



The Chicago Voter

League of Women Voters of Chicago
Website - www.LWVChicago.org

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LWVChicago Events

- Social Policy Committee
- Monday, January 9
- 10 AM to noon
- Executive Board
- 5:00 PM
- Board Meeting
- 6:00 PM
- LWVChicago Office

Chicago Government in Focus

- with Alexandra Holt
- Wednesday, January 11
- 5 PM to 7 PM
- Union League Club

Program Planning Briefing

- Saturday, January 14
- 10 to noon

LWVIL Issues Briefing

- Saturday, January 28
- 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM
- University Center

Call 312-939-5949
For more information

President's Message

Happy New Year!

The League of Women Voters United States begins the New Year recommitting itself to engaging its members in reviewing its positions on issues and charting a course for the next two years. At the January unit meetings members will review the existing positions, which are many, and comment on those that need to be updated to reflect changing circumstances. We will also identify those issues that, during the next two years, we believe will be the subject of legislative or executive action at the federal level and that we, as LWVUS, should support or oppose. For example, during 2011, LWVUS actively supported renewal of the Clean Air Act. If there is a national issue that merits study by local Leagues throughout the country, a study may be proposed. Please participate in this discussion by attending a unit meeting. A summary of the LWVUS positions may be found on pages 3 and 4 or this **Voter**.

Chicago Government in Focus resumes Wednesday, January 11 when Alexandra Holt, Budget Director of the City of Chicago, will speak. These early evening events provide us insight into the responsibilities of specific offices and the constraints within which the official functions. Details are in the flyer on page 6 of this **Voter**. This series is open to the public, so invite friends to join you at the Union League Club at 5 PM on January 11.

On January 28 LWV Illinois will hold its annual Issues Briefing. This is an election year, primary elections in March and the general election in November. With newly drawn Illinois General Assembly and Congressional districts, we anticipate that LWVChicago will be asked to participate in candidates' forums. If you would like to serve as a moderator or assist at a forum the LWVIL Issues Briefing afternoon program, when there will be workshops on organizing and moderating candidates' forums, is the place to learn about this process. We will be forming a group to work on this as well.

Margaret Herring

Privatization Study

Please consider volunteering for the LWVChicago Privatization Committee. The briefing is scheduled for Saturday, March 3. This subject is an LWVUS national study with consensus. Materials are available from LWVUS and the topic will be covered in one of the workshops at LWVIL's Issues Briefing. If LWV members (or non-members) would like to volunteer for this committee, please leave a message for Esta Kallen at the LWVChicago office: 312-939-5949 or at League@LWVChicago.org.

Esta Kallen

Chicago Ward Redistricting

The Chicago City Council is scheduled to consider the proposed maps for ward redistricting at its meeting on January 18. It is possible that this redistricting issue will be decided by a referendum on the ballot on March 20.

Program Planning

Every year local Leagues participate in the program planning process. This year members of LWVChicago will review the positions of LWVUS and LWVCookCounty. In alternate years members review the programs of LWVillinois and LWVChicago. The LWVUS positions (see pages 3 and 4 of this **Voter** for a summary) are of importance because all levels of League act under these positions. No state or local League position may contradict a National position.

The briefing for program planning will be held Saturday, January 14 from 10 AM to noon in the Suite 525 conference room. If you are planning to attend please call the office: 312-939-5949 or send an email to League@LWVChicago.org to have your name put on the building security list.

The Program Planning process is an important League tool by which the organization identifies issues for study and action. Program Planning gives members the opportunity to balance pros and cons, assess public support, and consider the viability of issues. This year, each local League may recommend one of three choices:

- 1) propose a new study;
- 2) review and update of one position; or
- 3) ask for concurrence with an existing

position of a state or local League.

The LWVUS position on gun control was adopted by concurrence with an Illinois position. Of course, a local League may choose to make no recommendations.

Program is a core component of the League's mission. It is a three part process: program planning, study and consensus, and advocacy. This fall we participated in the study and consensus on the federal role in education. This spring, local Leagues will participate in the national study and consensus of privatization of government services. (Are you interested in this topic? Call the office to sign on this study.) It is through local Leagues' identification of issues and evaluation of support for study of an issue that LWVUS will adopt at its program at the National convention in June 2012.

Chicago Units will meet in January to review positions and recommend issues for study, review or concurrence. The complete LWVUS positions are available on the LWVUS web site (LWV.org) in the publication **Impact on Issues 2010-2012**. These

positions are the basis for LWVUS advocacy to Congress and the executive branch. **Impact on Issues** also includes a history of League action under each position. The general areas for possible review and update are Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources and Social Policy.

At the Unit meeting, the presenter will have a copy of **Impact on Issues**. The responses of the Unit members' discussions will be compiled and submitted to the LWVChicago Board for approval and then forwarded to LWVUS.

In considering a possible recommendation bear in mind these criteria;

Is there widespread member interest?

Is this a timely issue?

Is government action the most effective way to address the problem?

Resources and volunteer time are important considerations in a recommendation of a study; review and update; or a concurrence. Members must consider the resources available to our League, resources of both money and volunteer time. We should also consider the resources of other Leagues. Bear in mind that priorities must be weighed carefully when resources are scarce. Nevertheless, when an issue is significant and legislative activity is imminent, the League must be ready to take action, which it can do only under a position that is developed through study and consensus.

LWVCookCounty asks local League members to indicate if there is an issue of county government that should be studied. A brief summary of the LWVCookCounty positions is found on page 5 of this **Voter**. For complete positions see cookcounty.il.lwvnet.org.

