



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF EAST NASSAU

Voter

www.lwvofeastnassau.org

info@lwvofeastnassau.org

*At local, state and national levels
the League works to influence public policy
through education and advocacy.*

November 2015

Please join us

on Wednesday, November 18th, at 7:30 pm
at the Levittown Library, to discuss

Juvenile Justice Issues in New York State

After a brief presentation, we will have a discussion and decide whether to come to concurrence with the following important sections of the current LWV of Ohio Juvenile Justice Position.

1. Children under the age of 18 are not adults and their treatment within the juvenile justice and criminal court system should relate to their stage of development.
2. Children should not be held in adult jails.
3. Rehabilitation is the purpose of the juvenile justice system.
4. The legal rights of children should be protected.



If a statewide concurrence is reached, these principles will form the LWVNYS position on Juvenile Justice.

Please read the articles on Juvenile Justice in previous issues of the VOTER and come to the meeting to listen to the report of the committee, to discuss the issue, and to help us determine if our members concur with the Ohio position.

After our concurrence meeting, we will have a brief report by the Money in Politics consensus study committee, and if time permits, a brief discussion. Please read the Money in Politics articles in this issue prior to the meeting. The consensus meeting on this topic is planned for January 20.

SAVE THE DATES

Wednesday, November 18, 7:30 pm

LWVEN Juvenile Justice Concurrence Meeting
See notice above.

Wednesday, December 2, 7:30 PM

LWVEN Board Meeting, Levittown Library

Friday, December 4, 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

2015 Groundwater Symposium – A Thoughtful Discussion on Groundwater Protection and Management, sponsored by Water for LI - South Huntington Public Library, 145 Pidgeon Hill Rd, Huntington Station, NY. (For additional information, contact Paula: 516-785-3213.)

Tuesday, December 8, 6:30 pm

LWVNC Board Meeting, Hempstead Library

Tuesday, December 15,

LWVEN Holiday Luncheon, NC Bar Association.
Gail D. Berg will discuss *Women and the Law*.
See page 6 for details and registration form.

Wednesday, January 20, 3:30 pm

LWVEN – Book Discussion - *My Beloved World*, by Sonia Sotomayor, and *consensus meeting on Money in Politics*.

The State League Needs You!

The LWVNYS is looking for volunteers for three different issues-related committees. Please email Laura Bierman (Laura@lwvny.org) with any questions about these committees.

The first is a **study committee for the Legislative Procedures update**. The update would be focused on two aspects of League's current position in particular, although it might consider other parts:

1. the reference to a part-time legislature
2. the ambiguous reference to length of terms.

A recent LWVUS announcement interpreted the Meeting Basic Human Needs position to permit state and local Leagues to lobby in support of raising state or local minimum wages or adopting a living wage position. The state League is forming a committee of League volunteers **to look at the issue and possibly make a recommendation on a state minimum wage** to the Board. For more information on the living wage concurrence Carol Mellor: Grassroots Lobby Director (Carolmellor140@gmail.com).

The state League is also forming a **long-range program planning committee to look at the last decade or two of program planning**, what studies and updates were undertaken, the effort involved and the results. Please email or call the state office (Katrina@lwvny.org or 518-465-4162) if you are interested in serving on any (or all) of these committees.

Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria

It appears that dangerous infections resistant to antibiotics are spreading and growing stronger. According to Consumer Reports "antibiotic-resistant bacteria can develop anytime the drugs are used on farms, in hospitals, or in doctors' or dentists' offices." Some of the ways in which these medications are misused are:

- when the drugs are used to treat viral illnesses, not only those caused by bacteria;
- when doctors prescribe drugs just to satisfy patient demand;
- when doctors prescribe antibiotics instead of waiting a few days to see if mild symptoms clear themselves; and
- when doctors reach too quickly for broad-spectrum drugs that attack multiple bacteria types which may then wipe out protective bacteria.

Patients can play an important role in making sure that antibiotics are used only when necessary by not insisting that doctors prescribe an antibiotic for viral infections; by asking if you can fight an infection without drugs; by requesting that doctors prescribe drugs that actually target the identified bacteria; by using antibiotic creams sparingly; and finally by staying up to date on vaccinations and making sure to wash hands thoroughly and regularly, before preparing food, after using the bathroom and when treating a wound, handling garbage, coughing and sneezing. (Harriet Slivka, LWV White Plains)

LWVUS Money in Politics (MIP) Review and Update
















As adopted by delegates to the 2014 LWVUS Convention, Leagues from across the nation are engaging in a review and update of the national LWV position on campaign finance to consider First Amendment political speech issues. The LWVEF Board tasked the Money In Politics Review and Update Committee to:

- Conduct an update of the League's position on campaign finance.
- Evaluate the extent to which political campaigns are protected speech under the First Amendment.

So, why is the League updating the position on campaign finance? Our current position dates back to the 1970s and predates Supreme Court decisions that changed campaign finance law significantly. The MIP Review and Update will address a gap in our current position. It aims to get League member understanding and agreement as to the extent to which our organization believes that financing a political campaign is speech protected by the First Amendment. Leagues are being asked to consider through the consensus process: the rights of individuals and organizations to express their political views through the financing of political campaign activities; and how those rights, if any, should be protected and reconciled with the interests set out in the current LWV position.

Please join us for a brief report on Money in Politics at our November meeting, and for a consensus meeting on the topic at our January 20th meeting.

