



# League Links

## LWV AH-MP-BG Area

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Arlington Heights-Mount Prospect-Buffalo Grove Area  
Including Prospect Heights, Wheeling, and Elk Grove Village, Illinois

We are online at: <http://www.lwvah.org>

November 2012

Volume 58, Issue 4

### Serving our communities since 1955

Our Mission Statement/Purpose: The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



## ACTIVITY CALENDAR



Date	Time	Event
Sunday, Nov. 4		In-person absentee voting begins at the Cook County Clerk's downtown Chicago office.
Monday, Nov. 5		Last day voted mail ballots can be postmarked for acceptance by the Clerk's Office. Also, in-person absentee voting continues at Clerk's downtown Chicago office and 5 suburban courthouses.
<b>Tuesday, Nov. 6</b>		<b>Election Day.</b>
Thursday, Nov. 15	Doors open at 7 pm Meeting at 7:30 pm	"How the Community Feels about Crime" Illinois State's Attorney Kathleen Bankhead Arl. Hts. Historical Society, 110 W. Fremont, AH Free program and community is welcomed.
Now until Nov. 21	M-Th 11 am-4:30 pm Sun 1:00-4:00 pm	"Ballots, Babes, and Beer" exhibit at Raupp Museum, 901 Dunham Ln, Buffalo Grove. Free and open to public. Information: <a href="http://www.bgparks.org">www.bgparks.org</a>
Thursday, Nov 22		Thanksgiving Day
Tuesday, Nov. 27	7 pm	Board meeting at Pat Lindner's. Members are welcomed.
Tuesday – Thursday Nov. 27-29		Illinois Legislature Veto Session
Tuesday – Thursday Dec. 4-6		Illinois Legislature Veto Session
Monday, Jan. 21	7 pm doors open 7:30 pm program	Martin Luther King Commemorative Program Arlington Heights Historical Society
Saturday, Feb. 9	8:30 am – 3:30 pm	LWVIL Annual Issues Briefing. University Center, 525 S. State Street, Chicago.

The League of Women Voters gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the Horner Group in providing all the printing, postage and mailing services for our bulletins.



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## A Message BY and ABOUT

### LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara

**Change of Pace:** Very interesting interview by James Nord of the online *MinnPost* 10-17-12 about the dynamo who is LWVUS President. Traveling to Leagues across the country that have been fighting voter suppression efforts for more than a year, she energizes battle-weary members and promotes the League and voting rights. First 2 questions are below.  
<http://www.minnpost.com/minnpost-asks/2012/10/lwv-president-macnamara-our-goal-ensuring-free-fair-elections-open-every-eli>

Elisabeth MacNamara stopped in Minnesota this week to meet with elections officials as part of a four-state swing. MacNamara, the League's 18<sup>th</sup> president, has been a member since 1983. She recently retired as deputy chief assistant district attorney in DeKalb County, Georgia, where she headed up the office's juvenile court division.

MinnPost: In Minnesota: Photo ID supporters predict the amendment's two main cost drivers will be providing free identification to voters who lack it and educational campaigns to notify voters about changes to the state election system. What has the experience been like in Georgia?

Elisabeth MacNamara: All 159 counties had to be equipped with the equipment, the training, the ongoing training to issue free IDs. Over 26,000 free IDs have had to be issued ... and we've had over 1,500 provisional ballots cast that have not been counted because of ID issues. You've got to weigh that exactly zero cases of voter impersonation fraud have been uncovered as a result of these laws, so in terms of cost benefit, I think that needs to be weighed.

They're not uncovering instances in which Voter ID is necessary, and so the League's position is that this is not, particularly here in Minnesota, where you're being asked to amend your constitution, to put something in your constitution with so little information and so many unanswered questions as to how this is all going to work, what it's going to cost and what the impacts are going to be on your current system, which works really well, and has been proven over and over and over again to work very well. So ... **the best way of ensuring the integrity of any voting system is to make sure that every eligible voter has a free and fair access to the polls.** We do not have a problem with too many people being registered. We have a problem with too few people ... and that is all across the country.

MP: Reports, in Georgia, at least, have shown that neither the rampant voter fraud nor the widespread voter suppression that supporters and opponents have cited exists or have come to pass. In fact, one report showed minority turnout increased...

