February 21, 2017

To: Representative Margaret Doherty, Chair
   House Committee on Education

Re: HB 2219 and HB 2691 re Civics Education, Comment

We appreciate that both Democrat and Republican sponsors see value in Civics Education.

The League of Women Voters has supported Civics Education for many decades and has provided free classroom materials for voluntary Civics Education and Mock Elections across the state. We acknowledge that both these bills allow broad latitude without imposing harsh mandatory graduation requirements. Additionally, we know that with the looming deficit for funding existing education and safety net social services this biennium, now is not the time to impose additional expenses or requirements on individual school districts, the state Department of Education, or individual students.

We commend voluntary efforts of school districts to offer opportunities for civics education. We acknowledge that Oregon Department of Education for Oregon Social Sciences Academic Content Standards has already developed core standards and grade level standards in kindergarten through high school in civics education. Therefore, we do not see the need for either of these bills. The intent is already being met.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Norman Turrill
LWVOR President

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LWVOR Education Policy Coordinator