



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>

February 2014

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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



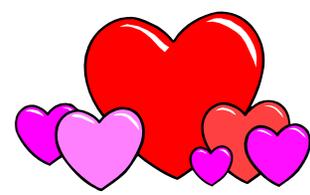
Date	Time	Event
Fri, Feb 14		The 94 th Birthday of the League of Women Voters
Tue, Feb 18		Key Election Date: Last day to register to vote
Thu, Feb 20	12:30 pm	Hot Pizza: "New Paths, New Plans" Member input on future plans for OUR League First United Methodist Church, 1903 E. Euclid, Arl Hts. Please use parking lot in rear of church
Tue, Feb 25	1 pm	Board meeting, Nancy Duel's home Members most welcome to attend
Thu, Feb 27	7-9 pm	Agricultural Study Program, Part 1, by LWV Palatine Area Community Rm., Pal Police HQ, 595 N. Hicks Rd, Pal.
Thu, Feb 27	Check listings	LWVIL Gubernatorial Debate in Chicago, ABC-7 TV
Mon, March 3		Key Election Date: First day of early voting.
Sat, March 8	11:30-2:00	Women's History Month Luncheon, Karen Daniel, on the wrongful conviction of women Wilmette Golf Club Restaurant, 3900 Fairway Drive, Wilmette
March 10-16		Sunshine Week. Open Government Is Good Government. www.sunshineweek.org
Thu, March 13		Key Election Date: Last day to request a mail ballot
Mon, March 17		Key Election Date: Last day voted mail ballots can be postmarked
Tue, March 18		ELECTION DAY Be sure to VOTE

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.



THE HORNER GROUP LTD

A Message from the LWVUS President On Issues Concerning Voting Rights



January 16: It looks like a good time for voting rights. The Election Assistance Commission rejected Kansas and Arizona's request to modify the national mail-in registration form to require documentary proof of citizenship and a bipartisan bill to fix the Voting Rights Act was introduced in Congress.

The Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2014 has been carefully crafted to protect the rights of all voters and repair the damage to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 inflicted by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in [Shelby v. Holder](#). This is an important first step, but it will require [the League to follow the progress of the legislation closely](#) and will also require continued public education in our communities. Since the Shelby decision, we have seen states rush to enact legislation likely to suppress the vote and dozens of cities and towns make changes in their election laws and voting processes, many of which may keep eligible voters from voting.

Similarly, the decision of the EAC is not likely to be the final word with regard to [documentary proof of citizenship when registering vote](#). This is just one step in the lawsuit brought by Kansas and Arizona challenging the constitutionality of the federal mail voter registration application form and the LWVUS, along with LWVAZ and LWVKS, is already involved. This issue is not isolated to Kansas and Arizona and like all our election work, it will require Leagues all across the country to continue educating our communities about the importance of ensuring that every eligible voter has fair and equal access to the polls.

January 23: The Presidential Commission on Election Administration issued its report. Whatever skepticism the League articulated when the commission was formed, was all [but swept away by the comprehensive nature of the report and its recommendations](#). The bipartisan Commission spent six months taking testimony from election officials, academics and organizations like the League. The League [submitted a five-point reform agenda](#) to the Commission. In the end, the recommendations do not go so far as addressing the administrative barriers created by ever more restrictive voter photo ID especially in the implementation of online voter registration systems, [but] the report... looks at our diffuse system from the point of view of the voter.

Among the key recommendations: modernization of the registration process through expansion of online voter registration and expanded state collaboration in improving the accuracy of voter lists; measures to improve access to the polls through expansion of the period for voting before traditional Election Day and through selection of suitable, well equipped polling facilities; state-of-the art techniques to assure efficient management of polling places; and reforms of the standard-setting and certification process for new voting technology to address soon-to-be antiquated voting machines.

Elisabeth MacNamara

Voting Rights Act Talking Points available at <http://restorevotingrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/restoring-voting-rights-talking-points-c4branded.pdf>

LWV AH-MP-BG BOARD MEMBERS 2013-2014			
<u>Position/Portfolio</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
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Hot Pizza, Hot Topics becomes NEW PATHS, NEW PLANS

New Twist: LOCAL focus

Thursday Afternoon, Feb 20th 12:30 pm



Note Location: First United Methodist Church, AH

This year, there's a new twist to our annual pizza get-together: we will concentrate on our own League's future, instead of planning for State or National Convention. What Path to Take? What Plans to Make?