EM: One of those elections ... was the 2008 election. ... But that's really not necessarily the point. The point is that we are re-jiggering ... our election systems. We're spending money ... We are creating barriers to new voters, to young voters, to elderly voters... And Americans are concerned about the integrity of our electoral process, about politicians manipulating our election laws for their own benefit.

<b>LWVAH-MP-BG BOARD MEMBERS 2012-2013</b>			
<u>Position/Portfolio</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
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#### **OFF-BOARD LEADERS**

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League Geek	Connie Weissman	847-870-7719	connie_weissman@rush.edu

Program Thursday, November 15  
Assistant State's Attorney Kathleen Bankhead  
Southside Community Justice Center



At our League meeting on November 15, Kathleen Bankhead will present information about her office's work on juveniles in the court system, restorative justice, and disparity in punishment. Her presentation will give the audience visual as well as verbal challenges on these issues. Ms. Bankhead is head of the South Side Community Justice Center, 9059 S. Cottage Grove, Chicago.



Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez says the four centers her office has established expand community-based prosecutions programming. This office works closely on the prosecution and prevention of local crime, working with police districts, community groups, schools, businesses and area residents. Community crime prevention meetings on topics such as identity theft, mortgage fraud, gangs, and guns are held within this office.

At the Community Justice Centers, crime victims can utilize the resources of the center to access ongoing court information and to obtain the additional services of the State's Attorney's Victim Witness Unit. The State's Attorney's office will also coordinate informational seminars and host crime prevention meetings at the location. Additionally, a specially trained prosecutor from the office's Mortgage Fraud Investigations and Prosecutions Unit will work at the center to assist local residents affected by mortgage fraud, conducting pro-active mortgage fraud investigations and coordinating takedowns of corrupt appraisers and brokers.

**Come join us!**

**Thursday, November 15 at 7:00pm**  
**Arlington Hts. Historical Museum, 110 W. Fremont, Arlington Hts.**

## Good news! All 4 Presidential Candidates Respond

VOTE411 received responses from all four presidential candidates – Gary Johnson, Barack Obama, Mitt Romney and Jill Stein. Presidential candidate information is available at [www.VOTE411.org](http://www.VOTE411.org). Thanks to input from League members across the country, we were also able to include a question specifically designed for low literacy publications for the first time.

## ORDER YOUR GIFT CARDS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Hanukah are all just around the corner. This is a great time to enhance our League treasury by purchasing gift cards. Purchase gift cards to give as gifts or to use to buy gifts. Purchase gift cards to buy groceries, gas, office supplies, clothing, sports equipment, and much more. Purchase cards to donate to food pantries or homeless shelters. Purchase cards for restaurants where you and your friends like to eat. No matter what cards you purchase you will be assisting League in our fundraising.

You can find the list of vendors in the September League Links, or at our website [www.lwvah.org](http://www.lwvah.org), or contact Nancy Duel at 847-259-3793 or [nduel@aol.com](mailto:nduel@aol.com). If you are interested in a vendor not on the list, just ask, it may be available.

Make checks payable to League of Women Voters. Send orders to Nancy Duel, 115 N Windsor Dr, Arlington Hts, IL 60004. THANK YOU.

## Local Voter Service: Election Season Wrap-up

By Judith O. Royal



### A big thank you to the League members who registered new voters and attended the candidate forums.

Seven of our League members spent a total of 34 hours registering a total of 71 new voters between September 18 and October 8. We did this at Prospect High School, Cedar Village Senior Community, and the Rolling Meadows Court House. Cathy Boykin, Pat Budin, Nancy Duel, Cathy Duoba, Heidi Graham, Pat Lindner, Julie Sass, and Judith Royal were the deputy voter registrars.

Our candidate forums presented on Saturday, October 20, were flawless because of your support and participation. Eight candidates participated. About 40 people attended, including a Daily Herald reporter and a representative of Chicagotalks.org. Twelve (12) League members were there, including two from Palatine League. The following members helped during the forum: Nancy Duel, Susan Fuller, Karin Hribar, Rosemary Krizan, Pat Lindner, Fay Michaelis, and Connie Weissman. We were blessed to have Edith Auchter from Barrington who moderated masterfully.

Although we had no one to make posters, our event was announcement on the TribLocal and Daily Herald websites, in the Daily Herald, on the Village's electronic board at the corner of Northwest Highway and Arlington Heights Road. Email announcements were sent to members and friends in the local districts. Judith Royal narrated a PSA announcing the event; it was shown on WOW channel 6 and Comcast channel 17 on local access TV. Also our event was listed on [www.lwvah.org](http://www.lwvah.org) and at [www.lwvil.org](http://www.lwvil.org).

