democracy is fair and free elections in which all eligible voters can participate. To learn more about the League of Women Voters of Tennessee and to read the "November 2016 Election Poll Watching Report", go to www.lwvtn.org.