



THE LEAGUE

OF WOMEN VOTERS of the CINCINNATI AREA

THE VOTER

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May/June 2012

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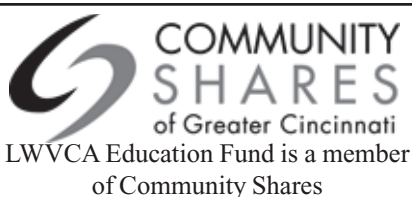
The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages the informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Membership is open to all men and women over 18. For information call 513-281-8683, or write to the LWVCA office at 103 Wm H Taft Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45219, or email at info@lwvcincinnati.org.

LWV DIVERSITY POLICY

The League of Women Voters recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making.

The LWVCA affirms its commitment to actively seek diversity in its membership, leadership and programs.



LWVCA ANNUAL MEETING - MAY 24, 2012

The 2012 Annual Meeting of LWVCA is scheduled for Thursday, May 24. Please save the date, as it promises to be a special event. We will be having a buffet dinner **catered by PIP** (Power Inspires Progress) which is directed by our own **Rina Saperstein**; their food is always delicious!! We will be having our event in the Geier Room at **Mount Auburn Presbyterian Church**, location of our office. The Geier Room has been very recently renovated and will be a great venue for our event. You will be quite surprised if you haven't been there for a while. All the pertinent details will be in **Workbook I**, soon to appear in your mailbox.



PLEASE SAVE THE DATE!!! WE'LL SEE YOU THERE.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONSENSUS Meeting Set For May 19

By *Nancy Dawley*

Would you like to be part of a statewide consensus process on human trafficking? LWV Ohio is requesting your participation. The state League adopted a human trafficking study at its convention in May 2011, and has just recently distributed it to Ohio local leagues for review and statewide consensus. The paper gives an overview of the surprising extent to which Ohio is involved in sex trafficking rings.

LWVCA is planning a meeting on **May 19 10:00-11:30 am** for all interested members, in the League Offices. **Eight consensus questions will be discussed:**

Other must reads in this issue:

- Call for Action: Redistricting (p. 4)*
- Call fro Action: Fracking (p.4)*
- Educate the Public re Election (p.9)*

1. Human forced labor and sex trafficking should be stopped through legislation and changes in public policy.
2. Victims of human trafficking should be provided with services on an as-needed basis to facilitate integration into the community, including but not limited to.... (Check all items to be included)

- Counseling
- Drug and alcohol treatment
- Safe housing

(Continued on page 9)

PRESIDENT’S LETTER

Dear League Friends,



I would like to thank you for having given me the opportunity to serve as your president. For the past two years, I’ve grown in ways that I had never thought possible. Thanks for believing in me and supporting me in countless ways. I especially would like to thank the board for their guidance. It has been a pleasure to serve with each of you. I hope you join me in welcoming **Shirley Jason** as she comes on board as president, and the new board as they take their seats and begin to guide our next steps.

The past months have been a busy time with planning for our upcoming election season. I hope you consider joining the **Speakers Bureau** as we begin outreach to local schools and community groups on the process on electing the president. More information about this opportunity is included in this Voter. Please contact Speakers Bureau coordinator Mary Kay Gardner if you are interested or have questions.

In April, we held the first **My Vote Counts - Southwest Ohio**, which was a look at voters’ rights in our region, in conjunction with Common Cause Ohio. We had many great speakers present and we plan to have more follow-up to the event. Thanks to all of you who attended.

Thanks to the members who participated in our many consensus processes this year. Your input and hard work makes a difference to the future of our League.

Hope to see you at annual meeting!

In League,

Melissa Currence

BOARD MEETING BRIEFS - APRIL

By *Sherrie Heyse*

On April 2, the Board acted on the following:

- Approved: A letter to the Editor on Ohio SB 295 (the current Ohio legislation action that partially modifies early voting bill HB 194 before the voters have a chance to address it via referendum)
- Approved: A letter to State Representatives on HB 408 (a bill concerning the number of members on the board of Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority).
- Reviewed: **Jean Masthay’s** report on her operational analysis of the LWVCA. The Board will vote on the report at a special board meeting on April 19, 2012.
- Approved: plans for the Annual Meeting.

CORRECTION:

Editor’s note: Our apologies for mistakes made in the editing of a story last month. The original article is printed below.

GREEN UMBRELLA

By *Chris Moran*

How green is your umbrella? Another refurbished site to visit is <http://greenumbrella.org>. Currently a 2012 membership drive is underway and you are invited to join Green Umbrella, a Regional Sustainability Alliance. This is a collective effort to improve the economic vitality and quality of life in our region! Why not visit the site. You may want to click on Get Involved.

