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**CGA Energy and Technology Committee
Public Hearing – February 19, 2019**

SUPPORT FOR

SB 6 – AAC NET NEUTRALITY PRINCIPLES AND INTERNET PRIVACY

**Submitted by Pua Ford, Media Issues Specialist
League of Women Voters of Connecticut**

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut appreciates the opportunity today to offer support for Committee Bill SB 6. Our support is based on the position adopted by our membership in May 2008.

A Neutral Internet: "Net Neutrality"

The LWVCT believes that a free and open Internet is increasingly important to the protection of individual liberties – freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of association – guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and by the Connecticut Constitution. The League also believes that net neutrality protections are essential for political discourse, dissemination of news, and democratic participation. Therefore, the League of Women Voters of Connecticut supports the 2006 LWVUS resolution to protect the open, neutral, nondiscriminatory nature of the Internet. To further this position, the LWVCT supports efforts by the State of Connecticut to protect the open, neutral, nondiscriminatory nature of the Internet.

We submitted testimony last year in support of the nearly identical SB 2 (AAC Internet Service Providers and Net Neutrality Principles). Our support remains the same as last year. We attach that testimony for your review.

We hope that this year's bill receives the committee's Joint Favorable vote and goes forward for passage in the rest of legislature. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONNECTICUT, INC.[®]

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**CGA Energy and Technology Committee
Public Hearing – March 8, 2018**

SUPPORT FOR

SB 2 AAC Internet Service Providers and Net Neutrality Principles

**Submitted by Pua Ford, Media Issues Specialist
League of Women Voters of Connecticut**

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut appreciates the opportunity today to offer support for Committee Bill SB 2 (LCO No. 1844), based on the position adopted by our membership in May 2008.

A Neutral Internet: "Net Neutrality"

The LWVCT believes that a free and open Internet is increasingly important to the protection of individual liberties – freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of association – guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and by the Connecticut Constitution. The League also believes that net neutrality protections are essential for political discourse, dissemination of news, and democratic participation. Therefore, the League of Women Voters of Connecticut supports the 2006 LWVUS resolution to protect the open, neutral, nondiscriminatory nature of the Internet. To further this position, the LWVCT supports efforts by the State of Connecticut to protect the open, neutral, nondiscriminatory nature of the Internet.

LWVCT supports this bill, which is similar to the bill drafted by the Government Administration and Elections Committee, [HB 5260 AA Requiring State Contractors to Adopt a Net Neutrality Policy](#). We listened to the informational meeting held by this committee on 2/13/18, considered the arguments heard then, and tried to read as much recent news as possible on the issue outside of Connecticut—mainly on the open Internet.

In general, although LWVCT agrees that it would be best for the U.S. Congress to act on the issue, this does not seem likely to happen soon, nor do we trust that the current Congress is willing to codify Net Neutrality principles as clearly as HB 5260 or SB 2.

2018 testimony re SB 2

By pushing these bills forward, Connecticut would give support to the action taken by our Attorney General and other Attorneys General in their Petition for Review on the Federal Communication Commission's repeal of the 2015 Net Neutrality Order.

We considered the argument that the Federal Trade Commission of the Bush and Obama administrations was strong enough to enforce Net Neutrality violations without the 2015 FCC Order. But this is a different administration, with a pronounced aversion to government regulation of business. We read recently that nominations for appointments to the FTC have been made only recently and that seats on that agency have been empty for months: <http://benton.org/blog/trump-ftc-and-internet>

On 2/13, the difference between a regulatory agency (e.g., FCC) and an enforcement agency (FTC) was explained. It makes sense that both agencies need to support clearly-stated Net Neutrality for citizens to be protected: <https://www.publicknowledge.org/press-release/ninth-circuit-decision-reaffirms-ftc-jurisdiction-need-to-restore-net-neutrality-rules>

Industry representatives stated that Net Neutrality principles are included in their clients' current terms and conditions. LWVCT is happy that industry recognizes Net Neutrality is good for business, but recalls that terms and conditions often change, are offered in very small type and dense language. Obviously without clear language, it is difficult for the average citizen-consumer to file a complaint with any agency. We note that in GAE's HB 5260 (lines 37-39), a Net Neutrality policy must "be posted in a prominent and accessible location at the contractor's place of business and on the contractor's Internet website". This is a good start for transparency.

Does adherence to Net Neutrality hinder buildout of broadband infrastructure? We submit that corporations, like our own state government, have to make tough choices. Perhaps shareholders should be credited with the intelligence to recognize that infrastructure investment is good in the long run. At the same time, is the Public Utility Regulatory Authority being provided resources to carry out its role in this bill?

Committee members who keep track of this issue probably know that Washington State passed their own Net Neutrality bill:

<http://lawfilesexxt.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bills/House%20Bills/2282-S.pdf>

We appreciate that SB 2, like Washington's legislation, applies to both wired and wireless Internet Service Providers. We note that Washington's version applies to ISPs there, independent of whether they have contracts with the state government or not.

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut urges this committee to approve SB 2, consider how it may be reconciled with the Government Administration and Election Committee's HB 5260, and further support Net Neutrality and protection of citizen consumers here and throughout the nation.