



# 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>

April 2013

Volume 58, Issue 8

### 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
Wed, April 17	1-3 PM	LWV Glenview program on "Open Meetings Act" with a representative from the IL Attorney General's Office. Glenview Public Library, 1940 Glenview Road, Visit <a href="http://glenview.il">http://glenview.il</a> for more details.
Thu, April 18	Doors open 7:00 PM Program starts 7:30 PM	LWV Monthly Program: "Protecting Illinois from Fracking, Protecting Illinois' Environment" Arl. Hts. Historical Society, 110 W. Fremont
Tue, April 23	1 PM	Board meeting at Nancy Duel's. Members are welcomed
Mon, May 6	9:30 AM to 1 PM	LWV Cook County Annual Meeting Speaker Chief Judge Timothy Evans, Cook Co Circuit Court University Center, Chicago RSVP by April 26
Wed, May 15	7-9 PM	LWV Glencoe: Discussion of "Not for Ourselves Alone," a documentary by Ken Burns on Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Visit <a href="http://lwvglencoe.com/">http://lwvglencoe.com/</a>
Thu, May 16	6:30 PM Potluck 7:30 PM Meeting	LWV AHMPBG Annual Meeting. Arl. Hts. Historical Society, 110 W. Fremont
Sat, May 18	10 AM to 2 PM	LWVIL Moderator Training, led by Robin Labeledz Chicago Loop location TBD (Lunch included) RSVP by May 11
Tue, May 21	TBD	New Board meets with old Board
Fri, June 7 to Sun, June 9		LWV State Convention in Bloomington-Normal Join us in pushing for League action against Fracking in Illinois

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.



**A Message From  
The LWVUS President  
Elisabeth McNamara**

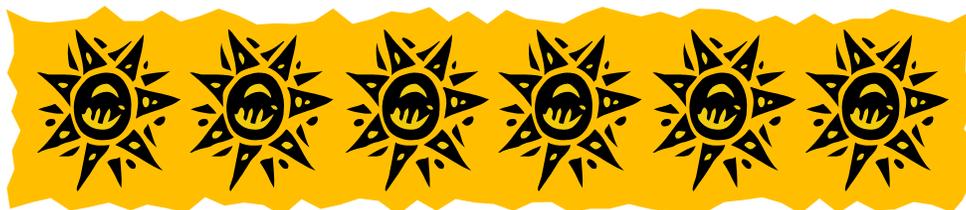


On March 18, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the case of *Arizona v. Inter-Tribal Council*. At issue is a challenge to one of the League’s landmark achievements, the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), sometimes known as the “Motor Voter” law. The LWVUS has submitted an amicus brief and the League of Women Voters of Arizona is a plaintiff in the case. The case will decide whether the landmark National Voter Registration Act prevents states from passing laws that restrict the voter registration process.

The National Voter Registration Act became law in 1993 and streamlines the voter registration process. It requires states to provide voter registration opportunities when citizens get a driver’s license or seek government services at other agencies and provides for voter registration by mail, which is particularly important for citizen-led voter registration drives. In so doing, it protects voters against state restrictions on voter registration for federal elections. The League was a key player in the passage of the NVRA – we worked on the initial bill and later co-chaired a national coalition that brought together over 60 organizations dedicated to improving the voter registration process.

Oral arguments in the case focused largely on the technical question of whether the provisions of the NVRA preempt an Arizona law requiring documentary proof of citizenship. It is always impossible to predict outcomes in the current Supreme Court, so while the arguments in favor of the NVRA appeared to go well, it is important that we continue to remind our communities of the importance of the streamlined voter registration process that is the cornerstone of the legislation. Permitting Arizona or any other state, to require additional documentation defeats the purpose of the federal registration form, makes mail-in registration and citizen-led voter registration drives far more difficult thereby creating a barrier to registration that the NVRA was intended to eliminate.