IN MEMORIAM

We were sorry to hear that long time League member and office volunteer **Elizabeth Lemon** died on April 11. Our sincere sympathies to her family and many friends.

NATIONAL POSITION ON “THE FEDERAL ROLE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION” ANNOUNCED

Last September, LWVCA members participated in the consensus study of “The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education.” The Board of the LWVUS has announced the position that results from the thoughtful responses of our members and of those throughout the United States. Space doesn’t allow us to reprint the entire position statement, so we are offering some **excerpts** from that new position:

The League believes that the role of the federal government should include the following:

- Provide leadership and vision to promote a quality education for all children;
- Provide broad common standards developed by educational experts upon which states and local education agencies can build;
- Provide a suggested curricular structure or framework as a guide to state and local education agencies to develop their own curricula;
- Provide a national assessment that clearly informs teachers, parents and students about how well individual students have mastered criteria established at the national level;
- Provide a national assessment that informs districts how well their populations compare to other populations similar to theirs; and
- Provide a combination of competitive grants and non-competitive funding to states and local school districts to achieve equity among states and populations.

In accordance with the League of Women Voters’ position on Equal Rights, we continue to support equity in public education for all through:

- Broad guidelines for accountability, leaving implementation to the state and local education agencies;
- Adequate funding sources that support the broad goals of national standards; and
- Mechanisms for local and state funding with adequate federal support for mandates that require less burdensome, compliance-based reporting and regulations.

The League believes that the federal government should support the following:

- Early childhood education programs that include funding for parent education and involve child development, health, nutrition and access to other supportive services such as mental health care for all children and their families;
- Research that documents quality early childhood education programs; and
- Research that demonstrates the importance of linking state and local community partnerships with effective early childhood education programs and services.

You can access the entire position statement on the LWVUS website, www.lwv.org. Click on “Members” at the top; then click on “Advocacy,” and “Education Study.”

BETTER KNOW A DELEGATE ... TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

Have a message you want delivered in person to the National LWV Convention in July? The following people will be representing us there.

Nancy Dawley
Randi Ditter
Shirley Jason
Gail Wick
Pinky Kocoshis
Sandra Mowell

The Voter is the official monthly newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area (LWVCA).

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Please submit articles to:
newsletter@lwvcincinnati.org.
Next deadline: Friday 06/08/12
for the July/August issue

CALL FOR ACTION RE FRACKING: Senate Bill 315

By *John Hunter and Nancy Dawley*

Fracking is the strange new name for the hydraulic fracturing of shale rock to release trapped oil and gas for recovery via drilled wells. The process requires the injection of millions of gallons of water mixed with chemicals and sand under high pressure into horizontally drilled wells radiating from a central drill hole. 15% – 20% of the water makes its way back to the surface laden with chemicals (both added and picked up from the shale) and must be disposed of safely. Large deposits of oil and gas in shale underlying much of eastern Ohio have attracted the interest of the petroleum industry and Ohio's government as a potential new source of revenue.

Experience with fracking in other parts of the country have raised concern that the process brings risks of lasting damage to air, water quality, and communities where the fracking takes place. The Ohio Senate is considering a bill (SB 315) to regulate fracking in hopes of minimizing threats to health, the environment, and the impacted communities. LWVCA's Natural Resources Committee (NRC) encourages you to read the LWV Ohio Fracking action sheet (attached to this Voter) and their future analyses of SB315.

As with all legislation, the devil is in the details. LWV Ohio suggests contacting your state legislators and urging them to support legislation that includes complete disclosure of chemicals used in fracking, made before drilling starts, and available to the public so that home owners can take action if appropriate to protect their water supply. Proprietary laws are the problem – companies can claim that the exact content would give an advantage to their competitors, and then only disclose the general chemical "class" to which each component belongs. At present, disclosure is not required to the public; only that the information should be available to emergency response commission or fire department.

LWV Ohio has found that existing environmental positions in Natural Resources, Resource Management, Environmental Protection and Pollution Control, Air Quality, Energy, Land Use, and Water Resources cover relevant aspects of the fracking issue and can provide guidance for action. Legislative consideration is moving quickly. NRC encourages members to contact their state legislators and urge them to strengthen provisions for transparency, accountability, and environmental and community protections.