We are looking forward to having our whole group together. Our League needs some new direction if we are to stay an active organization. And that means we need the input of every member. Some will come with ideas for a new path to take. Some will listen to those ideas and come up with improvements. Often before, creativity seemed to grow when our members engaged in back and forth discussion.

**If everyone comes and participates,
creativity will happen again.**

TIME: 12:30 pm

Location: First United Methodist Church, 1903 E. Euclid, Arl. Hts.

Please use parking lot at **rear** of church

The email survey indicated a preference for an afternoon meeting. Location change was due to limited parking at AH Historical Society in the afternoon. **Call Pat Lindner, 847-259-2711, for pizza reservations (\$5).**

Members, Here's Your Chance! Agricultural Study

The LWV Palatine Area is holding a program to study How does your food get to you? and What role does/should the government play in that?

Thursday, February 27, 7--9 pm

Topics: Questions 1-4

Agriculture and the Economy: Subsidies, Crop Insurance & More

Agriculture and Technology: It's More Involved than Most Know

Agriculture and Antitrust Law: Balancing Innovation & Cost



A follow-up meeting on March 27th will cover questions 5&6 and 8-11 - What is in your food really? : Animal management, Nutrition, & Labeling.

Community Room of the Palatine Police Headquarters

595 N. Hicks. Rd. Palatine, IL

Find out more at www.lwvpalatinearea.org

It's a Party & We're All Invited!

By Judith Royal

After hanging around the house (or apartment) avoiding cold weather and challenging driving conditions, you want to get out. I know. Make sure you put LWV's Women's History Month Luncheon on your list of places to go. I suggest Leaguers carpool. Going there can be as much fun as the luncheon itself.

Oh, remember non-Leaguer members can buy luncheon tickets too. You can take your friends or family.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH LUNCHEON

FEATURED SPEAKER: KAREN DANIEL

Co-Legal Director Northwestern University Law School Center on Wrongful Convictions

Ms. Daniel will speak about the wrongful conviction of women

WHEN: Saturday, March 8th, 11:30-2:00

WHERE: Wilmette Golf Club Restaurant

3900 Fairway Drive, Wilmette, IL 60091

(at the corner of E. Lake and Harms)

If interested, please call Judith.



Update on January Program: **CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

By Cathy Duoba



Many thanks to the hearty dozen who braved the bitter weather to see the video on our criminal justice system: *The House I Live In*. The video was very powerful and a lively discussion broke out afterward. Reforms to the criminal justice system have been very much in the news these last months. Members wanted to see how they could become active on urging reform (see below). We urge all those who couldn't make this showing to

Please check out this video from your public library

The Arl. Hts. Library has several copies. It will strike both your mind and your heart.

Follow-Up on Possible Action:

Linda Waycie, a guest of Faye Michaelis, promised to get back to us on working with the Community Renewal Society on Criminal Justice issues. Our League worked with this group when we and the Housing Task Force were pushing for Housing for Persons with Mental Illness. Here's her email response:

I talked to Ryan Wallace (rwallace@communityrenewalsociety.org, 312-953-0063.) our contact and organizer for the Community Renewal Society about working together on issues. He thought that if the women at the meeting wanted to address some of the issues like mandatory minimums (The FORCE Project) ...consider contacting him if they are a member of a church that might like to work on social justice issues and consider working as a congregation. Other than that, if the [LWVIL] members wanted to encourage their legislators to vote yes or no on certain issues that would be appreciated too.

Linda Waycie lwaycie@wowway.com

Criminal Justice Reform in the News

Sec. Duncan & AG Holder Announce New Discipline Guidelines The Advancement Project notes "youth of color, LGBT students, and students with disabilities are punished more often and more harshly than their peers for the same misbehavior." The likelihood of being suspended at least once is 1 in 6 for Blacks, 1 in 14 for Latinos, and 1 in 20 for Whites (UCLA Civil Rights Project). During 2011-2012, 36% of students expelled were African-Americans, who are 15% of the total student population. In many "zero tolerance" schools, students are handcuffed, arrested and jailed for minor infractions like chewing gum or bringing a cell phone to class. The ACLU website lists a host of minor misbehaviors that resulted in arrests and jailing.

