



*Defending democracy. Empowering Voters.*

**LWVRI Written Testimony Submitted in Support of H. 7303,  
A Resolution Related to Same Day Voter Registration**

Chair Shanley and Members of the Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Rhode Island (LWVRI)<sup>1</sup> supports H. 7303, which would allow the voters to decide whether to remove the 30-day advance registration rule from the State Constitution. If voters approve the measure, the General Assembly will establish new voter registration policies in a future legislative session.

Same-day registration is a hallmark of modern elections. Rhode Island already has implemented automatic and online registration, mail ballots, and early voting. Updating our outdated deadline system is the logical next step. Election officials support this change, including the Secretary of State, Board of Elections, and Town and City Clerks Association. It's time to remove unnecessary barriers and ensure all Rhode Islanders can fully participate in elections.

As you know, Rhode Island has one of the most restrictive voter registration deadlines in the country. It is one of only 10 states that requires voter registration at least 30 days in advance of the election. Historically, the rationale for a requirement to register in advance of voting was that it was necessary to give election officials time to create accurate lists of eligible voters. Technological advances and the digitization of voting rolls, however, have rendered this rationale anachronistic. Same-day registration encourages new voters to enter the process and allows existing voters to update or correct errors in their registration.

Research shows that same-day registration boosts voter participation without raising significant issues. Today, unregistered Rhode Islanders may vote only for president and vice president at certain, designated polling places on Election Day. More than 9,000 people took advantage of this option to cast ballots in the top-of-the-ticket race in 2024. While some may point to that process as a "fix" to the 30-day registration requirement, it is wholly inadequate to the task of encouraging more citizens to vote in every election and in all contested races.

We urge this Committee and the General Assembly to approve H. 7303 so that the question may be put before voters and if approved, acted on by the Legislature.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Gene Thompson-Grove  
President  
League of Women Voters Rhode Island

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<sup>1</sup> The LWVRI is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering voters and defending democracy. Through education, advocacy, and civic education, LWVRI works to ensure that every Rhode Islander can participate fully in the democratic process.