CALL FOR ACTION RE REDISTRICTING

By *Nancy Dawley*

League Members can get a nonpartisan redistricting plan on the November ballot. Here is how:
Nonpartisan, good government organizations in Ohio, including the League of Women Voters, and Common Cause/Ohio, have proposed a constitutional amendment that would reform Ohio's redistricting

process. It would place redistricting decisions with an independent appointed board rather than with the legislature. With enough support, this issue can be on this November's ballot, so that Ohio's voters can decide.

Petitions are now available. **386,000 signatures are needed by July 3, 2012.** A statewide

educational campaign must be mobilized for the November 2012 election.

You can help by:

- Helping to collect signatures to put this initiative on the November ballot. Please fill out the volunteer form (available at votersfirstohio.org under the "Volunteer" tab).
- Signing a petition at an upcoming League meeting.
- Hold public meetings or speak to groups about the redistricting process and why there is a need for reform.

- Supporting this effort by committing your time, money, and influence.
- Following our efforts at www.votersfirstohio.org and on Twitter and Facebook.

For more information, see the flyer "Statehouse Day and Council 2012" attached to this newsletter. More detail is available on the website www.votersfirstohio.org – see in particular the "Response to Bipartisan Proposal" halfway down the page on the right.

STATEHOUSE DAY

Five ACTION SHEETS were distributed by the Ohio League on Statehouse Day:

- Human Trafficking
- Incumbency and Redistricting
- Fracking
- Voting in 2012
- Constitutional Modernization Commission

All five fact sheets are included within this *Voter*.



*Our local participants to Statehouse Day:
Front row L: Helen Rhoad, Nancy Dawley
Back row L: Mary Kercherval Short, Kit Berger, Marlene Muse, Alice Schneider, and Sandra Mowell*

League of Women Voters of Ohio Statehouse Day and Council 2012

Human Trafficking - *Fact Sheet*

The League's Position

Pending. The League does not yet have a position on human trafficking and therefore has not advocated regarding the bills which have been before the legislature in recent years. At the State Convention in 2011, delegates proposed a study on human trafficking. A committee led by Karen Rainey studied human trafficking and prepared consensus questions. Local Leagues are holding meetings or otherwise attempting to reach consensus this spring. If consensus is reached, we would anticipate that the League will be able to advocate on behalf of laws which strengthen authorities' ability to apprehend and convict persons responsible for human trafficking and to assist victims.

Issue Status

LWV Ohio adopted a state study of human trafficking at its convention in May 2011. It was expected that the study would draw significantly from the work of the Ohio Attorney General's Trafficking in Persons Study (TIPS) Commission. A 2010 year-end report formed the basis for the League's consensus questions in that they address continuing issues; in fact, the new attorney general, Mike DeWine, has continued the study commission. House Bill 262 - a "safe harbor" bill - is pending before the state legislature and would provide for victim services. A law passed in 2010 made trafficking in persons a stand-alone offense and easier to prosecute, but much work remained to be done.

The scope of the LWVO study was to review the recommendations of the Ohio TIPS Commission 2010 Year End Report as well as other research materials, and determine what steps can be taken legislatively and through community coalitions to address the issues. Its purposes are to 1) allow the state and local Leagues to advocate for legislation assuring victims' rights, with a focus on how minor victims of sex trafficking are treated by the criminal justice system; 2) join in coalition with other organizations in their own communities, working to provide community-based services to victims; and 3) educate communities on how to recognize and report human trafficking. While prosecution of traffickers is important, equally important are the identification and rescue and rehabilitation of victims.

Take Action

- Participate in your Local League's discussion of the Human Trafficking consensus questions, which are due May 31st.
- Once Local Leagues have submitted their consensus report forms, the state board will review the reports and identify the consensus position. The state board will promptly share this position with members and local Leagues, so that we can begin lobbying.

For more information, contact the state office at leg@lwvohio.org or call (614) 469-1505.

League of Women Voters of Ohio Statehouse Day and Council 2012

Incumbency and Redistricting - *Fact Sheet*

The League's Position

LWVUS position is that congressional districts and government legislative bodies should be apportioned substantially on population, recognizing that both the U.S. Constitution and the Voting Rights Act require that reapportionment not dilute the effective representation of minority citizens.

The Ohio League's position on redistricting includes support for an impartial districting process that may include but is not limited to (i) substantial population equality in districts; (ii) a bipartisan commission comprised of an odd number of members to draw lines; (iii) districts that are compact, contiguous, bounded by a non-intersecting line and follow political boundaries as much as possible; and (iv) opportunities for citizen participation.