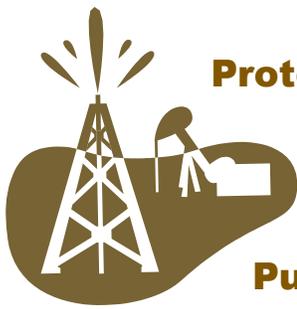
We have already made good progress on drawing attention to the importance of this decision. The League has been mentioned or quoted in much of the national coverage (MSNBC, Associated Press, Talking Points Memo, Huffington Post LIVE, and The Washington Post) and we promoted the issue through a successful tweet chat last week. The media attention on this issue and on the fight to keep the important protections within the Voting Rights Act helps us remind the public that the fight to keep our elections free, fair and accessible to all voters is far from over.



<b>LWVAH-MP-BG BOARD MEMBERS 2012-2013</b>			
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**Protecting Illinois from Fracking,**

**Protecting Illinois' Environment**



**Starved Rock, Smart Grid, and Lake Michigan**

**Public Program, April 18<sup>th</sup>**

Honoring Earth Day, our April program focuses on environmental issues in Illinois. The main topic will be the issue of fracking and how to ensure that fracking in Illinois is developed with public input, regulations and financial arrangements to prevent the problems seen in other states. But we will also get updates on the question of permitting a sand mine right at the entrance to Starved Rock State Park, the proposals being advanced for the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes, and any progress on upgrading the electric system to a Smart Grid.

Our featured speaker is Cindy Skrukrud, Clean Water Advocate for the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club. Sierra Club Illinois has been calling for a moratorium on fracking in Illinois and has been active in debate over fracking regulatory legislation. Illinois' 1941 Oil and Gas Act is outdated for the newer hydraulic horizontal fracking techniques and the staffing and funding of the Department of Natural Resources is inadequate.

Cindy Shrukrud will give us an update on the March 14<sup>th</sup> legislative debate over fracking, what has been learned about the dangers of fracking, what specific solutions have proved or are expected to prove most effective in preventing or ameliorating these dangers, and if there is any push for something like the "severance tax" promoted in Pennsylvania by the PA League to protect local communities from clean-up, road repair and other costs left by oil companies.

Sierra Club Illinois has also been a leader in the fight to keep a silica sand mine from being developed next to Starved Rock State Park and Ms. Skrukrud will bring us up to date on this situation.

**This is our Earth Day Public Education Program  
Bring Family and Friends!!**

**AH Historical Society. 110 W. Fremont, AH  
Doors open 7 pm, Program starts 7:30 pm**

**Where can You Get the Most Bang for Your Time and Effort?  
At the State Convention, Of Course**

All that woman (and man) power all in one place.

A chance to develop contacts with people working the issues you care about.

An opportunity to share what you've learned and gain from the experience and expertise of fellow Leaguers. Making friends and learning how to influence people and government policies.



That's the take-away from attending state convention. State conventions are a wonderful chance to share, support and welcome each other. And this year there is an extra incentive: our League hopes to convince fellow delegates to adopt the Pennsylvania State League's Position on Fracking.

**Help fight fracking! Join our League's delegation!  
LWVIL State Convention in Bloomington, IL  
June 7th to 9th**

League will help defray expenses. Call Cathy Duoba or Judith Royal  
To plan your trip and get more information

# Protecting Illinois from Fracking

By Cathy Duoba

From the Illinois Chapter, Sierra Club, paper of the same name:

...we also need to acknowledge that fracking is legal today in Illinois, and for all we know, may already be occurring as you read this. We also need to recognize that our current laws regulating oil and gas drilling, originally passed in 1941 [50 years before the use of **hydraulic horizontal** fracking techniques], are totally inadequate to deal with the range of issues raised by injecting millions of gallons of chemical-laced fluid deep into the earth only to come surging back with gas and potentially oil. In short, Illinois citizens and our environment, at the moment, are virtually defenseless against the problems experienced in other states.

