



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of ILLINOIS**

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February 6, 2015

To: Cook County Board of Commissioners

Re: Resolution Urging the Illinois General Assembly to Pass HB 172 To Restore Judicial Discretion in the Transfer of Juveniles to Adult Court.

I write on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Illinois in support of this resolution.

The League has long opposed the automatic transfer of children to the criminal court and believes that a juvenile court judge should determine whether a case is considered in the juvenile court or the criminal court

Juveniles are different. Because they are still immature, they often act without thinking of consequences. However, with proper treatment, they have tremendous capacity for change. Transferring a juvenile to adult court often closes the door to a good future for that juvenile.

A juvenile judge is more able to consider the relevant issues such as: age, criminal history, whether there is a history of abuse, whether there are mental health issues, etc. These, of course, are weighed against the need for public safety.

Allowing a juvenile judge to make the decision does not mean a juvenile will not be transferred to adult court. We simply believe that a juvenile deserves to be heard in a setting where the juvenile's particular circumstances are best understood.

The General Assembly will be considering this bill, HB 172. The League of Women Voters urges the Cook County Board of Commissioners to lend its support to the passage of HB 172.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Kubasak

President, League of Women Voters of Illinois