Issue Status

Last year, Ohio politicians hid out in backrooms to draw districts that benefit themselves — to ensure their own re-elections and over-represent their party. In order to gain political advantage, they have created bizarre districts that split apart cities and counties. They have rigged the system to create “safe” districts that prevent voters from holding them accountable. ***Instead of voters choosing their politicians, politicians are choosing their voters.***

What is the solution? Nonpartisan, good government organizations in Ohio, including the League of Women Voters, and Common Cause/Ohio, have proposed a constitutional amendment that would reform Ohio's redistricting process. With enough support, this issue can be on this November's ballot, so that Ohio's voters can decide.

What would the new process look like? Politicians will no longer be able to draw their districts. The Commission will be independent and nonpartisan. No more backroom deals! It would require fair and objective redistricting practices and compliance to federal election law and the U.S. Constitution.

Take Action

To move forward, we need to identify sufficient resources to gather 386,000 signatures by July 3, 2012 and mobilize a statewide educational campaign for the Nov. 2012 election.

You can help by:

- Hold public meetings or speak to groups about the redistricting process and why there is a need for reform.
- Helping to collect signatures to put this initiative on the November ballot. Please fill out our volunteer form (available on the <http://votersfirstohio.org> website).
- Supporting this effort by committing your time, money, and influence.
- Following our efforts at www.votersfirstohio.org and on Twitter and Facebook.

For more information, contact the state office at leg@lwvohio.org or call (614) 469-1505.

League of Women Voters of Ohio Statehouse Day and Council 2012

Fracking - *Fact Sheet*

The League's Position

Fracking is a topic that relates to so many environmental concerns that we operate under a number of our environmental positions. We use statements in Natural Resources, Resource Management, Environmental Protection and Pollution Control, Air Quality, Energy, Land Use, and Water Resources (pp 41, etc. in *Impact on Issues*). All refer to either preserving, regulating, inspecting or controls on ecosystems and resources. At the state level, "Stringent water quality standards accompanied by strong enforcement and means of implementation" can be used as well as "financing for reducing water pollution" and "joint planning along watershed lines". For the specific wording, see the materials sent out by Kristin Vessey for programs on fracking in February of 2012.

Issue Status

Exploiting the gas and oil potential of Eastern Ohio is a major part of Governor Kasich's program. He outlined his detailed plans in February 2012. We support several of his ideas in principle, including mandatory disclosure of chemicals used in fracking, encouraging waste-water treatment and recycling, and imposition of a severance tax on gas and oil production. However, the devil is in the details. The first item on his agenda presented to the Legislature is the severance tax. The House of Representatives has refused to consider any tax increase, even though the severance tax is coupled with an income tax reduction. The matter apparently is in negotiation.

LWVO has not completed an analysis of more comprehensive legislation (SB315), that was introduced very recently. We note that it does contain several measures that we oppose, including incomplete disclosure of fracking chemicals. It also includes matters unrelated to gas and oil production, such as the ability to fulfill Ohio's statutory renewable energy goals with non-renewable technologies.

Finally, LWVO took action on the earthquakes caused by storage of fracking liquids in injection wells. While the State has issued regulations intended to prevent earthquakes, we petitioned the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to take the additional precaution of locating the wells away from population centers and critical infrastructure. We will attempt to get this provision included in legislation.

Take Action

- Contact your state legislators and urge them to support legislation that includes complete disclosure of chemicals used in fracking, so that local emergency responders can be prepared in the event of an emergency.
- Urge the Department of Natural Resources and your state legislators to adopt new laws or regulations to require that injection wells be located away from population centers and critical infrastructure.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper under your own name, or encourage your Local League president to write a letter on behalf of the Local League, supporting greater transparency and accountability in fracking, including disclosure of chemicals used.

For more information, contact the state office at leg@lwvohio.org or call (614) 469-1505.

CITY GOVERNMENT ISSUES

By Carolyn Miller and Chris Moran, LWVCA City Government Committee

PLAN CINCINNATI. Plan Cincinnati held an Open House on March 14 to receive public comment on the Draft version of this new comprehensive plan for the City of Cincinnati. **Chris Moran** and **Carolyn Miller** attended from the League. Plan Cincinnati includes five broad areas - Live, Compete, Sustain, Connect, and Collaborate - with goals and strategies for each area. You can view the document as a whole or by specific Initiative Area at the website, plancincinnati.org. Following the public comment period, the Draft plan will be updated and moved forward to the City Planning Commission later this summer/fall.