That's why it is essential that Illinois move quickly to get the strongest possible safeguards in place to protect citizens and their water supplies. Fortunately, discussions in Springfield have produced a basic agreement on what would be the strongest set of protections of any state in the country

Where does the LWVIL Stand? The LWVIL can take action under our state Land Use position and under LWVUS positions on Clean Air and Clean Water – BUT – these are very GENERAL positions when it comes to fracking. We can oppose dangers to clean air and water, Well DUH!

**When legislators ask, “What specifically do you want us to do about it?” – our positions are silent.**

**That's why our League suggested to LWVIL that the study and specific positions of the LWV of Pennsylvania be “adopted by concurrence” by the members of the June 2013 Convention.**

Pennsylvania, like Illinois, is a state with both rural/agricultural and urban/suburban areas as well as areas of rich natural beauty. Realizing that fracking could not be permanently stopped either legally or politically, League members studied the literature on fracking's dangers and methods to ameliorate those dangers. There are 5 Study Guides that can be downloaded. Being League, the position also includes measures for transparency and public input.

## **LWV of Pennsylvania Position on Fracking Issues**

**<http://www.palwv.org/Issues/Natural-Resources/Marcellus-Shale.asp>**

Web site includes study guides, full position and position-in-brief, past legislative testimony, current legislation summaries, related web site resources, past actions, etc.

## **PALWV Marcellus Shale Position in Brief:**

**Support the maximum protection of public health and the environment in all aspects of Marcellus Shale natural gas production; prevent the burdening of taxpayers with costs of industrialization and unanticipated consequences.** (The full position will be available April 18<sup>th</sup>. Find it now at [http://www.palwv.org/files/221\\_MarcellusShalePositioninDetail.pdf](http://www.palwv.org/files/221_MarcellusShalePositioninDetail.pdf))

### **Excerpts from the Position points:**

the maximum protection of public health and the environment;

encouragement of employment opportunities at the local level and economic development resulting in revenue to local and state government

preventing a burden on Pennsylvania taxpayers [thru] a sufficient fee structure on [this] extraction

creation of a severance tax on natural gas as a revenue source primarily designated for

- the preservation and enhancement of natural resources;
- the monitoring and protection of public health;
- an escrow fund for supporting community adjustment as the industry grows and declines;
- research on the effects of natural gas extraction from Marcellus Shale on the economy, environment, and public health of Pennsylvanians.

legislation and regulation that provides for transparency in all stages, insures public input into decision making, extends water testing timelines and parameters, balances the rights of mineral and surface owners, and establishes an efficient and effective oversight system for reporting potential violations and accidents.

## League Serves Up the Candidates for Voters

By Judith O. Royal



What a busy five days for our League's Voter Services between March 16-21! After months of planning or organizing, League launched our three candidate events. The League's candidate forums are a wonderful public service. These events made the League visible particularly this spring. Even writers to the "Neighbor Fencepost" in the Daily Herald made references to our candidate forum.

**On Saturday, March 16**, League presented a candidate forum at Arlington Heights Village Hall for 12 candidates running for three different offices: Village president, Village trustee, and Library trustee. By headcount **over 200 citizens attended** and more watched the live broadcast on local access TV. Later residents watched the daily rebroadcasts on television. Plus anyone—even out-of-state friends—with a computer could watch the candidate forum on *YouTube*. The Daily Herald, bloggers online, and the candidates printed links to our candidate forum. Lorelle Communications, Inc. provided *pro bono* the video and *YouTube* as a courtesy to the League and the residents of Arlington Heights. An invaluable service!

Saturday morning audience-size suggested residents were interested in all three contests, even though one can assume the race for AH Village president held the most interest, since that office is open for the first time in 20 years. The Board Room seats about 90. Early in the day folks filled it and started to fill the adjoining Community Room. The custodian and later Trustee Farwell brought in more chairs so folks wouldn't have to stand.

A week later I watched our League's candidate forum on TV. When I presented it, I didn't have an opportunity to see all of it. I was proud of what I saw on TV. The audience's written questions for the trustees asked about trash pickup and green policies, new police station, group homes and affordable housing, Metropolis Theater, local business and the economy, pensions for police and firemen, and the differences in city and village governments. Also, I learned that the number of trustees had been increased from 6 to 8. I hope all the candidates for Village president were there to hear this discussion.