Because of Kevin Corcoran's diligence and commitment to support our mission to educate and inform voters, he broadcast our candidate forum live and video taped every panel for rebroadcast daily on cable TV. He set up a link just for our League--<http://www.lwv.on-the-web.tv> --on YouTube where voters and our hard-working League members can watch what they missed during the event. Within the first two days of YouTube exposure, the site had been reviewed several times. Our webmaster Connie Weissman linked our website calendar to these YouTube sites.

A special thank you to Village of Arlington Heights for allowing League and the candidates to use the Village Hall, to Edith Auchter, and to Kevin Corcoran of Lorelle Communications, Inc. for his commitment to excellence and helping to make democracy work.

**Relax now. Enjoy the holidays.**

**But remember voter registration starts again on February 28 for the April election.**



### Voter Suppression Efforts Reach Illinois LWVIL Joins the Fight



LWVIL President Jan Dorner, on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Illinois, signed a letter, joining the Chicago Lawyers Committee on Civil Rights Under Law (who drafted the letter) and seven other organizations, to the election official in the following counties (counties *True the Vote* has targeted): Adams, Alexander, Bureau, Clark, Clinton, Crawford, Cumberland, DeWitt, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Jersey, LaSalle, Marion, Massac, Menard, Mercer, Ogle, Piatt, Pulaski, Richland, Rock Island, Stark, Union, Wabash, and White.

**“ We are writing to you because we are aware that a letter from the organization True the Vote claims your County is in violation of the National Voter Registration Act (“NVRA”) and threatens legal action if certain steps are not taken in response. We represent a coalition of national and state based voting rights organizations, which collectively bring extensive experience supporting local and statewide election officials in the fair and legal administration of elections. We write to advise you of serious inaccuracies and omissions in True the Vote's letter and to clarify that pursuant to the NVRA, no systematic voter removal program may be undertaken prior to November 6, including one triggered by a mass mailing.”**

# ELECTIONS

**“free, fair elections open to every eligible voter”**



National Voter Registration Day:  
A Success of Many Levels

## LWV AHMPBG at Rolling Meadows Courthouse

The National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) was an incredible success! On last count from the NVRD website, more than 3,600 volunteers registered more than 180,000+ voters and still counting (as of these Oct 4<sup>th</sup> totals, only 40% of Leagues have reported numbers). Among the more than 1,000 groups that participated, League volunteers made up a major portion of the “workforce” that made National Voter Registration Day such a success nationwide. Members from 249 Leagues across the country registered voters all day long, often in multiple venues

### Local Leaguer Fights Successfully for a Frustrated Eligible Voter

Mr. Isidro approached League member Julie Sass as she registered voters at the Rolling Meadows courthouse on NVRD. Seems he had tried to register several times over the years, but his application was always rejected because he is a janitor at a church and lives, in a separate building, on the church’s property in DuPage County. Julie took the gentleman upstairs to the Cook County Clerk’s office where a supervisor promised to talk directly to her DuPage counterpart and smooth out the situation. Julie wished Mr. Isidro well and gave him her contact information.

Several weeks later, Mr. Isidro contacted Julie: he had been rejected AGAIN. Julie being Julie, she went directly to the DuPage County Supervisor of Registrations, Mrs. Rocky Lofendo. Last week, Julie received an email from Mrs. Lofendo: *Julie, Just wanted to let you know that I have been in contact with Isidro, the gentleman who has been rejected several times. He is coming in here tomorrow and registering and voting. I have taken care of the address issue.*

**Kudos to Julie Sass and her persistence**

**THAT’S what a fighter for “free, fair elections open to every eligible voter” acts like!**



### The League, the Media and National Voter Registration Day

The League received incredible media coverage and a great deal of visibility stemming from National Voter Registration Day. The LWVUS website carries many news clips, along with stories from Aurora, CO, Charlotte, NC, and Purdue, IN.

League President Elisabeth MacNamara wrote a new Huffington Post blog post on NVRD, which was quoted in subsequent articles. LWVUS Sr. Director for Elections Jeanette Senecal was interviewed on the local Fox affiliate and by Jennifer Granholm of The War Room, Current TV. Deputy Executive Director Zaida Arguedas appeared on Univision in both national and local news stories. League joined Voto Latino, Fem 2.0, actress Rosario Dawson and other partners in a Tweet Chat to set the stage for the nationwide event.