FOUR YEAR TERM PROPOSALS FOR CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS. City Council has voted out of the Rules and Government Operations Committee two proposed ordinances for Charter Amendments for four-year terms for Council members. One version of the Charter Amendment has all nine council members running in a single election every four years; the other has either five or four members running in staggered elections every two years for four year terms. Both versions retain the eight-year term limit and four-year terms would begin with the 2013 Council elections. Public hearings are being held on these issues to assess which proposal has the most support. Also, presentations are being made to community councils and other civic groups. By August, City Council will approve one of these proposed Charter amendments and it would then go on the November 2012 ballot for a vote. LWVCA is actively involved in this issue in conjunction with the Rookwood 6 group and will keep the membership informed about the issue of four-year terms as the community discussion continues through the spring and summer. LWVCA will look closely at these proposals to see how they align with our City Government positions.

CITIZENS DECIDE PRIORITIES IN NEW CITY BUDGET PROCESS. City Council has approved a new **priority-driven budgeting** process for 2013-2014. This plan, which is underway, will transform the budget process so that city funds those support services that achieve the community's priorities. The Center for Priority Based Budgeting (Center for PBB) has been hired to help with the intensive citizen engagement that drives the new approach. During March and April, the Center for PBB worked with citizens and community leaders to identify a set of between five and seven strategic priorities with clearly defined outcomes that will guide the City's allocation of resources.

Working with city staff, they will use the priorities to guide development of the budget to reflect what the community wants, and to aid City Council in making difficult budget decisions. The administration intends to bring the results back to City Council before its June recess, and will use them to develop the budget that will be brought to council in November.

Priority-Driven Budgeting marks a departure from the way the City has developed budgets in the past. Typically, the departments put together the costs and revenue from programs they currently deliver as well as upcoming programs. Priority-Driven Budgeting sets the areas of focus and then evaluates which programs and services help achieve them.

Though the open public sessions were concluded in April, you can still participate online, at prioritydrivenbudgeting.pbworks.com. An even easier interface is on [Facebook](#): a search for "Cincinnati Budget" will take you right to the relevant page.

PREDATORY TOWING: A Campaign in Song

Cincinnatians have recently rallied together to oppose overcharges on towing fees within Cincinnati. Two tactics have been employed. First is the lawsuit: a court suspended Kenwood Towing from the City's contract for grossly overcharging. Second is a song! Search on YouTube.com for "The Cincinnati Tow Jam," and learn your rights the fun way.



YOU CAN HELP EDUCATE AREA STUDENTS AND ADULTS ABOUT THE 2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION!

By Nancy Dawley

LWCA has some exciting plans this year, and we could use your assistance.

We are planning a major local community education effort. One major source will be the brochure *Electing the President*, a co-production of the National League Education Fund and the Newspapers in Education Institute (NIE).



It will take skills of many kinds to accomplish our goals:

- People to design, print, and distribute a poster on Electing the President, to be used in high schools and Hamilton County libraries.
- People to design a PowerPoint presentation about the election for high school and adult discussion groups.
- People to join the Speakers Bureau and experienced speakers to train new ones.
- Someone to phone the many school districts and area colleges to identify contact information of social studies/government curriculum managers so we can notify them about our materials.
- There will be the usual project management, communication, and record-keeping tasks, if that is where your interests lie.
- Know of any resources to help fund our expenses? We would like to find funds to cover our expenses.
- There is no end to the opportunities. You might have an even greater idea of ways to use this document to educate the Tri-State area.

The Cincinnati Public Schools have already signaled their high interest in using our materials. We hope to expand to all area school districts and colleges. **Once our materials are designed, we will make them available to all Leagues in the country.**

Call Nancy Dawley or email her at action@lwvcincinnati.org if interested. *Tentatively hold one of these times for a 1 hour planning meeting – Monday, May 7, 12:00 noon; or Monday, May 7, 5:30 pm.* You can find a pdf of the pamphlet online, at www.lwv.org/content/electing-president-2012-now-available.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONSENSUS (continued from page 1)

- ___ Physical and mental health care
- ___ Legal representation
- ___ Job training
- ___ ESL/GED/education
- ___ Employment assistance

3. Minors who have been commercially sexually exploited or forced into slave labor should be legally considered as victims and given special physical and mental health care.
4. Cooperation and collaboration among state and local agencies is necessary to enforce prohibitions and prosecute traffickers and other offenders (consumers).
5. There should be aggressive enforcement of laws dealing with traffickers and offenders (consumers).
6. Strategies to reduce the demand for commercial sex and forced labor trafficking should be employed by law enforcement agencies and the courts (an example would be court-ordered attendance at "john schools").
7. Training and education of the public, law enforcement, and service providers should be widely available.
8. Funding (state and local) should be provided as necessary to treat victims, prosecute traffickers and consumers, and enhance awareness of the issue through training.



