

**House State, Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs**

**04/07/2025 01:30 PM**

**HB25-1319 County Commissioner Vacancies**

**Typed Text of Testimony Submitted**

<b>Name, Position, Representing</b>	<b>Typed Text of Testimony</b>
<p>Celeste Landry Amend League of Women Voters of Colorado</p>	<p>The League of Women Voters of Colorado is asking for amendments to HB25-1319 regarding vacancies in the Office of County Commissioner.</p> <p>LWV is pleased that the bill sponsors want to hold an election rather than allow a vacancy committee appointment to serve more than one year. However, LWV is asking that the bill be amended in 3 ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Allow any elector, regardless of party, to run in the special vacancy election as long as they meet the qualifications to serve as a county commissioner,</li><li>2) Allow every elector in the county to vote in the special vacancy election, and</li><li>3) Use a better voting method to reduce vote-splitting when there are more than 2 candidates running in the special vacancy election.</li></ol> <p>Opening up the vacancy election to all candidates and all voters, regardless of party, is the way all special elections currently operate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• whether they are held off-cycle to fill a vacancy in the US House of Representatives, as we saw with Ken Buck resigning last year ... or ...</li><li>• whether the special election is held on cycle in the next even-year November after an elected official vacates their seat early in their 4- or 6-year term.</li></ul> <p>Democracy is defined as a system of government by the whole population. In practice, we have some limitations based on citizenship, age and so forth, and an election to choose a political party's nominee may restrict who can cast a ballot based on party.</p> <p>However, any election to fill an office should be open to every elector, regardless of party. When some voters are denied the right to vote, it's called voter disenfranchisement. Colorado doesn't stand for voter disenfranchisement. The Colorado Voting Rights Act doesn't stand for voter disenfranchisement. The U.S. Constitution in the 14th Amendment doesn't stand for voter disenfranchisement, but the 14th Amendment only applies to federal and state offices and doesn't claim jurisdiction over county commissioner seats. Nevertheless, the U.S. Constitution clearly frowns upon disenfranchising voters in elections. LWV asks you to amend the</p>

	<p>“vacancy” special elections in odd years to be as open to candidates and voters as the “regular” special elections in even years.</p> <p>Once all voters and candidates are allowed to participate in the vacancy elections, the question of what voting method to use comes up. Primary elections in even years serve to winnow the candidate field and ensure that candidates represent different parties – BUT with no primary election, all the candidates would run against each other. If the election uses choose-one plurality voting and there are two popular, but similar, candidates, those two candidates could split the vote and allow the least popular candidate to win. The solution is to use a better, more expressive voting method, such as the simple-to-adopt-and-audit approval voting.</p> <p>In conclusion, please support the 3 amendments that the League of Women Voters proposes for this bill.</p>
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