Social Policy Committee

The Committee will meet in the LWVChicago office on Monday, January 9, 2012 at 10:00 AM. It will consider resuming participation in Jobs with Justice and start planning for the May briefing. Topics might include an update on sequestration and budget cuts as well as their potential impacts on jobs, food stamps, affordable housing, etc. New committee members are always welcome!

Herb Ziegelendorf

LWVUS Public Policy Positions 2010-2012

Summary

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

Voting Rights

Citizen's Right to Vote. Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation. Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

Election Process

Apportionment. Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

Campaign Finance. Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

Selection of the President. Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular-vote. Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

Citizen Rights

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation. Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision making.

Individual Liberties. Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices. Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

Congress and the Presidency

Congress. Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision making capability and effective performance.

The Presidency. Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

United Nations

Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

Trade

Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

U.S. Relations with Developing Countries

Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

Arms Control

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

Military Policy and Defense Spending

Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

Natural Resources

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.

Resource Management

Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

Air Quality. Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

Energy. Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.

Land Use. Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

Water Resources. Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

Waste Management. Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

Nuclear Issues. Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Public Participation

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

Agriculture Policy

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

SOCIAL POLICY

Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

Equality of Opportunity

Equal Rights. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Education, Employment and Housing. Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

Fiscal Policy

Tax Policy. Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

Federal Deficit. Promote responsible deficit policies.

Funding of Entitlements. Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

Immigration

Promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises; and provide for student visas. Ensure fair treatment under the law for all persons. In transition to a reformed system, support provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.

Meeting Basic Human Needs

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

Income Assistance. Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter.

Support Services. Provide essential support services.

Housing Supply. Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

Child Care

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

Early Intervention for Children at Risk

Support policies and programs that promote the wellbeing, development and safety of all children.

Violence Prevention

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

Gun Control

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

Urban Policy

Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

Death Penalty

The LWVUS supports abolition of the death penalty.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well defined channels for citizen input and review.

Deputy Voter Registrar Training

The next training sessions for Deputy Voter Registrars are:

Wednesday, January 11, 11 AM

Saturday, January 21, 9:30 AM

Thursday, January 26, 6 PM

LWVChicago's Voter Service chair, Terry Williams, must register you for the training at least 3 days in advance. Please call the office if you would like to be included in the class.

LWVUS

LWVUS continues to lobby against Anti-Environmental Riders on US Budget Bills and to work for elimination of restrictions on registration and voting.

LWVIL Annual Issues Briefing

Saturday, January 28, 2012

ISSUE PROGRAMS 9:15 AM to Noon

Voting in Illinois: Myths and Realities

Sustainable Food & Water

LUNCHEON: Noon to 12:45 PM

WORKSHOPS 12:45 PM - 2:00 PM (attend one)

Legislative Outlook 2012

LWVUS Privatization Study

Candidate Forums 2012

What Planners Need to Know

WORKSHOPS: 2:15 PM - 3:30 PM (attend one)

Legislation, Regulation and the Illinois Smart Grid

LWVIL Pension Study

Candidate Forums 2012

What Moderators Need to Know

Consult LWVIL.org or phone 312-939-5935 x 37 for more information or to register for this program.

LWV Cook County

Summary of Positions

COUNTY GOVERNMENT - Supports measures that improve the structure and function of Cook County government, including retention of single-member districts, separation of powers, a timely budget process, government transparency, and inter-governmental cooperation.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE - Supports measures that improve adult corrections and the criminal courts, increase and improve diversion programs, and improve judicial sentencing and oversight of correctional facilities.

HEALTH CARE - Supports measures that provide public health facilities that are accessible to those who need services, and provides for citizen input in planning for health care with emphasis on cost containment and consumer involvement.

JUVENILE JUSTICE - Supports a separate juvenile justice system that protects the rights of all without discrimination; has the necessary staffing, programs and community support to be effective; is accessible; and provides for the secure detention of juveniles when necessary.

TOWNSHIP SCHOOL SYSTEM - Supports abolishment of the township school treasurers and trustees system within Cook County.

Unit Meetings

Unit 1/5 Downtown – evening

Tuesday, January 17 – 5:30 PM

LWVChicago Conference Room

Leader – Margaret Herring

Unit 9/11 West Side – daytime

Sunday, January 22 – 1:30 PM

Third Unitarian Church

301 N. Mayfield, Chicago

Leader – Joan Morton

Unit 21/35 North Side – Evening

Tuesday, January 17 – 7:30 PM

Home of Carol Ziegeldorf

Co-Leaders – Carol Ziegeldorf and Norma Braude

Unit 22 Downtown – daytime

Thursday, January 19 – 10 AM

LWVChicago Conference Room

Leader – Bernice Fortini

Unit 41/42 – South Side

Call the LWVChicago Office

Coordinator – Marcia Cowing

Unit 66/74 – Montgomery Place – Daytime

Thursday, January 19 – 1:30 PM

Montgomery Place – East Room

Leader – Dorothy Scheff

The Chicago Voter

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Voter Editor pro-tem

A monthly series of informal public meetings where areas of Chicago government are discussed by city officials.

Chicago Government in Focus

January Program Presents



Alexandra Holt Budget Director City of Chicago

Wednesday, January 11, 2012

5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Program begins at 5:30

at the

Union League Club

65 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL

Admission is free, cash bar

RSVPs appreciated - 312-939-5949 or League@LWVChicago.org

Dress: Business casual, no jeans/denim

Co-sponsored by the
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHICAGO
and the
UNION LEAGUE CLUB OF CHICAGO

**Coming February 8: Mariyana Spyropoulos, Commissioner
Metropolitan Water Reclamation District**