**On Tuesday, March 19**, the District 25 Council of PTAs presented a candidate forum at Village Hall for 5 candidates competing for 4 openings on the District 25 School Board. With guidance from Judith Royal, Shannon Silverman, Co-President of the Arlington Heights Council of PTAs and new League member as of 2012, made this candidate forum a flawless experience for the candidates and the moderator, Paula Lawson from the Glencoe League. The event was recorded and later broadcast on District 25 TV and *YouTube*.

Our regularly scheduled meeting for **Thursday, March 21**, was a "Meet and Greet" for 16 candidates running for Wheeling Township government. This was the only partisan contest on the April 9th ballot. In compliance with the League's nonpartisan policy, Cathy Duoba moderated this event, because she is a resident of Elk Grove Township and not interested in the outcome of this race. Cathy gave a brief but good description of township government, because many of us are unfamiliar with the role of township government. Each candidate gave a three-minute-timed statement during which she or he shared personal aspirations for office. Our meeting room was packed, and a few guests stood in the back. After the candidates' statements, Cathy adjourned the meeting and people stayed! Candidates expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to talk about their ambitions for township government. Guests and candidates mingled. Everyone thanked the League for providing this voter education opportunity. Moreover, Cheryl Brandt joined our League! [Welcome, Cheryl.]



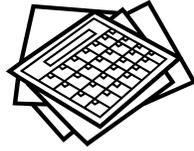
Presenting these candidate events was fun this year, because more League members helped in significant ways. Past League presidents Gilda Karu and Robin LaBedz (also former LWVIL voter service chair) helped me decide which guidelines to demand when a small, local newspaper invited League to work with it on a candidate forum in another community. (During negotiations it became clear the paper did not wish to work *with* League but wanted League to work *for* it. League decided against this joint effort.) Also Gilda, Robin, and I conferred when a candidate for village president violated the media rule he had voluntarily agreed to before participating in the March 16 candidate forum. Thank you, Gilda and Robin for being available, often at short notice.

Thanks go to many Leaguers. Rosemary Krizan, Marty Landorf, and Susan Fuller volunteered to be timekeepers often for more than one event. This is a demanding job, but their performances were flawless every time. Believe me, the candidates and moderator expect that and appreciate it. Fay Michaelis made the candidates' name tags, and she supervised the sign-in sheets. Gilda checked in candidates and did the number draws on March 16. Karin Hribar and Pat Lindner sorted the audience's questions and got a range of subjects to the moderator. We are so lucky that Edith Auchter, LWVIL, agreed to moderate on March 16, and despite a broken leg, she did a marvelous

job. Dawn Walter, Joyce Marks, and Nancy Duel distributed programs and index cards plus collected questions. Thank you, Cathy, for moderating and bringing a bit of levity to the Candidate Meet and Greet on March 21. Pat Lind and Gayle O'Brien provided a beautiful array of fruit and homemade desserts on March 21.

So a huge thank you to all who helped. If I omitted anyone's name, I apologize, but you can be assured, I appreciated your effort—and so did the voters.

**Save the Date**



**Thursday evening, May 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Our Local League's Annual Meeting**  
**Watch for Coming-Soon Email with Budget, Nominating and By-laws Reports**

### **Medicaid Expansion Factoid**

According to Ezra Klein on wonkblog, 25 states, eight of them with Republican Governors, have signed up for the Medicaid expansion program of the Affordable Care Act. However, hold-out states may reconsider due to pressure from local hospitals.

Because the Obama Administration expected the poor who are currently uninsured to be covered in future by Medicaid expansion, funding under the current program of aid to hospitals (called DISH for disproportionate share) was cut back as part of deficit reduction.

The state with the largest percent of uninsured, Texas at 24%, could lose about \$1 billion in current help. By the way, in Texas, a family of three must earn less than \$5,000/yr to qualify for Medicaid!