To answer this problem, in mid-January, Education Secretary Duncan and Attorney General Holder issued new guidelines and resources aimed at helping schools better deal with discipline. Sec. Duncan: "these guidelines offer different approaches for early interventions on discipline issues so schools are able to pick and choose what works best for them."

Sentencing Reforms Last August, Attorney General Holder announced new guidelines for federal prosecutors that are designed to reduce sentences for non-violent offenders in the future, AG Holder: "In recent years, black male offenders have received sentences nearly 20% longer than those imposed on white males convicted on similar crimes. This is shameful and unworthy of our country and our great legal system."

On January 30th, the Senate Judiciary, in a bipartisan vote of 13 to 5, gave approval to the "smarter Sentencing Act" the biggest overhaul of federal sentencing in decades. It would cut mandatory minimum sentences in half for certain drug offenses, increase eligibility for reduced crack penalties, and expand discretion for judges to rule on drug cases. The Justice Dept. has asked defense lawyers around the country for help seeking out those low-level, non-violent offenders whose crimes might carry shorter sentences under the recently revised sentencing law. The Justice Dept. has requested those offenders to petition the President for early release. Meanwhile, Congress is considering a bill to allow these same offenders to petition judges for early release.

This is not a War on Drugs; it's a War on Drug Users

America practices mass incarceration: 5% of the world population with 25% of the world prison population.

Between 1970 and 2010 the number of people incarcerated in this country grew by 700 percent.

By 2007, states spent more than \$44 billion on incarceration -- a 127 percent jump from 1987.

After 40 million arrests and \$1 trillion spent, drugs remain readily available.

One in every nine black men between the ages of 20 and 34 is incarcerated, and one in three black men, and one in six Latino men, will spend some part of their lives in prison.

Stats from ACLU blog "It's Time to Discuss Criminal Justice Reform"

<https://www.aclu.org/blog/criminal-law-reform-prisoners-rights/its-time-discuss-criminal-justice-reform>

Action Priority: Gun Violence Prevention

EVERY TWO DAYS ?!?

from the Melissa Harris-Perry Show, MSNBC, January 26th

In 2013, there were 28 shootings or threatened shootings in schools.

As of January 26, 2014 there had already been 7 school shootings -- in only 14 school attendance days -- resulting in kids from age 12 to 21 seriously wounded or dead.

Wakefield Elementary School (CA), Delaware Valley Charter School (PA), Albany High School (GA), Berrendo Middle School (NM), South Carolina State Univ. (SC), Widener Univ. (PA), and Purdue Univ. (IN).

In New York City, 58 shootings. In Philadelphia: 22 murders. In Chicago: 41 murders. In Detroit: 38 shootings.

So far in 2014, there have been shootings in a supermarket, a barber shop, a movie theater, and a mall.

As Ms. Harris-Perry noted:

"2013 was the year we took no meaningful national legislative action to curb gun violence.

And 2014 appears set to become the year we will live and die with the consequences of that inaction."



WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT?

If Congress won't act, you can. The battle has moved to State & Local efforts. Here are some options.

Support our Sen. Dan Kotowski's bill to exempt churches (and maybe other venues) from the new Concealed Carry law. It was not brought up in the last General Assembly session. Get on the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence (ICHV) email list to follow this and other actions on state legislative efforts.

Attend the AH Ministerial Association's TBD plan to show the video "Trigger: The Ripple Effect of Gun Violence." Our own Faye Michaelis is involved with Pastor Steve Pierce on this & will get date, etc. to us.

MOMS DEMAND ACTION Campaign

From a recent email from Shannon Watts, Founder

...Sadly, both Facebook and Instagram allow users to initiate gun sales and trades through posts on their platforms. There's no way to know if the gun sales that begin on Facebook or Instagram end up with guns in dangerous hands, because thanks to the "private sale loophole" in federal law, many states don't require background checks for private sales initiated on the Internet.