### LWVUS Running Online Voter Registration Ad

Before time ran out to register to vote and to make sure League reached as many people as possible and encouraged them to register, the League of Women Voters Education Fund ran online ads in targeted states to direct potential voters to VOTE411.org and its voter registration tool.





# VOTER SUPPRESSION

## Another Series of Mostly Successful Fights...

By Cathy Duoba from LWVUS emails

From an email I sent to a nervous friend: "more heartening news about voter suppression efforts. It seems every new restrictive voter law has been thrown out by the courts with only one exception (early voting restrictions in those Florida counties not covered by the Voting Rights Act, Sec 5). South Carolina was the last one standing and that went down 2 weeks ago. So all the effort the Right Wing extremists put into these illegal maneuvers to try to steal the election has come to (almost) naught.

### The Court Battles

Leagues were involved in court cases around the country, which will have a direct impact on who can vote and how they can vote in November. With weeks to go before Election Day, there are still decisions coming from the courts, most importantly in battleground states like PA, OH, NH, and WI.

### Voter ID

**Wisconsin:** The state Supreme Court declined - for now - to take up lower court orders blocking Wisconsin's voter ID law, the latest sign the law likely will not be in place for the November 6 election.

**Ohio:** On October 16<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Supreme Court cleared the way for voters in Ohio to cast ballots on the three days before Election Day.

**Pennsylvania:** On October 2, a Pennsylvania Court ruled that voters will not need to show a photo ID in order to vote in November. This is only a temporary injunction: The court will make a final decision after the election. Congratulations to LWVPA, the lead organizational plaintiff in the case, joined by LWVUS. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court had said it will tolerate "no voter disenfranchisement," when it sent the case back to a lower court to decide whether the state is doing enough to get photo ID cards to voters who need them.

**Arizona:** The Court has agreed to hear arguments related to proof of citizenship and registration.

**South Carolina:** Final arguments were heard by a three-judge panel in Washington DC. Afterwards this U.S. Federal District Court blocked implementation of the state's new voter photo identification law for the November 6th general election, but pre-cleared the law so it will be implemented in 2013. It was a nuanced decision; from the LWVUS and LWVSC joint press release:

*"Specifically, in future elections, voters who do not have a required form of photo ID will still be able to vote so long as they sign an affidavit stating the reason for not having obtained a photo ID.*

*"We are pleased that this court has applied common sense and blocked the state of South Carolina from requiring photo ID from all eligible voters on November 6... "Voting is the one time all citizens have an equal say in molding our collective future here in South Carolina and across this great country. Barriers such as photo ID threaten that equality."*

### Voter Registration and Ballot Applications

**Michigan:** A federal judge ordered Michigan Secretary of State Ruth Johnson to remove a U.S. citizenship question from ballot applications for the November 6 election, citing potential confusion and inconsistent use of the inquiry. Johnson wanted to require the check-off box even after the legislation was vetoed by the governor earlier this year.

**New Hampshire:** The state's highest court blocked the use of a new voter registration form for the November 6 election. The form would likely have dissuaded college students from voting.

### Voter Purges

**Florida:** In a partial victory for voter rights' groups, Florida residents mistakenly removed from the voter rolls this year (because the state classified them as noncitizens) will be returned to the rolls and allowed to vote in November.

### LWVUS Testifies at Senate Hearing

Earlier this month, League President Elisabeth MacNamara testified at the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on "The Citizens United Court and the Continuing Importance of the Voting Rights Act". Find her testimony at <http://www.lwv.org/content/testimony-elisabeth-macnamara-lwvus-president-us-senate-committee-judiciary>

## But Is the Damage Already Done?

By Cathy Duoba from news media reports

A Reuters' story noted the quandary "third-party" registration groups faced when Florida's restrictive voter registration law was finally blocked only weeks before the November election: "Groups race against time to get Florida voters registered." The story was widely carried by media outlets. Elisabeth MacNamara, president of the League of Women Voters was quoted in the story, "30 local chapters are registering voters in Florida, trying to make up for lost time. ... 'They are targeting under-served communities,' she said. 'They're working at bus stops, community colleges, baseball games, naturalization ceremonies and other events.'"

