FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The League of Women Voters of Florence and Darlington Counties and The League of Women Voters of South Carolina to PARTNER with Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority to HIGHLIGHT URGENT NEED TO INVEST IN the area’s TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Communities Across the Nation Unite to Emphasize Need for Long-term Investment in U.S. Transportation Infrastructure before Expiration of Federal Transportation Bill on May 31

Infrastructure is the collection of physical facilities that permit business and commerce to exist and flourish. It comprises all of the variously interconnected systems and services that serve as the underpinning of society; those that facilitate our daily activities and those that promote our collective engagement in commerce.

Despite its importance, the only time we generally think about infrastructure is when it fails or is absent – the collapse of a bridge, contamination of a water supply, a sustained power blackout, insurmountable and costly traffic congestion, failure of a communications network, or overcrowded buses and trains in communities unable to afford to maintain a state of good repair. We completely ignore infrastructure when it works as intended, and we complain mightily when it doesn’t. Our nation and our local communities need to continually modernize and maintain the infrastructure to make the country and the Pee Dee Region an attractive place for businesses to operate and for people to live. This requires collective action and sustained public investment in infrastructure, notably at the federal level.

The individual resolve and advocacy by our congressional leaders for a long-term transportation funding bill has not resonated because it has not resulted in collective action by Congress in this crucial area that is so important to its citizens. The current transportation funding bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP 21), was a two-year bill that authorized $10.6 billion in FY 2013 and $10.7 billion in FY 2014 for federal transit programs administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). MAP 21 also authorized just over $40 billion annually for highway programs administered by the Federal Highway Administration. MAP 21 authorized a variety of programs that address different transportation needs, specified how funds can be used and set formulas for their distribution. It did not provide any increase in dedicated funding for public transit or highways, despite the fact that current dedicated revenues going into the Highway Trust Fund will not fully fund even current levels for public transit or highway programs in future years. As the Pee Dee area grows, transportation projects and public transit require adequate funding to keep pace.

In recognition of the need to encourage more investment in transportation, the League of Women Voters of Florence and Darlington counties is partnering with the Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority to bring attention to transit’s critical importance to our communities. Hundreds of students, employees, seniors, people with disabilities and others depend on our public transportation system to get them to school, to work, to medical appointments and more. Join us on April 9 to bring attention to the need to provide better funding for this important community service that is so vital to the economic health of our region.
WHO: The League of Women Voters of Florence and Darlington Counties and Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority

WHERE: Florence-Darlington Technical College, Bus Shelter at Lot A

Directions: Enter the FDTC campus off of US 52 (Lucas St.) at its far left entrance, where you see an SIMT sign. Continue on the road to a fork; go right at the fork. The bus shelter will be on your right.

In event of rain, location is lobby of SIMT building on the FDTC campus.

WHEN: April 9, 2015 at 2 p.m.

For more information about Stand Up 4 Transportation Day, visit www.standup4transportation.org or engage on Twitter using #StandUp4Transportation.

For more information about the April 9 local event, contact Dyan Cohen at dyanrc@gmail.com or via telephone at 843-307-1525.