If you think that's wrong: Send a letter to the CEOs of Facebook and Instagram to prohibit this practice at

<http://act.demandaction.org/sign/Facebook/?akid=1304.931328.hxdXkd>



Abolition of the Death Penalty

By Cathy Duoba

Drug manufacturers refuse to sell drugs for lethal injection. A European-led boycott refuses to export these drugs to the US. When the sole US manufacturer discontinued its lethal injection drug recently, supplies of "good" lethal drugs began drying up. States have begun buying alternative mixes of untested drugs made by compound manufacturers (who are not regulated by the FDA). St. Louis Public Radio reported "the quality of compound drugs, unlike manufactured drugs, varies from batch to batch...inspections by the Missouri Board of Pharmacy have found that one in five fails to meet standards...their impact on the human body is not known."

In January, Ohio used one of these mixtures to execute an inmate. Per the *Columbus Dispatch*, "McGuire struggled, made guttural noises, gasped for air and choked for about 10 minutes" – taking over 20 minutes to die. Despite this, "Louisiana plans to use the same mix for an execution scheduled for early February."

Because of these drugs, Supreme Court Justice Alito gave a temporary stay of execution to Missouri inmate, convicted murderer Herbert Smulls. In his order, Justice Alito suggested that secrecy surrounding these drugs made it impossible to determine if the lethal injection would cause undue pain and suffering (from the Atlantic).

While Mr. Smulls was on the phone with his lawyer because the Supreme Court was in the process of determining whether they would grant a final stay, guards took him away to his execution. The prison administration refused to wait for the decision. It was only after Mr. Smulls was already pronounced dead that the Supreme Court decision was announced from the bench. The decision was a denial, but what if it had gone the other way? Nor was this a fluke: Mr. Smulls defense lawyer says this was the third straight case in which the state of Missouri executed an inmate while appeals were still pending in court!

Reporting on all this, MSNBC's Alex Wagner noted:

"Executions may be becoming rarer in the U.S., but they are also becoming less humane.

Action Priority: Support Healthcare Reform Smear & Loathing of the ACA

by Cathy Duoba



From the beginning it's been Death Panels, Job killer, Government Takeover, Socialized Medicine. Seems like before we slap one down, another rises up. First the facts about the false story of "Bette in Spokane" and her huge premium increase from Rep. Cathy McMorris Rogers's Official Republican State of the Union response:

The Spokesman Review reported that "Bette in Spokane" was not forced to pay \$700 more a month. In fact, she had other, cheaper health care options available in Washington through the health exchanges -- she simply chose not to avail herself of those options. Bette never spoke with McMorris Rodgers's office to tell the whole story.

The Main Event: Job Choice OR Job Loss

When the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released its comprehensive report on the slow recovery of the labor market, one paragraph in one section was grabbed and mis-interpreted by some major media outlets. Republican leaders from Sen. Mitch McConnell to House Majority Leaders Boehner and Cantor went to the microphones to denounce "Obamacare" as a proven Job Killer," naming the CBO Report as proof. True??

ACTUAL WORDING OF THE CBO REPORT: "[CBO projects] a decline in the number of full-time equivalent workers of about two million in 2017...the estimated reduction stems almost entirely from a net decline in the amount of labor that **workers choose to supply**, rather than from a net drop in businesses' demand for labor, so it will appear almost entirely as a reduction in labor force participation...rather than as an increase in unemployment (that is, more workers seeking but not finding jobs)..."

The ACA frees workers from "Job Lock," i.e. being tied to a job or to longer, unwanted hours in order to keep healthcare insurance. It will allow Americans to choose to work fewer hours or quit that second job -- enough such decisions to be the equivalent of 2.5 million jobs over the next 10 years. A mother may decide to go part-time or a father may quit that second/third job so as to have time at home with their children (stronger families). Some workers may decide to return to school or start their own business (both improve the workforce or the economy). Some may retire early when age makes a labor-intensive job hard to endure.

Very recently, many conservatives were complaining about Job Lock, At a Capitol Hill "presser", May 20, 2009, Sen. Paul Ryan spoke for many when he said: "the key question that ought to be addressed in any healthcare reform legislation is are we going to continue job lock or are we going to allow individuals more choice..." But times change and at a Feb 5th Senate hearing, he now says "Washington is making the poverty trap much worse...in inducing a person not to work who is on the low-income scale, not to get on the ladder of life, getting the dignity of work...this means fewer people will do that, that's why I'm troubled by this."

The sophisticated wording of the CBO and the results it projects can be very difficult for many to ingest and digest. Americans are used to fast food and short headlines. So expect the 30-second campaign ads to read "Obamacare will cost American workers over 2 million jobs!"