You can find a link to the study paper and consensus questions on our local website, lwvca.org.

We hope all members will plan to attend the meeting, voice your views on human trafficking, and enter into the consensus. **RSVP to the League office (513-281-8683)** if you plan to attend, so we can provide an adequate room size and morning beverages.

LWVCA ADVOCACY CORNER

Ideas for advocacy, complete with sample letters to write or calls to make!

#1. PUBLIC HOUSING. Email letters were sent to all Ohio State Legislators asking them to vote **NO on House Bill 408**, the bill that singles out Hamilton County to increase the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority from five to seven members, with the two additional members to come from suburban communities.

Dear Legislator,

Ohio House Bill 408 singles out Hamilton County from all the other counties in the state and changes the number of members of the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) Board from five to seven.

This change does not benefit the goal of equal opportunity access to housing in Hamilton County for the following reasons:

- Adding two people will give control of the housing authority to primarily white suburban jurisdictions, even though 90% of public housing in Hamilton County is within Cincinnati, and about 90% of its residents are black.*
- HUD recently made findings of racial discrimination by the CMHA Board because members ordered no public housing to be built in their suburban jurisdictions.*
- The bill applies only to the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority. We question why it should be different from other Ohio counties.*
- Currently the CMHA Board has four members, and is awaiting the appointment of a fifth by a countywide elected official. Of the four members, two live in suburban townships. There is no need to expand the Board to ensure representation of these communities.*

We therefore ask that you vote against HB 408 if it comes to a vote.

Sincerely,

Melissa Currence, President, League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area

#2. ELECTION LAW. A letter to the editor was posted in the online Cincinnati Enquirer to explain the negative consequences of the Ohio Legislature attempt to repeal HB 194, the controversial election bill subject passed last year and subject to referendum.

To the Editor:

The League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area has concerns about the current action of the Ohio Legislature to repeal HB 194, the controversial election bill passed last year that is subject to referendum.

We are concerned for the following reasons:

- 1. The repeal by the legislature will NOT undo all the changes made last year. Most importantly, the repeal will not restore early voting for the Saturday, Sunday, and Monday before Election Day.** *Why? Because eliminating the last three days of early voting was also included in another bill last year, HB 224, which the legislature used to "fix" sections of the law they missed in their rush to pass HB 194. To completely restore election law to the way it was before HB 194, SB 295 should be amended to restore early voting the three days before Election Day.*
- 2. If the repeal passes, what happens to the referendum on HB 194? No one knows.** *HB 194 never went into effect, because the referendum petitions blocked the law until Ohioans vote on the referendum this fall. Legislators have publicly acknowledged in the press that it is unclear whether or not it is constitutional to repeal a law that is subject to referendum. If the legislature does pass the repeal bill, it likely will end up in court for a judge - rather than the voters - to decide what happens to the referendum.*
- 3. The rush to repeal HB 194 is unnecessary, because the referendum stopped HB 194 from taking effect until after the November 2012 election. So why the rush?** *Passing SB 295 will not change what rules are in effect for this year's election, because HB 194 has never gone into effect. Supporters of SB 295 claim that removing HB 194 from this fall's ballot will avoid voter confusion and save money. However, the uncertainty of voting on a repeal that may or may not be constitutional and is likely to end up in costly litigation simply adds to the confusion over what laws will or will not go into effect and when.*

We urge that the legislators allow the voters have their say on HB 194 this fall.

Sincerely,

Melissa Currence, President, League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area

#3. See also the **STATEHOUSE DAY ACTION SHEETS** within this *Voter*.

Note: *There are no Unit Meetings in May, June, July, and August. We'll start again in September! In the meantime, we hope you will take this opportunity to take action on some of the issues raised in this Voter.*

Hilltop Summer Planning Meeting

The Hilltop Unit will be having its Planning Meeting for the coming year as well as its Potluck dinner at the home of Sylvia and Bob Mersfelder on **August 20**.

FOLLOW-UP TO PRIVATIZATION CONSENSUS

By Nancy Dawley

Thanks to all LWVCA members who took part in the recent LWV consensus regarding privatization of government services. Our unit discussions were consolidated and presented to the Board, then passed on to the National League. LWV will use the many local and state consensus recommendations to determine a National Position. It is expected that the position will be published at the June National Convention.

OUT OF TOUCH? We need your email address!

LWVCA's email list is fewer than half our paid members. That means that many of you are not receiving up-to-date League information. Providing your email address allows us to email you the newsletter in color with links; to solicit your opinion on League policy issues; and to send reminders of a few pertinent issues or events throughout the year.