The League of Women Voters,® a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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LWV Action on Money in Politics

Year in and year out since 1974, the League has fought for comprehensive campaign finance reform to address the abuses in the existing system, supporting bills that curbed special-interest contributions and provided public financing for candidates who accepted voluntary spending limits. The League has called for limits to PAC and large contributor donations, for closing the soft-money loophole. The League also vigorously supports a strong and effective Federal Election Commission.

The League continues to look for ways to limit the size and type of contributions from all sources as a means of combating undue influence in the election process. League action on this issue is built on a careful assessment of all proposed changes in campaign finance law. The League continues to assess proposals that allow challenger and incumbent candidates to compete more equitably. The League favors shortening the time period between primaries and general elections.

The League continues its support for comprehensive reform through multiple channels: lobbying, testimony, grassroots action, and work with the media. Members push for voluntary spending limits; public benefits, such as reduced-cost broadcasting and postal services, for participating candidates; aggregate limits on the total amounts candidates can receive in PAC and large individual contributions; and closing the loopholes that allow huge amounts of special-interest money to influence the system...

The League expended incredible effort in the five-year campaign for the McCain-Feingold-Shays-Meehan bill, which reached fruition when President Bush signed the legislation into law. The bill, known as the *Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA)*, closed the most significant loopholes in campaign finance regulation – the "soft money" loophole that allowed unlimited corporate, union, and individual contributions, and the "sham" issue ad loophole that allowed undisclosed contributions to campaign advertising advocating particular candidates. The League was instrumental in developing this approach and pushing it – at the grassroots and in Congress – to final enactment.

In more recent Congresses, the League has lobbied actively for the passage of the "Disclose Act" which would close the disclosure loopholes that are allowing outside groups to make secret contributions in federal elections.

The League has also used litigation strategies to advance and protect campaign finance reform by filing *amicus curiae* briefs, or joining in those of others. The League filed *amicus* briefs in both the *Citizens United v. FEC* and *McCutcheon v. FEC* cases in support of minority views on the Court.

Of course, litigation has recently overturned significant aspects of what has been achieved over the years with the *Citizens United v. FEC* case. The impact of *Citizens United* has dramatically changed the political landscape, and the League's current work is directed towards finding feasible ways to correct the massive problems created by the decision. Further inroads were made by the *McCutcheon v. FEC* decision.

Why Money in Politics Matters to the League

Money in politics matters because the goal of campaigning is to convince voters either for or against a candidate or issue. Thus, campaigning is ultimately about communication. In our modern age, this includes speech and money. It is very important to continually keep combining campaign, communication, free speech, and money in our thinking.

Purpose of a Campaign Finance System

A campaign finance system is intended to control and limit the money spent on election campaigns. Why do that? The first reason is to protect the right of voters to know who is spending money to influence their vote. The second reason is to prevent corruption. The only corruption that the current U.S. Supreme Court acknowledges is *quid pro quo* which, in the context of political campaign finance, refers to an explicit agreement by a candidate or elected official to perform a specific act in exchange for something of value. But reformers believe that money in politics should be controlled because it may allow undue access or influence. Third, reformers want to control money out of a belief that unlimited spending gives an unfair advantage to candidates and spenders. Finally, there is a concern that the rise in spending corrupts representative government by downplaying the role of the voters and allowing for unfair competition, possibly leading to lower voter turnout.

Conclusion

Whatever else it may or may not have done, the United States Supreme Court's decisions in the 2010 *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* and the 2014 *McCutcheon, et al. v. FEC* cases galvanized the campaign finance reform movement. Any education and discussion of these issues must attempt to be comprehensive, which means complex. The task of the Money in Politics Committee is to make the issues understandable to the members of LWV and all citizens. Work done by the 2012-2014 LWVUS Campaign Finance Task Force and LWV of Massachusetts Campaign Finance Study Committee (presented at the LWVUS Convention in June 2014) contributed immensely to this project.

LWVNC POST-ELECTION SUPPER

Thursday, November 12, 2015

Light meal and a lively discussion with commentary on the election results by

Newsday Columnist

JOYE BROWN

Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock

48 Shelter Rock Road, Manhasset, NY 11030

(Exit 27 North on Northern State Pkwy. Drive north on Shelter Rock Road approximately one and a half miles. UU Congregation is on the left. If you reach Northern Blvd., you've gone too far.)

\$20.00/person

Doors Open at 6:00 pm • Buffet Supper at 6:30 pm

For further information call 516-883-0698

If you require a ride to the Supper call Barbara: 516-221-1948

LWVEN HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Tuesday, December 15, 2015

12:00 Noon Sharp



Delicious buffet lunch and lively discussion on

Women and the Law



Gail D. Berg

Director of Pro Bono Attorney Activities, Nassau County Bar Association

Nassau County Bar Association, 15th & West Streets, Mineola, New York 11501, Tel: 747-4070

(Meadowbrook Pkwy to Old Country Rd. westbound, Left on West St. to 15th St.)

\$25/person

For further information: 516-221-1948

Please reserve _____ place(s) for the LWV Holiday Luncheon @ \$25.00 on **Tuesday, December 15.**

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____

NAME: _____ Email: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

I regret I cannot attend the luncheon, but enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____ to LWV of East Nassau.

Please send check, payable to LWV of East Nassau, to:
Barbara Josepher, Treasurer; 339 Cold Spring Road, Syosset 11791

The League of Women Voters of East Nassau

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