



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WISCONSIN  
EDUCATION FUND

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August 17, 2011

Rep. Karl Van Roy, Chair  
Assembly Committee on Homeland Security & State Affairs  
Room 204 North  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8953  
Madison, WI 53708

Re: Public hearing for AJR 52

Dear Representative Van Roy:

Earlier this year many Wisconsin residents were shocked when the state Supreme Court concluded that the state's Open Meetings law did not apply to the state Legislature. Because the legislature historically has acted in compliance with the law, citizens reasonably expected it to continue to do so. After all, Wisconsin has been known as a "good government" state with ample opportunity for citizens to know what their elected leaders are doing and to participate in the process. As Chair of the Assembly Committee on Homeland Security and State Affairs, you have the opportunity to affirm Wisconsin's good government reputation by holding a public hearing for Assembly Joint Resolution 52.

AJR 52 requires the legislature to enact laws requiring reasonable notice of and public access to meetings of governmental bodies, including the legislature, and making members of the legislature subject to citations and civil penalties for violations of such laws. This is the first consideration of this proposed amendment to the state constitution. It must be passed by two consecutive state legislatures and then approved by voters.

The League of Women Voters has long held positions supporting the citizen's right to know and encouraging citizen participation in government. We believe AJR 52 clearly affirms in the state constitution the basic transparency and public access that Wisconsin residents expect in their government. It merits a public hearing and a vote by your committee.

We urge you to schedule a public hearing in the near future for AJR 52.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melanie G. Ramey".

Melanie G. Ramey  
President