### **Immigration Reform: Compromise on Low-Skilled Workers**

If you remember the discussion of guest workers in our Immigration Study, this will interest you. When the AFL-CIO/Chamber of Commerce reached a compromise on low-skilled workers, a major hurdle across the road to comprehensive immigration reform was overcome. The timing and time-frame of the path to citizenship still remains a controversial sore spot.

The compromise provisions include:

- Workers can self-petition for permanent status after one year.
- Wages and working conditions for guest workers must be on a par with the industry.
- Workers will not be tied to a single employer. [very important; huge past problems]
- Guest worker cap can never be below 20,000 or above 200,000.

### **For Every Occasion** **Support your League – Use Manna Gift Cards**



**Mother's Day**  
**Graduations**

**Birthdays**  
**Weddings**

**Contact Nancy Duel, 847-259-3793. Forms on LWVAH.org**

## ADVOCACY: Fiscal Policy

### What Sequester Crisis?

By Cathy Duoba



The national media appears convinced that the sequester's "bad-effects prediction" was a false alarm. After all, the stock market held its record highs (10+% gain this year alone) and all through March, profit reports came in glowing. The politicians' only complaint was no White House tour tickets to hand out to donors and constituents.

However, Huffington Post staff found 100 sequester stories in local media in two hours. In fact, they say, the only place not noticing the sequester effects is Washington, DC, also the only place that can do anything about it.

Huffington Post: "**Sequester Effects: Cuts Sting Communities Nationwide**"

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/02/sequestration-effects\\_n\\_2996101.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/02/sequestration-effects_n_2996101.html)

I strongly urge you to read this article's analysis of the real situation and peruse its list of stories. As you read these stories or listen to Washington sequester proponents tell those needing the now-slashed safety net, "Everyone has to tighten their belts a little in this time of tough economic uncertainty", also remember Congressional pay is exempted from sequester cuts by order of Congress.

#### The Politically Invisible

Ari Melber of MSNBC's The Cycle, gave the best explanation of the difference between Washington and local media views: "the politically invisible." Some excerpts from his analysis:

46% of Americans do not own stock (that's 146 Million people) and 12 Million people are unemployed.

For the indigent elderly, the senior nutrition program is cut 5% which means \$40 million cut from Meals on Wheels (a 60 year-old program). Cuts to housing assistance will drive some residents out on the streets; 40% of these residents are children, another 25% are elderly. The bull market does nothing for these people, but the sequester cuts hit these groups the hardest.

Politicians react only when the plight of these people reaches a level that outrages enough other people or the press [what does that say about **our** responsibility?]. Reporting is that the sequester didn't knee-cap the economy after 3 weeks [most cuts started April 1] so all is OK. **But things never look that bad from the Top.** This crisis is being defined by **who** faces the crisis. So the news concentrates on the public housing on Pennsylvania Avenue, not the other public housing residents across the nation.

#### LWVUS Call for Change in Fiscal Policy - A Reminder

"The League of Women Voters supports a federal fiscal policy that recognizes the importance of a fair tax system, that provides for social needs, and that will carefully manage the deficit and the economy."

**It's time to recognize we need change and to take things in a new direction.**

"More than 20 million people are in need of full-time work, and unemployment continues to hover around 8 percent. But budget "hawks" are pushing for huge spending cuts that will harm the economy. At the same time, the top two percent of taxpayers are not paying their fair share. Millions of seniors, children, people with disabilities, and others are depending on social programs to get by. Our fiscal policy must support people in need, while carefully balancing the deficit with the needs of the economy."

#### Local Illinois Examples:

**Joliet, Ill.** -- The Housing Authority of Joliet, already struggling, is going to lose nearly \$900,000 due to sequestration. It recently sent layoff warnings to employees.

**Rock Island, Ill.** -- The U.S. Army garrison, Rock Island Arsenal, announced that it is firing 175 employees, 44 of whom are temporary workers, 131 of whom will see their jobs unrenewed when their terms expire.