In Pennsylvania, weeks after the court blocked the state's voter ID law, the state's PR campaign about the new law and at least 5 counties' official websites continued uncorrected, and the state's "VotesPA" voter info phone number recording still stated Voter ID was required to vote as of October 4. In Mississippi, the State's official voter website and billboards across the state continued to state that Voter ID was needed. The correction on the website, inserted around October 23, is just about postage-stamp size. Similar problems were found in Arizona, Colorado, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Also important: any voters who saw/heard these pronouncements for the previous months are, at the least, confused and, at the worst, intimidated.

### Private Money Gets Into the Act

The "secret, angry money" has not just gone to TV ads. Targeted scurrilous mailings are an old story; this year's new wrinkle is mega dollars spent to distribute an anti-Obama movie, 2016: Obama's America with Glenn Beck.



However, a more damaging voter intimidation effort is the appearance of 140-150 billboards in minority and university neighborhoods in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Funded by "a private family foundation", the billboards' message is "Voter Fraud is a Felony...3 ½ years and \$10,000 fine" At first, the billboards' owner, Clear Channel, refused to take down the ads; but after the public outcry increased, agreed to take them down stating the ads violated Clear Channel's policy against anonymous political advertising. Additionally, 10 billboards stating "Voting is a Right, Not a Crime" have appeared in Cleveland, Ohio minority neighborhoods -- courtesy of the Cleveland City Council.



Several prominent employers have publicly acknowledged that, after a conference call with presidential candidate Mitt Romney, they sent letters to their employees stating the outcome of the election would affect the future of the employees' jobs or as one example from time-share mogul, David Siegel, puts it "the economy doesn't currently pose a threat to your job. What does threaten your job, however, is another four years of the same presidential administration...If that happens, you can find me in the Caribbean...retired, with no employees to worry about."

From the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*:

Mike White, the chairman and owner of Rite-Hite, a major Milwaukee manufacturer of industrial equipment, emailed his 1400 employees that "should understand the personal consequences to them of having our tax rates increase dramatically if President Obama is re-elected..." The email, which may conflict with state election law, stunned some employees. One employee said he felt threatened by the email. The email doesn't mention GOP candidate Mitt Romney by name, but the employee said workers felt it was implicit that they were being encouraged to vote for him.

Wisconsin State law states: "No employer or agent of an employer may distribute to any employee printed matter containing any threat, notice or information that if a particular ticket of a political party or organization or candidate is elected ... , work in the employer's place or establishment will cease, in whole or in part, or the place or establishment will be closed, or the salaries or wages of the employees will be reduced, or other threats intended to influence the political opinions or actions of the employees."

According to the *Chicago Tribune*, The Koch brothers have also emailed their employees, but were careful to merely "urge" their employees.



## Fighting Big Money, *Citizens United*

From Public Citizen email 9-22-12

*“democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than their democratic state itself.”* President Franklin D. Roosevelt

A recent survey by the Associated Press and the National Constitution Center shows that 83% of Americans think there should be limits on how much money corporations can give to the outside groups that run so many of the dirty campaign ads polluting our airwaves.

It's not about political parties: 85% of Democrats, 81% of Republicans and 78% of Independents support limiting corporate influence in elections. And it's not about income groups: Among people with household incomes over \$100,000, the number actually goes up to 90%.

Overwhelmingly, We the People — across political and income spectrums — want corporations out of politics. Yet a staggering amount of money is being spent by corporations (on behalf of candidates from both major parties, it must be said) seemingly bent on taking us back to the age of the Robber Barons.

## Democracy is Strengthened by Casting Light on Spending in Elections

D.I.S.C.L.O.S.E. Act of 2012

From [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov) on July 6

**S.2219:** Democracy is Strengthened by Casting Light on Spending in Elections Act of 2012

Sponsor: Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [RI] (introduced 3/21/2012)

**Cosponsors (44): Sen. Durbin - 3/21/2012, Sen. Kirk is not a co-sponsor**

**Latest Major Action:** 3/29/2012 Senate Status: Committee on Rules and Administration. Hearings held.

**LWVUS (and other coalition partners) urge that each of us  
ask our Senators to become co-sponsors of this bill.**



## FAQ on the DISCLOSE Act of 2012

### Q. Why is the DISCLOSE Act needed?

**A.** Following the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*, we have seen a huge increase in election-related advertising through supposedly "independent" expenditures – and most of the money comes from secret sources. Corporations, unions and wealthy individuals can hide the fact that they are funneling tens of millions of dollars into ad campaigns designed to elect or defeat candidates. The DISCLOSE Act would remedy this situation by requiring disclosure.

