



February 21, 2023

**RE: HB23-1186 Remote Participation in Residential Evictions - SUPPORT**

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

My name is Kathy Smith, and I am a Volunteer Lobbyist with the League of Women Voters of Colorado's Legislative Action Committee. **I am writing in support of HB23-1186, on behalf of the League's Legislative Action Committee.**

The League of Women Voters of Colorado (LWVCO) has been a nonpartisan organization for 103 years, encourages informed and active participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Our membership spans the state of Colorado with 19 local leagues operating in several regions around the state.

The LWVCO supports policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every person, and equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Currently, when a tenant does not appear for an eviction court proceeding, a default judgment is automatically entered against them, and the tenant is evicted without a hearing. Many tenants face significant barriers to appearing in person for eviction proceedings, including work, child care, transportation, and living with a disability. Tenants living in rural parts of Colorado can be particularly challenged in appearing in person for an eviction, as county courthouses can be located many miles away. The option of remote participation will result in fewer default judgments and an increase in participation.

The bill requires that the court allow either party or any witness to choose to appear in person or remotely (by phone or video) for court proceedings related to residential eviction actions. It also authorizes a defendant to file an Answer electronically, authorizes either party to file a motion or other documents electronically, and prohibits the court from assessing fees for e-filing documents. It requires the court to comply with federal and state regulations regarding accommodations for people with a disability or for people with limited English proficiency. The bill prohibits the court from entering a default judgment if a party is unable to participate remotely due to a technological disconnection or failure. Uniform access to due process and justice requires statewide uniformity for eviction proceedings, which includes having a choice for remote participation and accommodations for people with a disability or people with limited English proficiency.

We urge the committee members to vote YES on HB23-1186. Thank you for your consideration of this important bill.

Respectfully,  
Kathy Smith, Volunteer Lobbyist  
League of Women Voters of Colorado  
1410 Grant Street, Suite B-204  
Denver, CO 80203  
303-863-0437