**Southern Illinois.** -- Local hospital CEOs relayed fears to Rep Bill Enyart (D-Ill.) that their \$128,000 in sequester cuts would be debilitating with the state already not making payments.

**Granite City, Ill.** -- The Granite City School Board voted to lay off nine teachers and four district employees at the end of the week to help with budget cuts and a \$400,000 sequestration hit.

**Southwestern Illinois.** -- Federal contractor Aero NavData may lay off 45 employees next month due to budget cuts. Corrections officers at the federal prison in Greenville, Ill., will be furloughed for 14 days.

**Proof of Ari Melber's theory:** As of April 6 White House tours restored, small airport (corporate jets) tower closures delayed. **STILL CUT:** White House employee furloughs, 4 million seniors' meals, 600 thousand women, infants and children from WIC, an unknown number of Head Start toddlers/teachers, and services to 150 thousand veterans.

# Attacks on Voting Rights – a Midterm State Legislative Report

From LWVUS web site

By: tobrien

03/28/2013



2230 bills relating to elections, both good and bad, have been introduced in state legislatures across the country since January. That equals approximately 26 new bills per day or more than 1 new piece of election legislation per hour and we're well on track to exceed the 2357 bills introduced in 2012.

[After the well-publicized problems with Election 2012 and] with the majority of Americans in favor of reforms that improved access to the ballot box, many thought these notable problems would create a window of opportunity for real reforms to help ensure every eligible voter could cast their ballot and have it counted without any unnecessary barriers. For the most part legislatures did not take advantage of this opportunity to reform the election systems in their states and in some cases they simply ignored the facts and moved forward with anti-voter legislation.

Take Virginia for example, in the span of a few short weeks the legislature passed and the governor signed two anti-voter bills into law; one makes it more difficult for organizations like the League to register citizens, and the other not only creates more onerous [than the law passed just last year] photo identification criteria to vote, but also risks removing eligible voters from the voting rolls and makes absentee voting more difficult. The LWV of Virginia helped lead the charge to defeat these bills. Assuming that the Voting Rights Act survives an awaited ruling by the US Supreme Court, both of these new laws will need to be pre-cleared by the federal government before going into effect.

Other states continue their assault on voters with new photo ID legislation and the Leagues in these states, including Missouri, North Carolina, Alaska, and Montana, are working hard to defend voters' rights.

**Project Vote Report:** 55 new voting restriction bills introduced in 30 states so far this year

## Little-Known But Critical SECOND Voting Rights Court Challenge

### Supreme Court Hears Arizona Challenge to National Voter Registration Act

With all the publicity around the Shelby, AL, challenge to the Voting Rights Act, the State of Arizona's challenge to the National Voter Registration Act, sometimes called "Motor Voter" law, has gone almost unnoticed. From attacks on same-day registration through restrictions on third-party voter registration drives to proof-of-citizenship requirements, Republican-controlled states have unleashed a variety of measures to hinder a citizen's right to register to vote.

BE SURE TO READ THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (page 2)

for more information on the case and League's role in the creation, support, and defense of NVRA.

## New Brennan Center Report on 2013 Voter Suppression on Steroids

In the last election, there was virtually no voter fraud and substantial voter backlash against voter suppression efforts. Yet Republican-controlled state legislatures began suppression efforts immediately in 2013. See new report at <http://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/election-2013-voting-laws-roundup>.