The Sideshow Event: ACA has a Government Bailout!

Just like Medicare Part D, passed by a Republican Congress, signed by Pres. Bush, the ACA has a provision called a "risk corridor." And for the same reason: the ACA is creating a whole new insurance market; no one knows who is going to sign up and what the cost will be to insure them. So when insurance companies set premiums for these plans, they have to guess. The incentive is for companies to set the premiums high to cover their costs-plus-profits and consumers get hurt with higher premiums. So, as with Medicare Part D, the government set up "risk corridors" for the first 3 years: if claims outpace premiums, the government sends companies a check; if premium totals exceed claims and the companies make a killing, the companies write a check to a government fund. Based on Medicare Part D figures, the CBO Report estimates the government could get \$8 Billion back. A windfall for the deficit.

There are some differences: When the Republican Congress wrote Medicare Part D, they made the "risk corridors" a permanent fixture; the ACA risk corridors last only three years. Also, the ACA corridors have an upper limit, unlike the just-passed Farm Bill which has no upper limit on the premium subsidies to insurance companies selling crop insurance.

The Senate Republican Healthcare Reform Plan “The Patient Care Act”

Excerpts from the website of The United States Senate Committee on Finance
<http://www.finance.senate.gov/newsroom/ranking/release/?id=5cebe1e1-963f-4a4d-b613-0bd5aa0f2e3a>
and a televised interview with co-sponsor Senator Burr
by Cathy Duoba



“Burr, Coburn, Hatch Unveil Obamacare Replacement Plan

Senate Republican Proposal Lowers Health Care Costs, Increases Access to Affordable, Quality Care Without Government-Centered Regulations, Mandates”

Described as “...common-sense, patient centered reforms that reduce healthcare costs and increase access,” this bill has not been formally introduced so it has not yet been “scored” by the CBO. Without CBO analysis, it does seem to cut costs to the government, but it seems to shift these “saved” costs to the patients.

Sen. Burr: “Affordability is what we tried to address in this by creating competitive markets. This GOP Plan eliminates costly mandates and empowers the patient so they can choose... a plan that meets their age, their income, and their health condition. We certainly don’t offer as rich a tax credit or benefits as the President does but we think, in a competitive market we can offer a comparable mix of products and let individuals choose, not have the government set the rules.”

Comparison of Some Key Provisions to Healthcare Reformers

The GOP Plan eliminates annual and lifetime caps on benefits as does the ACA.

The GOP Plan has no minimum requirements on insurance coverage: for example, no requirement to provide maternity care, free preventive health services, etc. No requirement that mental health services be covered at parity with physical health services (a hard-fought ACA victory of gun/domestic violence prevention advocates).

The GOP Plan has no provision for States’ Medicaid Expansion. The ACA provides both the framework (which can be adjusted, see article on Arkansas) and the funding (at 100% for first three years and 90% into the future) for an expansion of Medicaid to provide coverage for the working poor who made too much for regular Medicaid, but could not afford private insurance premiums.

The GOP Plan caps tax credits at 300% of federal poverty level (FPL) while the ACA caps at 400%. These tax credits replace the Medicaid Eligibility Expansion to expand coverage to the uninsured, but it is unclear if the number of uninsured would drop. According to Larry Levitt, Senior VP, Kaiser Family Foundation, “Because the tax credits in many cases are quite modest, and there are no minimum requirements on insurance, the coverage they get may be very, very skimpy.” Meaning a return of substandard or catastrophic-only plans. Sen. Burr: “I would suggest people aren’t going to buy plans that don’t meet their needs.” Interviewer: “In some cases, they can’t afford plans that ‘meet their needs’.”

The GOP Plan claims savings of \$1 Trillion over 10 years. However, lacking a CBO analysis, the biggest component of that figure appears to be the GOP plan’s tax hike on 35% of the employer contribution to employee insurance plans. Sen. Burr states that this tax would only apply to “Cadillac” plans and that the revenue would be applied to cover the tax credits for lower-income households. Again, lacking a CBO analysis, some commentators say it is hard to see how the coverage of the tax credits could be achieved using the traditional definition for “Cadillac plans.” Opponents claim this proposal is a \$47 billion tax hike on the working poor and the middle class, with the worst effect on households of modest income (about \$30,000 level).

