



Testimony HB22-1086
Vote Without Fear

Thank you Chairman Kennedy and distinguished members of the committee,

My name is Jan Moorman, representing the League of Women Voters of Colorado.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to advocate today in support of House Bill 1086.

The League is a nonpartisan organization that:

- Encourages informed and active participation in government and
- Influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League focuses on government issues chosen by members for study and ultimate action including legislative lobbying. These positions were arrived at by grassroots consensus. Our Colorado membership spans the state with 19 local leagues. I am with the local league here on the Western Slope in Mesa County.

I would like to start by pointing out a need for clarity in what constitutes voter intimidation, evident through the tale of two Colorado counties in 2020:

- In Arapahoe County police were called after voters reported that two men, one of whom was armed, stood near a ballot box in Littleton and filmed voters who came to drop off their ballots. Arapahoe County Elections Director involved law enforcement because of concerns from voters who felt unsafe. (9News, Littleton)
- In Mesa County, election volunteers raised concerns about people with guns in polling place parking lots. A supervisor responded that 'These armed individuals were helping the police' and the Mesa County Clerk and Recorder voiced her opinion that people with guns 'would be protecting them if any violence occurs.' (Anne Landman, a Western Slope journalist/blogger)

Two different interpretations of whether open carry constitutes intimidation.

- The League believes that all voters in Colorado deserve the same protections regardless of their zip code. Every citizen should be protected in the right to vote. We oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

- The League believes local governments should be accountable, responsive . . . and effective.
- The League supports regulation of firearms to ensure voter safety.

The League believes that allowing individuals to open carry guns near polling places runs the real risk of voter suppression through intimidation. We also believe that allowing individuals to open carry guns near polling places impacts the essential poll workers sense of safety.

We are asking you to support HB22-1086 to provide the clarity needed to existing statutes.

Thank you,
Jan Moorman, LWVCO Legislative Action Committee