



League of Women Voters Eden Area

# V O T E R

Vol. 51 No. 1 *Political Responsibility Through Informed and Active Participation* Jan. 2008

## WHAT SHOULD THE LEAGUE'S POSITION BE ON IMMIGRATION POLICY?

The presidential candidates are talking about it. Congress is talking about it. Newspapers and television report on it.  
The "it" is IMMIGRATION POLICY.

Our League Immigration Study Committee has been exploring the underlying values and principles regarding immigration--reasons for immigration, current federal immigration policy, and the impact of immigration on American society.

We are now ready to "come to consensus" on the six major multi-part questions that will assist the National League develop a position on this important issue.

**Final Consensus Meeting**  
**Thursday, January 24, 2008**  
**4 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**  
**Supvr. Nate Miley's Conference Room**  
**20999 Redwood Road, Castro Valley**  
**(near CV BART)**  
**Refreshments will be provided**

Study Review Session to Prepare for Consensus  
Thursday, January 17  
5 to 7 p.m.  
Hayward City Hall, Room 1C  
777 B. Street, Hayward

Consensus questions and more details on the meetings are in this VOTER.

## Co-President's Report By Angelinia Reyes

Hope your holidays were happy and that you are looking forward to a wonderful new year. As you know, the League had a festive holiday party to close out the year. Unfortunately, I was out of the area and unable to attend. But fortunately, I had several "elves" tell me that it was a successful event with more than 45 people attending.

The holiday auction was successful, too, with thanks to Supervisors Nate Miley, Alice Lai-Bitker and Gail Steele donating tickets for great seats to watch Warrior games. Thank you to Jo and Al Murdach for donating their condo at Lake Tahoe again and to Assemblymember Mary Hayashi for a gift basket of chocolates and champagne.

Thanks to Jo Casenave for delivering a Congressional Tree Ornament donated by Congressman Pete Stark (who is also a member of our League). These ornaments have become collector items for many of our League members and the bidding got spirited, I was told.

This year we also auctioned off luncheons donated by VIP's in our community:

- Hayward City Council Member, Barbara Halliday
- Superintendent of San Lorenzo School District, Dennis Byas
- Superintendent of Castro Valley School District, James Fitzpatrick
- Chancellor, Chabot-Las Positas Community College, Joel Kinnamon
- President, CSU East Bay, Mo Qayoumi
- Senator Ellen Corbett

And, of course, thank you to Marianne Dimick who coordinated the event, Steve Dimick and Brian Foster who were the motivational auctioneers, and Suzanne Barba for hosting the event at her home.



## Board Briefs November 14, 2007

- Discussed lack of quorum to approve minutes. Minutes will be sent to those that attended for their approval and then to the rest of the board for final approval.
- Received a report from the Treasurer stating that the bank needed a copy of the minutes when the new officers were elected in order to process new signature cards.
- Discussed the need to fill more Board positions in order to have a quorum to conduct business. Angie was asked to contact Board members who were not attending and ask if they wanted to stay on the Board.
- Received an update on the Immigration Luncheon Forum from Trish. She said that attendance was approximately 50 and that the feedback on the speakers was positive. She has a video of the speakers which she is hoping to use for those who were unable to attend.
- Received a report from Trish that she has a Chabot student willing to go into 15-20 classes at Chabot to give information on the importance of voting.
- Received an update on the Eastshore power plant situation in Hayward.

## Board Briefs December 12, 2007

- Elected two Board members—Suzanne Barba and Nancy Van Huffel. Both were serving in off-board positions and have many years of League Board experience.
- Discussed the need to recruit more members as speakers for Pros and Cons presentations. Requests for these presentations are already coming in.
- Discussed venues and potential speakers for Program Planning meeting.
- Next Board meeting is January 9, 2008. All Board meetings are open to the public.

## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE IMMIGRATION DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

You may attend the informational meeting on Thursday, January 17. This session will be a "crash course" for anyone who has been unable to make previous study committee meetings.

This session will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Hayward City Hall, room 1C, 777 B Street, Hayward. There is limited parking in the City Hall basement.

On Thursday, January 24, the final consensus meeting will be held at Supervisor Nate Miley's conference room at 20999 Redwood Road, Castro Valley, next to the CV BART.