The GOP Plan encourages states to allow insurance plans to be sold across state lines, thus creating “a newly competitive market” driven by market forces not fashioned by government requirements. Opponents remind us these same selling points were the basis of credit card reform and the result was a “race to the bottom” as credit card companies relocated to the states with the least regulation. In the end, it was quality, not cost, that was reduced. Lack of consumer protections caused a great deal of harm until recent reforms were legislated.

The GOP Plan says people cannot be denied for pre-existing conditions if they are “continuously insured”. Sen. Burr: “After enactment, we have an open enrollment that anyone can enter without discrimination. If a person loses his job, he can go under COBRA [only lasts 6 months with huge premiums]. We allow small businesses to group together to buy insurance.”

State of the Union Address Touches on All of League's Priority Issues

By: Elisabeth MacNamara

League was also pleased that the President's address covered other important issues, including **income inequality, the wage gap and improvements to our health care system.**

CLIMATE CHANGE: Promise to use executive power to take action if Congress did not take action against climate change – and he's done just that by taking historical action to cut carbon pollution from power plants.

IMMIGRATION: commitment to fix our broken immigration system and to push for much needed reforms. Citizenship is the fundamental sign of allegiance to the U.S., our Constitution and our way of life.

VOTING RIGHTS: mention of two recent bipartisan efforts to improve our elections, increase access to the polls. We're excited that Obama highlighted the bipartisan bill introduced in both chambers of Congress to modernize the Voting Rights Act, and we look forward to working with Congress to pass a strong bill quickly.

MONEY IN POLITICS: brief mention of the grave issue of money in politics when he said "It should be the power of our vote, not the size of our bank account, that drives our democracy." 4th Anniv. of *Citizens United*.

GUN SAFETY: briefly addressed the need for stronger gun control measures, saying he intends to use his executive power to help prevent future gun violence. League believes it is long past time for common sense.

EDUCATION: CONNECT – ED: In the State of the Union, Pres. Obama gave a "shout-out" to CONNECT – ED, his plan to connect 99% of students in every school across the country to high-speed broadband by 2017. CONNECT – ED will transform the way teaching and learning happens in our classrooms where currently fewer than 30% of schools have access to broadband service, which is needed to teach today's technology. Partial funding of \$750M has been provided by "marquee" tech companies who will supply devices, content, and connectivity to 20 million students in the next 2 years.

by Cathy Duoba



Keystone Pipeline

The latest argument for the pipeline, advanced by more moderate spokespersons, is the issue of safety in Bakkan oil transport. It seems Montana got an agreement from the pipeline developers to build an on-ramp to the Bakkan shale. They cite State Dept. Report figures that transport by rail will cause 300 spills/year with 1200 barrels released while transport by pipeline will cause one leak/2 years with 500 barrels spilled. However, the pressure for pipeline usage will be enormous since plans for 2 pipelines to the east are dead and 2 pipelines planned westward are under attack. Unless there is a binding contract specifying Bakkan oil claims to pipeline usage (When? How much?), it is questionable Keystone will ever carry Bakkan oil, on-ramp or not.

ENVIRONMENT



WV Chemical Spill

Check out these excellent background articles: the *New York Times*, "[Clean Water Laws Are Neglected at a Cost in Suffering](#)" Sept. 12, 2009 (part of great series on Toxic Waters); Huffington Post, "[Who Owns West Virginia's Water? A Cautionary Tale](#)" (of pollution & privatization); and the Wall Street Journal, "[West Virginia Chemical-Spill Site Avoided Broad Regulatory Scrutiny](#)" (spreads blame but avoids mentioning long fight for stricter toxic chemicals laws).

At the time of the spill, Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) had introduced a bill to "reform" the inadequate Toxic Substance Control Act which was due to expire soon. Environmentalists called his bill "not a solution by any means." Manchin was among those pointing out the spill was "not a coal company incident." House Majority Leader Boehner claimed no new regulations were necessary (fire whoever didn't do his job) even as tainted water reached Cincinnati just south of his district.

But with over 500 hospitalized (the Governor noted it was flu season), Sen. Manchin insisted nobody knew about the gaps in regulation (guess he never reads New York Times or got lobbied by environmentalists). He joined Sens.

