



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON**

February 13, 2013

To: House Human Services and Housing Committee
Rep. Carolyn Tomei, Chair

Re: HB 2350 – Relating to Teen Dating Violence - Comments

Chair Tomei and Committee members:

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. Violence Prevention is a position of the National LWV, which supports the active role of government and social institutions in preventing violent behavior.

The League finds it reasonable for the Department of Human Services to survey teens about the prevalence of dating violence. The Public Health Division of the Oregon Health Authority has been involved in many prevention programs for risky behaviors, and dating violence fits in the prevention mission. Teen dating violence can be seen as a precursor to adult domestic violence patterns. The early education and awareness of these patterns can prevent emotional and physical injuries for teens and young adults.

However, the League is not in favor of new court fees to fund this prevention effort. During the last sessions, the Ways and Means Public Safety Committee revised the court fee schedules by including all the existing fees in the new schedules. Since this new fee schedule has been streamlined, we question resuming the practice of adding on new fees. Instead, it might be better to apply for grants to fund the study and survey of the teen dating prevalence. Most recently the Public Health Division applied for grants for Maternal Mental Health education, and teen dating violence prevention may be funded by federal or private grants.

The League supports the goal of teen dating violence prevention and encourages the state agencies to look for appropriate funding sources for this effort. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robin Wisdom".

Robin Wisdom
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen J. Nibler".

Karen Nibler
Social Policy Coordinator