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March 28, 2019

Joe Simitian, Board President
Board of Supervisors, Santa Clara County
70 West Hedding Street, 10th Floor, San Jose, CA 95110
Email: supervisor.simitian@bos.sccgov.org

Dear Supervisor Simitian,

Thank you for supporting the Voter's Choice Act (VCA) during the March 12th Board of Supervisors meeting. The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto (LWVPA) agrees with you that voting is fundamental, and that by giving voters more options for how to vote, the VCA is good for democracy. We hope that the entire board will vote in favor of implementing the VCA in Santa Clara County in 2020!

As you know, the VCA was piloted in five California counties in 2018, and every one of those counties saw a significant increase in turnout.

Some are concerned that implementing the VCA will be expensive. The LWVPA believes the expense will be worth it because expanding voter participation and access to the ballot by underserved and underrepresented communities will make our county and democracy stronger. Moreover, the VCA greatly reduces the number of provisional ballots cast, which will actually provide an unknown cost savings. We are encouraged that the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters plans to engage in a significant amount of outreach to explain the new law, and the League of Women Voters pledges to help as much as possible with these outreach efforts.

Choice works best for democracy. Providing mail-in ballots to all voters is not enough by itself. Such ballots get lost or damaged; people move and need to make use of same-day voter registration; voters who are registered without a party preference may need to visit a Vote Center to request a crossover ballot in order to vote in the presidential primary; and some people just prefer the in-person voting experience. Choice is good.

Yes, the VCA might cost a bit more, but as you've said, voting is fundamental. The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto supports the VCA because it empowers voters and makes our elections more democratic for all.

Thank you again for your support of the VCA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aisha Piracha-Zakariya".

Aisha Piracha-Zakariya
President, League of Women Voters Palo Alto