The League is very careful with our email list: we don't give or lend it to anyone; we don't allow it to be used to email solicitations; and we email events and advocacy requests only if they are a) sponsored by the League and b) came up too suddenly to be included in the *Voter* newsletter.

If you have an email address but are NOT receiving email from the League, please send an email with your name and email address to info@lwwcincinnati.org.

Thank you!

ALREADY IN THE WORKS:

Anderson Unit Plans September Candidate Forum

By Ruth Hardy

The League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area - Anderson Unit is sponsoring a Candidate Forum for the candidates running for Ohio State Legislature, District 27. The event will be held on Tuesday, **September 18** from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., at the Anderson Center on 7850 Five Mile Road in Anderson.

The candidates will answer 3-4 questions presented by our LWV Unit, and then field questions from the public. Candidates then have an opportunity to meet informally with the public as time allows. Anderson Cable Television (AC-TV) will be televising the event live and replaying it prior to the election.

The Anderson Unit will also use this opportunity to introduce participants to the LWV, welcome attendees to attend a Unit meeting, and encourage the public to pick up copies of various LWV publications such as "The Who & What of Elections," TRU, and membership materials.

Join the League of Women Voters

For civility in civic discourse



All citizens, male and female, 18 years and older, are welcome.

Take the opportunity now to support our work promoting democracy and civic engagement. Dues include Cincinnati, Ohio, and National membership, including newsletters from each.

Individual - \$60.00

Household - \$80.00

Student - \$25.00

Dues pose a hardship. I can pay _____

Optional deductible contribution to LWVCA: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mail to LWVCA, 103 Wm. H. Taft,
Cincinnati, OH 45219



League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



LEAGUE ACTIVITIES for May-June, 2012

*All meetings are open to the public and are held at the League Office, address above unless otherwise noted.
 Bring a friend!*

- Friday May 4 7:00 pm Fixing the Future: *Green Building*, at First Unitarian Church
- Monday May 7 12:00 pm Elect the President Committee
- Monday May 7 5:30 pm Elect the President Committee
- Monday May 7 6:30 pm Board Meeting
- Tuesday May 8 8:00 am Membership Committee
- Thursday May 10 7:00 pm Natural Resources Committee
- Wednesday May 16 6:00 pm Education Committee
- Thursday May 17 REGISTRATION DEADLINE, Annual Meeting
- Saturday May 19 10:00 am Human Trafficking Consensus Meeting, League Conference Room
- Monday May 21 6:00 pm Health Care Committee
- Monday May 21 7:00 pm County Government Committee
- Tuesday May 22 7:00 pm Housing Committee
- Wednesday May 23 5:00 pm Program Development Committee
- Thursday May 24 5:45 pm ANNUAL MEETING at Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church
- Monday May 28 Office closed for Memorial Day
- Wednesday May 30 6:00 pm Executive Committee

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- Monday Jun 4 6:30 pm Board Meeting
 - Friday Jun 8 VOTER COPY DUE for July-August issue
 - Friday Jun 8 LWVUS National Convention
 - Saturday Jun 9 LWVUS National Convention
 - Sunday Jun 10 LWVUS National Convention
 - Monday Jun 11 LWVUS National Convention
 - Tuesday Jun 12 LWVUS National Convention
 - Thursday Jun 14 7:00 pm Natural Resources Committee
 - Monday Jun 18 6:00 pm Health Care Committee
 - Monday Jun 18 7:00 pm County Government Committee

As always, see our website (www.lwvca.org) for more information on upcoming events.

League of Women Voters of Ohio Statehouse Day and Council 2012

Voting in 2012 – *Fact Sheet*

The League's Position

One of the key principles of the League of Women Voters is that every citizen's right to vote should be protected. This principle has been reflected in much of the work of the League of Women Voters of Ohio, including its the 2009 Settlement Agreement of *LWVO v. Brunner*, the historic lawsuit brought by the League to ensure the State of Ohio would protect and ensure Ohio voters' Fourteenth Amendment rights.

The League of Women Voters of Ohio adopted the 4 R's of Election Reform in 2008, one of which supported the removal of barriers to voting by (i) expanding the number of early voting locations in each county; (ii) eliminating voter ID requirements or alternatively, eliminating inconsistencies between absentee and provisional voter ID requirements; and (iii) permitting voters in wrong precincts to vote for candidates or issues not precinct specific.