Rockefeller and Boxer to sponsor the *Chemical Safety and Drinking Water Protection Act* which

- establishes state inspection programs for chemical facilities, both storage and production

- sets minimum inspection requirements and standards for facilities

- directs states to identify at-risk facilities

- requires industry to develop state-approved emergency response plans with at least minimum guidelines to

- ensure drinking water systems have the tools and information to respond to emergencies

Two More Things: Even if this bill passes, another bill is needed to update stronger testing standards for the Toxic Substances Control Act - the 15 page data sheet for the spill-chemical, MCHM, listed "no data available" 152 times! AND Why so many people in this water-rich state depend on a single, privately-owned treatment system and distribution network that sprawls across nine counties for their water supply? (Huff. Post article)

Action Priority: Immigration Reform

By Cathy Duoba

Ever since the bipartisan **comprehensive** Immigration Reform bill, with a path to citizenship, passed the Senate last year, its fate in the House has been very uncertain. House Majority Leader Boehner, on Jan 16th: “The American people are skeptical of big comprehensive bills and frankly they should be. The only way to make sure immigration reform works this time is to address the complicated issues **one step at a time**. Sen Paul Ryan on Jan 30th described “a probationary kind of status,” no path to citizenship.

Right-wing House Republicans are vehemently anti-immigrant; they call “unsatisfactory” the billions of dollars in border security that were added to the Senate bill - that Republican Senator Bob Corker said were probably overkill. There was increasing pre-election rhetoric about the President as “lawless,” a “socialist dictator,” an “imperial Presidency.” Still, hopes were alive. Speaker Boehner expected to iron out differences at the House Republican winter retreat in late January. He told various reporters that immigration reform must, and will, be done – step-by-step. But when the “Standards” were released by the House leadership, the rank and file was not impressed. The problem: how to explain another case of inaction on a vital issue.

Even though he had described his task as “keeping jumping frogs in a barrel long enough to pass a bill” (Tonight Show, Jan 23rd), at his press conference on Feb 6th, Speaker Boehner claimed a different cause of the inaction: “There is widespread doubt about whether this President can be trusted to enforce our laws. And it’s going to be difficult to move any immigration bill until that changes...The President is going to have to demonstrate that he can be trusted to enforce the law as it is written.” (In 2013 alone, President Obama deported 368,644 persons.) But Senate Minority Leader McConnell may have the more accurate reason: “I think we have an insolvable conflict here. The Senate insists on comprehensive [reform]. The House says it won’t go to Conference with the Senate on comprehensive and wants to look at step by step. I don’t see how you get to an outcome this year with the two bodies in such different places.” Some political commentators cite election year as another reason: the GOP thinks concentrating on a “lawless” Obama and his dictatorial, job-killing Obamacare will win them support outside their base. So why muddy the message while antagonizing the far-right? Besides they expect to win the Senate and be in a position of bicameral control in 2015.

The popular conclusion: tiny hope for action after primaries, but most probably NO ACTION in 2014. If these “standards” prevail, immigration will serve Business, enforcement triggers will stop even legalization.

The Republican “Standards for Immigration Reform”

Full text at www.nytimes.com/2014/01/31/us/politics/text-of-republicans-principles-on-immigration.html

Preamble The problems in our immigration system must be solved through a step-by-step, common-sense approach that starts with securing our country’s borders, enforcing our laws, and implementing robust enforcement measures. These are the principals guiding us in that effort.

Border Security and Interior Enforcement Must Come First We must secure our borders now and verify that they are secure... enact reform that ensures a President cannot unilaterally stop immigration enforcement.

Implement Entry-Exit Visa Tracking System this system to be biometric, using technology to verify identity and prevent fraud.

Employment Verification and Workplace Enforcement [e-verify]

Reforms to the Legal Immigration System For far too long, the United States has emphasized extended family members and pure luck over employment-based immigration. Visa and green card allocations need to reflect the needs of employers and the desire for these exceptional individuals to help grow our economy. The goal of any temporary worker program should be to address the economic needs of the country

Youth It is time to provide an opportunity for legal residence and citizenship for those who were brought to this country as children through no fault of their own, those who know no other place as home. For those who meet certain eligibility standards, and serve honorably in our military or attain a college degree

Individuals Living Outside the Rule of Law There will be no special path to citizenship for individuals who broke our nation’s immigration...Rather, these persons could live legally and without fear in the U.S., but only if they were willing to admit their culpability, pass rigorous background checks, pay significant fines and back taxes, develop proficiency in English and American civics, and be able to support themselves and their families (without access to public benefits). Criminal aliens, gang members, and sex offenders and those who do not meet the above requirements will not be eligible for this program. Finally, none of this can happen before specific enforcement triggers have been implemented to fulfill our promise to the American people that from here on, our immigration laws will indeed be enforced.