### Q. Why is disclosure important?

**A.** Voters deserve and need to know the sources of funding for election advertising so they can make informed decisions. Secret campaign money has no place in America's democracy simply because it undermines the role of the voter and corrupts the election process. Voters have a right to know -- whether it is a corporation, union, trade association, or non-profit advocacy group making unlimited campaign expenditures and influencing elections – so they can judge whether to believe the ads.

The League of Women Voters believes Americans deserve all the information they can get before they vote. Tell us where the money is coming from and let the voters decide.

### Q. Is there any other reason for disclosure?

**A.** It is often said that sunlight is the best disinfectant. Disclosure will operate as a deterrent to quid pro quo corruption because it stops the secret spending that could be part of a corrupt arrangement.

### Q. What does the Supreme Court say about campaign finance disclosure?

**A.** On an 8 – 1 vote in the *Citizens United* case, the Supreme Court upheld disclosure requirements. In fact, the Court pointed in the direction of enhanced disclosure when it said that disclosure is important to "providing the electorate with information." It also supported disclaimer requirements "so that the people will be able to evaluate the arguments to which they are being subjected." We couldn't agree more.

**Q. What does the DISCLOSE Act require?**

**A.** The DISCLOSE Act of 2012 is carefully crafted to require disclosure by outside groups of large campaign contributions and expenditures – those over \$10,000 – and includes a valuable “stand-by-your ad” provision for ads run by such groups. It requires outside groups to certify that their spending is not coordinated with candidates and, very importantly, covers transfers of money among groups so that the actual sources of funds being spent to influence federal elections will be known.

**Q. Covering transfers of more than \$10,000 among groups for election advertising is really important?**

**A.** Yes. Unless large transfers are disclosed, corporations, unions, trade associations and wealthy individuals would still be able to hide their spending and deceive voters through “dummy” corporations.

**Q. How is enhanced disclosure accomplished in the legislation?**

**A.** One of the key elements of the DISCLOSE Act is the definition of “electioneering communications” that triggers the disclosure requirements. If an ad uses the name or likeness of a candidate within the calendar year of a particular House or Senate election, then disclosure is required. Current law only requires disclosure of ads within 90 days of a general election, a period of time that is proving much too short with the huge campaign expenditures we are seeing – and made possible by – *Citizens United*.

**Q. Is the “stand by your ad” requirement an important part of disclosure?**

**A.** Yes, it is. The requirement for the main funder(s) of an ad to appear briefly in the ad ensures that the voters will hear directly and immediately who is paying for and is responsible for the ad.

**Q. What about “independent” expenditures?**

**A.** In *Citizens United*, the Supreme Court said that independent expenditures can’t corrupt since they are not done in concert or coordinated with a candidate. That’s why the Court allowed unlimited independent spending. But the real world is not so simple. Because the Federal Election Commission has failed miserably to properly define “independent” expenditures (as courts have repeatedly found), much of the current spending is not independent at all. Thus, in order to overcome the effects of *Citizens United*, regulatory, congressional or legal action is necessary to properly narrow what passes for “independent” spending.

**Q. Will candidates benefit from the DISCLOSE Act?**

**A.** Candidates also benefit from disclosure of the sources of independent expenditures. There is a danger that the candidates’ own voices will be drowned out by huge outside spending, and that a last-minute onslaught of untrue charges from secret spenders will alter the outcome of an election without the candidate being able to challenge the sources or to hold them accountable in any way.

**Q. Wouldn’t it be better just to get rid of contribution limits so that candidates would receive all the funding for a campaign?**

**A.** No. Abolishing contribution limits to candidates will simply legalize corruption by allowing unlimited gifts to those who will become public officials. And it will do nothing about independent expenditures, which could continue in secret.

**Q. Won’t disclosure of large contributions expose funders to unfair retaliation by disgruntled activists?**

**A.** The Supreme Court has held that the value of disclosure to informing voters outweighs any minor or imagined retaliation against funders. The Court has said that in real, demonstrated cases of retaliation, an exception to disclosure may be granted.