18 States have passed laws requiring Photo Voter ID. In effect already: Idaho, South Dakota, Kansas, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Louisiana, Florida, New Hampshire. Not yet in effect (some blocked by court suits or need Justice Dept. pre-clearance): Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Alabama. **Coming to a state near you!**

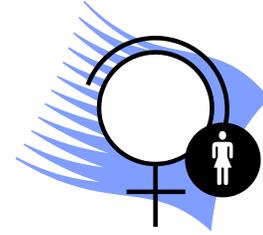
## Eligible for Ripley's Believe It or Not from WRAL.com

In 2008, President Obama won North Carolina by 14,000 votes, largely due to a 10% increase in the youth vote. In 2012 Republicans gained control of both Houses and the governorship and they wish to curb the college vote. A Supreme Court 1979 ruling found that "all students have the right to vote where they attend college." So... a Senate bill has been introduced by NC Republicans that establishes a tax penalty for parents whose children register to vote at their college address. The bill has 5 co-sponsors, including one from the leadership. But this is just **1 of 7 suppression bills in one week** involving photo ID, early voting cut in half, no more same-day registration, no "mentally incompetent" (not defined), anti-felon, etc., etc. But NC is not alone.

## ADVOCACY

# What's with Women's Reproductive Rights During Women's History Month?

By Cathy Duoba



On March 26<sup>th</sup>, the North Dakota Governor signed the most restrictive women's reproduction rights law, so far! - a "heartbeat" provision banning abortions at 6 weeks when most women are not even aware they are pregnant and requiring a trans-vaginal ultrasound probe to determine whether a heartbeat is present (over any objection of the patient or doctor, i.e. state-sanctioned rape: penetration without consent). - a Mississippi-style "trap" provision requiring the doctor to have admitting privileges at a local hospital. Since such privileges will not be granted any more than they were in Mississippi, the law is designed to close the last remaining clinic providing abortions in this state. (The Miss. Clinic's status is in limbo as a federal judge has not yet issued a final ruling on the constitutionality of the Miss. Law.)

### State Abortion Restriction Bans

From the *NY Times*: North Dakota, 6 weeks    Arkansas, 10 weeks    Arizona, 18 weeks

Idaho, Nebraska, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Indiana, all 20 weeks

NARAL Pro-Choice America lists these states who have passed near-total bans with state legislatures working on joining them: Wisconsin, Michigan, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, West Virginia, Delaware, Vermont, and Massachusetts.

### Why Is This Happening on 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *Roe v Wade*?

North Dakota Gov. Darylmer urged the legislators to set aside some of the state's sizable oil-revenue surplus for a litigation fund saying, "although the likelihood of this measure surviving a court challenge remains a question, nevertheless this bill is a legitimate attempt by a state legislature to discover the boundaries of *Roe v Wade*." (Fracking making a challenge to *Roe* possible.) However Professor Caitlin Borgmann, City University of New York, notes "Previous laws chipped away at abortion rights. By passing the 6-week ban, supporters hope to force a Supreme Court challenge and overturn *Roe*" (The Supreme Court set the cut-off at viability, usually 22-24 weeks.).

The law's supporters say 47% believe abortion is immoral; opponents point out only 10% believe abortion should be illegal in all cases. Most Americans support *Roe v Wade*; they accept that the abortion is a legal procedure and women have a right to have a level of access to a legal procedure. However, in all the states with Republican control of the state legislatures and governorships, there are these concerted efforts to *de facto* overturn *Roe v Wade*.

Irin Carmon, at salon.com, writes "We are reaching a situation where, in some states, women are endowed with full humanity and can exercise their constitutionally-guaranteed right to make their own decisions about their health and their bodies and in other states where women with the least means, the least access, and the least ability to travel (i.e. women of color) women are forced to give birth regardless of their constitutional rights.

### The Laws of Unintended(?) Consequences

The Alabama "trap" law, whose superfluous, overclassification regulations will force the closure of the 5 Alabama clinics which provide sliding-scale women's health services, most of which are NOT abortion... this law is called, unbelievably, The Women's Health and Safety Act!

For months, low-income women in Texas have been without affordable health services because the Texas legislature defunded Planned Parenthood clinics which resulted in the denial of federal funding for ALL health clinics. (Last week, the federal government announced it would fund these clinics directly, bypassing the state.)