In 2007 the Ohio League adopted a 10-Point Proposal for Election Reform, which included: (i) Ensuring that all persons eligible to vote by absentee ballot can do so in a timely way and (ii) Ensuring that provisional ballots and voter identification requirements not prevent eligible voters from having their ballots counted and (iii) Improving poll worker training and experience.

Issue Status

Last year the Ohio legislature passed House Bill 194 (HB 194) that included several provisions that the League opposed as being harmful to voters. A group called Fair Elections Ohio collected enough signatures to place a referendum on HB 194 on the November 2012 ballot. An effort is currently underway in the legislature to repeal HB 194 before voters get a chance to vote on the referendum this fall. The repeal bill is Senate Bill 295 (SB 295). The Senate passed SB 295 on March 28, 2012, and the House is expected to take it up when they return from Spring Break in mid-April. Members of the legislature have indicated that they also intend to introduce another package of election changes to replace HB 194.

The League offered interested party testimony in the Senate on SB 295, outlining three main concerns. SB 295 does not completely restore election law to what it was before HB 194, because it does not restore early voting on the Saturday, Sunday, and Monday before Election Day. Legislators have admitted that it is unclear whether or not it is constitutional for the General Assembly to repeal a bill that is subject to referendum. Thus, the issue is likely to end up being decided by the courts, which will only add to the confusion and cost. The legislature should not take up any more election legislation this year. Making any changes this year will create confusion and make it harder for election officials to run a smooth election. Changes to election law should be done in a thoughtful manner, with adequate time for public input, and implemented in off-year elections – not rushed through in the midst of a presidential election.

Take Action

- Contact your state legislators. Urge them not to pass SB 295 or any other election legislation this year. (Use the three talking points above.)
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper under your own name using the three points above, or encourage your Local League president to write a letter on behalf of the Local League expressing concern with SB 295 or any other election legislation this year.

For more information, contact the state office at leg@lwvohio.org or call (614) 469-1505.

League of Women Voters of Ohio Statehouse Day and Council 2012

Constitutional Modernization Commission

The League's Position

The Ohio Constitution provides that every 20 years voters must decide whether there should be a convention to amend the Ohio constitution. In 1932, 1952, 1972 and 1992 voters turned down a convention. In 1971 the League supported the creation of a Constitution Revision Commission, which made recommendations to the Legislature on changes to be made to the Constitution. The League lobbied the Commission, whose membership included several League members, for Constitutional changes and was instrumental in bringing many issues to the ballot.

Issue Status

The Constitutional Modernization Commission is made up of 12 legislators and 20 members of the public. The 12 legislators were appointed in 2011. Interested members of the public submitted applications earlier this year, and the 20 public members of the Commission are expected to be appointed soon.

Once the full Commission is seated, they will begin their work. The Commission is expected to form committees which will be tasked with studying particular issues. In addition to regular meetings in Columbus, the Commission may hold regional meetings around the state to hear public input. The Commission's first report to the legislature is due in 2013.

Take Action

- Help your community understand the importance of our state Constitution and the role of the Commission by including an article in your Local League's *Voter*, by holding a community event, or engaging in other public education.
- Attend regional meetings of the Commission. This will be an opportunity to advance League positions.
- Hold a community forum to discuss issues that your local community would like to see addressed by the Commission.

For more information, contact the state office at leg@lwvohio.org or call (614) 469-1505.

Isaac M. Wise Temple Critical Topics Committee Presents:

CINCINNATI

#3

Third in the Nation in
CHILD POVERTY:
a Report Card for Change

Monday, May 14, 2012
7:00 PM at Wise Center
8329 Ridge Road in Amberley Village

Panel:

Elaine E. Fink

Managing Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, LLC

Georgine Getty

Executive Director, Interfaith Hospitality Network

Kurt Reiber

President and CEO, The Freestore Foodbank

Anthony Smith

Assistant Superintendent, Cincinnati Public Schools

Moderated by: Marianna Bettman

Professor of Clinical Law, U.C. College of Law

Co-Sponsors:

Adath Israel Congregation
American Jewish Committee
BridgePointe Psychological and
Counseling Services
Central Clinic
Cincinnati Youth Collaborative
Freestore Foodbank
Cincinnati Chapter of Hadassah
Jewish Family Service

League of Women Voters of
the Cincinnati Area
Legal Aid Society of Greater
Cincinnati
Lighthouse Youth Services
Office of Interfaith
Community Engagement, XU
PROKIDS
Rockdale Temple

Temple Shalom
The Strive Partnership
United Way of Greater
Cincinnati
Valley Temple
Wesley Chapel Mission
Center
Woman's City Club
YWCA of Greater Cincinnati

For information, write to ctc@wisetemple.org