**Q. Aren’t unions given special treatment in the DISCLOSE Act so that Democrats can protect their funding sources?**

**A.** We don’t believe so. Unions are covered by the DISCLOSE Act, just as for-profit and non-profit corporations and trade associations such as the Chamber of Commerce are covered.

**Q. Isn’t the DISCLOSE Act just a way to limit Republican funding sources so that Democrats will have an electoral advantage?**

**A.** When campaign finance loopholes are created, both political parties typically do their best to exploit the loophole. The disclosure loophole created by the huge spending unleashed by *Citizens United* will be no different. The voters are the ones who will lose because without disclosure, they can’t know who is trying to influence their votes.



## NEWS FROM LWVUS

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**League Opposes H.R. 5912:** The League joined other coalition partners in a letter to the U.S. House of Representatives in opposition to H.R. 5912, a bill that would repeal the presidential public financing system.

**Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin Case Is Now before the U.S. Supreme Court** On Oct. 10, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in the case of *Fisher v. Austin*. The Court is considering whether prior Supreme Court decisions on racial equality, including the latest college admissions decision in 2003, permit the University of Texas to use race in the selection of its freshman classes. The League of Women Voters joined the Brennan Center in submitting an *amicus* brief in this case.

**League Supports Office of Congressional Ethics** The League joined with coalition partners in a letter to House Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi, expressing support for the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) and urging them to ensure its uninterrupted operations in the next Congress by reactivating the agency and appointing the necessary board members.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY

**Defending the Clean Air Act:** The League joined with the environmental community to send two letters to the U.S. House of Representatives in defense of the Clean Air Act. The first letter refers to H.R. 3409, the Stop the War on Coal Act of 2012. The bill fundamentally weakens the Clean Air Act and takes aim at an array of laws that keep the American public safe. The second letter was sent to a subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee regarding H.R. 6172, a bill that would rewrite the Clean Air Act and block the Environmental Protection Agency from setting any standards for power plant carbon pollution.

**League Comments on Proposed Hydraulic Fracturing Rule:** The League of Women Voters sent a range of comments to the Bureau of Land Management regarding a proposed rule that would regulate hydraulic fracturing on public land and Indian land. The rule would provide disclosure to the public of chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing on public land and Indian land, strengthen regulations related to well-bore integrity, and address issues related to flowback water.

**League Submits Comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission** The League submitted comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The comments contain guidance on proposed revision of environmental guidance documents governing interstate natural gas lines.



## NEWS FROM LWVIL

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### HEALTH CARE

LWVIL supports specific recommendations for the Blueprint for Illinois' State-Federal Partnership Exchange (Health Insurance Exchange). Governor Quinn recently announced that Illinois would apply for a state-federal health insurance exchange for the first year and then transfer to a state exchange most likely due to the Legislature's inability to agree on enabling legislation. The LWVIL, and our coalition partners, agree that the intention to move to a state exchange after one year be stated in the Blueprint. Read the letter to the Coalition for Better Health Care signed by President Jan Dorner at [http://lwwil.org/Just%20the%20Vote\\_NVRA.pdf](http://lwwil.org/Just%20the%20Vote_NVRA.pdf)

### AFFORDABLE CARE ACT - IMPORTANCE TO WOMEN

The Campaign for Better Health Care (CBHC) reached out to educate, engage and empower women to gain support for health care reform through a series of training sessions in Chicago and other areas, in August and early September. Details at [http://lwwil.org/A\\_Training\\_for\\_Women.pdf](http://lwwil.org/A_Training_for_Women.pdf) This is an outstanding opportunity for learning the most effective messages and tools for building support of health care reform in our communities

### GRADUATED RATE INCOME TAX (GRIT) PROJECT

League is partnering with the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability on a multi-year project to establish a graduated rate income tax in Illinois. This project is in accord with the League's Principles as well as the tenets of the Responsible Budget Coalition of which LWVIL is a member. See [lwwil.org](http://lwwil.org).



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**See you November 15th!**

*In this issue:*

*Page 1*

Activity Calendar

*Page 2*

LWVUS President Message

LWVAH Board

*Page 3*

November Event

Gift Cards

*Page 4*

Voter Service

*Page 5*

National Voter Registration Day

*Page 6-7*

Voter Suppression

*Page 8-9*

DISCLOSE Act

*Page 10*

News from LWVUS & LWVIL

*Page 11*

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