### The bottom line for those of us who spent our youth pre-*Roe*

Supporters of these bans and "trap" laws, like Mississippi's Governor, proudly state that their purpose is "to end all abortions in the state, to make abortion a thing of the past." But those of us over 55 years old know differently. Currently abortion is safer than giving birth because it is legal. Women my age know all too well, eliminating legal abortion does NOT end abortion. It only forces desperate women without other options to resort to the illegal, unsafe kind. And one dear college roommate hemorrhaging at 3 am one Monday morning after a secret weekend visit to an illegal abortionist is one too many in my lifetime and hers!!! The bottom line consequences for me, as for many women my age, are very real, very personal *deja vu!*

## NEWS FROM LWVIL

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See also articles on convention

**Criminal Justice:** LWVIL is opposing the closing of Dwight women's prison for the near future. Although the facility is old and needs significant repair, there are good reasons for keeping it open: proximity to Chicago helps families stay connected, especially important for moms and their kids; Dwight offers successful rehab programs that do not exist elsewhere; closing Dwight will exacerbate the crowding situation in other prisons.

**Health Care:** Illinois needs to move forward **NOW** on state implementation of two key provisions. Medicaid Expansion (SB 26, HB 106) will cover an additional 500,000 low income citizens. SB 26 passed the Senate on Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> and moves on to the House. The 2<sup>nd</sup> measure, the online Insurance Exchange (SB 34) will give some 1.2 M individuals, families and small businesses access to affordable care. Both are on the table in Springfield.

**Pension Reform:** HB 3411 was introduced in the Illinois House on Feb. 26th by Rep. Tom Cross with Rep. Elaine Nekritz as Chief Co-Sponsor. You can read the lengthy piece of legislation here - <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=3411&GAID=12&GA=98&DocTypeID=HB&LegID=75280&SessionID=85>

This link is provided for information only; currently, the LWVIL does not have a position on this legislation.

### Gun Violence Prevention

LWVIL is asking members to write to their Senators and Representatives and ask them to support SB 1171 and HB 1143, respectively. Both bills create a system for universal background checks for all gun purchases.

## NEWS FROM LWVUS

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See also articles on Sequester/fiscal policy, women's rights, voting rights and Continuing Resolution.

### League Expresses Support for Wind Energy

The League joined members of the environmental community in a letter to the US House of Representatives expressing strong support for HR 924. This bill extends the Investment Tax Credit for offshore wind and encourages investment in the growing industry.

### **ACTION ALERT!** Tell the U.S. Senate to keep the Budget Clean

Tell your Senators that the environment is not a bargaining chip in the federal budget -- to put people before polluters by protecting our environment, fighting climate change and saying no to the Keystone XL Pipeline.

**League sends letter to U.S. House on Gun Safety Legislation** The League sent a letter to the U.S. House of Representatives encouraging them to consider common sense solutions to gun violence issues. Tell your Senators to move forward with common sense gun legislation, in order to protect our children, our citizens and help restore our public confidence.

**Election Legislation Continues to be a Hot Topic in State Legislatures** (see article p. 8)

### **Women and the Rule of Law: A View from the Americas (NEW)**

The League of Women Voters and its partners, the Inter-American Dialogue and the International Association of Women Judges, held a standing room only two-day conference – Women and the Rule of Law: A View from the Americas - highlighting the important role women judges play in promoting and advancing the rights of women in the Americas. The group met with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the afternoon of February 26th – the day prior to the Court's historic hearings on the Voting Rights Act.

**The LWVUS Agriculture Update:** The Agriculture Update Committee is just beginning, so for those Leagues that are interested in starting, use the scope of the update as a guideline to select topics on which to initiate discussions with the local farm community, state departments of agriculture and other stakeholders.

**LAKE MICHIGAN LEAGUE:** LWVIL members from Oak Park/River Forest and Glenview joined others from the 8 Great Lakes States at the annual *Healing Our Waters* lobby days in Washington, D.C. on March 6-7. Priorities this year include re-funding of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and other legislation to protect the largest source of fresh water on our planet.



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- ☐ Kenneth A. Johnson, D.D.S.
- ☐ Renee P. Pappas, D.D.S.
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**See you on Thursday, April 18!**

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