NEWS FROM LWVUS

League Joins Suit Supporting Reproductive Health Care in ACA

LWVUS joined an [amicus brief](#) in a challenge to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by employers who maintain they do not have to provide reproductive health coverage based on religious beliefs of owners. LWV has long supported access to health care including reproductive health care for women.

Missouri Moves Forward on Photo ID – Veto Proof Majority Means Real Threat

This week a [Missouri Senate panel held a hearing on a bill that would require voters to show photo identification at polling places](#) amid warnings from the state's top election official that 220,000 registered voters would no longer be able to cast ballots if the measure passes. Similar measures passed in the past but were vetoed by their Governor. This year there is a veto proof majority in both houses.

Voting Rights Act Fix Introduced in Congress!

Representatives Sensenbrenner (R-WI), Conyers (D-MI), Scott (D-VA), Lewis (D-GA), and Senate Judiciary Chairman Leahy (D-VT) have introduced common sense legislation that would repair and restore the Voting Rights Act. This bipartisan effort to fix the damage done by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Shelby v. Holder* is necessary to restore and protect the rights of voters across the country. The League wrote the U.S. House of Representatives urging them to act quickly on the bi-partisan Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2014. Please urge your elected officials to support this important legislation, to act swiftly to move to final passage. The League's Lobby Corps will also be visiting targeted offices on the hill to deliver this message in person.

Court Overturns Pennsylvania Photo ID Law

Last week, a judge in Pennsylvania overturned the state's photo voter ID requirement stating it places [an unreasonable burden on the fundamental right to vote](#). This is a huge victory for voters. Congratulations to the [League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania \(LWVPA\)](#), the lead organizational plaintiff in the lawsuit.

Election Assistance Commission Rejects KS, AZ Request to Change Nat'l Voter Registration Form

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) rejected requests from the states of Arizona and Kansas to modify the national mail-in voter registration form to require voters to provide documentary proof of citizenship with that form.

LWVUS joined LWVKS and LWVAZ to submit [comments to the EAC](#) regarding this decision.

Presidential Commission on Election Administration Issues Solid Recommendations

The PCEA released their report to President Obama outlining how to improve the administration of America's elections. The League said "there are many good recommendations in the PCEA report and others that we will need to look at more closely to examine the real impact on American voters." We look forward to working with the Commission to implement the best of these proposals and improve how elections are run nationwide.

Support EPA's Limits on Carbon Pollution (Reminder)

President Obama and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have proposed a first-ever federal carbon pollution standard for every new power plant built in America. This is a game changer for the climate – especially because power plants are our single largest source of carbon pollution. [Submit a public comment to the EPA in support of the standard and your voice will be part of the official record.](#)

League Urges Senate to Oppose H.R. 2019

The League asked the U.S. Senate to oppose H.R. 2019. The bill contains a section that would repeal the presidential public financing system. The League believes that the presidential public financing system is necessary to protect citizens against government corruption and to provide presidential candidates with an alternative, citizen-based means to finance their campaigns.

LWVIL PRIMARY DEBATES IN JANUARY & FEBRUARY

The first debate was on **January 23, 2014 in Peoria at television station WTVP-TV**. LWVIL was joined by the following public radio and television stations in co-sponsoring the debate: WTVP in Peoria; WILL in Urbana-Champaign; WSIU in Carbondale; and WUIS radio Springfield. With the exception of Mr. Rauner. The second debate will be held in **Chicago at ABC 7 on February 27, 2014**. LWVIL's co-sponsors are ABC 7 and Univision. All four Republican gubernatorial candidates have confirmed their presence.



- ☐ Michael B. Schroeder, D.D.S.
- ☐ Kenneth A. Johnson, D.D.S.
- ☐ Renee P. Pappas, D.D.S.
- ☐ Robert P. DiChristofano, D.D.S.
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

February 20th - Hot Pizza, New Paths, New Plans!

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