EXHIBIT 8
DATE 2-17-05
HB 590

LWV League of Women Voters of Montana HB 590
2/16/05

Mr. Chairman, Members of House State Administration Committee,

The League of Women Voters of Montana is in support of HB 590.

The League is a nonpartisan organization whose mission is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in their government. We support HB 590 because it makes voting more accessible for more Montanans, maintains current security and is practically feasible.

Under current law, a voter who missed last November's general federal election and does not respond to two address correction notices may not vote in the May school election, the fall city primary and general elections, or any special election. HB 590 will allow those voters to either vote absentee or at the polls. These are not new voters, but lapsed voters who previously qualified as legal voters. They are qualified to vote in the next federal election in 2007.

Reactivation of voters is practically feasible. There is no need to wait until the statewide voter registration system is up and running in 2006. Names of both active and inactive voters are in every register at the polls, allowing poll workers to quickly verify that citizens have a legal right to vote in their precinct. This bill would allow electors on the inactive list to notify the election office of any change in their name or address at the polls before they vote just as electors on the active list are currently able to do.

We urge you to support the voting rights of Montanans by voting "Do pass" for HB590

Thank you.

Teresa Jacobs, Chair, Legislative Steering Committee
for the League of Women Voters of Montana
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