Here is the schedule for that meeting:

- 4:00 p.m. - a review of the Immigration Panel Forum (DVD) held in November.
- 5:00 p.m. – review and discussion of information from previous meetings.
- 6:00 p.m. – Working Dinner  
Each participant will write out personal perspective and or conclusion from the Study.
- 6:20 p.m. Begin a roundtable for each member to express an opinion and advocate for their position/thoughts on immigration consensus questions.
- 7:00 p.m. Consensus process.

Everyone is invited to this meeting and encouraged to attend the review of the issues if they have not attended any of the Study Committee sessions.

For those who want to "catch up" and educate themselves on the many facets of this complex issue. reading materials are on the LWVUS website at [www.lwv.org/ImmigrationStudy](http://www.lwv.org/ImmigrationStudy).

Questions? Contact Trish Taylor, Immigration Study Committee Chair, 886-1711 or at [Taylorfm@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Taylorfm@sbcglobal.net)

## IMMIGRATION STUDY--PREVIEW OF CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

The following questions are being discussed now by the Immigration Study Committee and may be helpful to you in framing this very complex topic. We will be having our League Consensus Meeting on January 24.

At the conclusion of the study, the committee will send the results to LWVUS so that they can develop a League position on Immigration. Leagues at every level will then be able to educate, advocate or oppose future legislation on the issue. *(All committee and membership meetings are open to the public.)*

1. a & b. Which of these criteria should Federal Law consider? How high of a priority is each? Which are your top 3 priorities?

- Ethnic and Cultural Diversity
- Employment Needs
- Environmental Impact/Sustainability
- Families: Spouse/Children Joining Authorized Immigrants in U.S.A.
- Criminal Record
- Humanitarian Crisis/ Political Persecution
- Health/Age
- Worker Rights to Safety/Fair Wages
- Rights of Families to Remain Together
- Rights to Fair Treatment and Justice
- Education/Training

2. How should unauthorized immigrants currently in the U.S. be treated?

- Deported?
- Deported & Fined Prior to Re-Entry?
- Fined & Allowed to Earn Legal Status?

3. For which of these categories of immigrants should Federal law provide efficient, expeditious entry systems? How high of a priority is each?

- Family Members Joining Authorized Immigrant Currently Residing in U.S. Workers to Meet U.S. Labor Needs Students The Persecuted

4. a. For the sake of effectively dealing with unauthorized immigration, how high of a priority is it that Federal law requires S.S. cards or other national ID cards with secure identifiers for all persons residing in the U.S?

4. b. Which of these methods should be utilized to deal with unauthorized immigration? How high of a priority is each?

- Physical Barriers/Border Surveillance
- Increased Personnel at Land, Air and Sea Entry Points
- More Effective Tracking of Persons with Non-Immigrant Visas Until They Leave the U.S.
- Document Verification Utilizing Secure Identifiers
- Facilitate Employer Verification of Technology
- Improved Technology for Sharing Information Among Federal Agencies
- A Program to Allow Immigrant Workers to go In and out of the U.S. to Meet Seasonal and Sporadic Labor Needs
- Significant Fines on Employers Who Fail to Verify Visa Status of Workers

5. Should federal law address and balance the long-term federal financial benefit from immigrants with the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations?

6. Should Federal law be coordinated with U.S. foreign policy to pro-actively improve economies, education, job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations?

## SETTING THE LEAGUE'S EDUCATION & ADVOCACY GOALS FOR 2008-2010

**Save the Date** – Saturday, February 9, from 9 a.m. to 11:30. On that date, we will be engaged in setting the direction for the League to follow in 2008-2010.

**Give Us Your Opinion.** - We will be reviewing the National League's positions and deciding which to drop, retain or update. We can also suggest a new study for a new position.

**Why is Your Participation Important?** – We need your participation so we have diverse opinions on which positions we want to emphasize in 2008-10. We need updated positions in order to educate and advocate on legislation as well as local policy decisions that are made.

**How Does That Work?** – For example, we at a local level can advocate for more transparency in how governmental agencies conduct their business because the LWVUS has a vertical position on the Public's Right to Know.

**How Can I Participate If I Don't Know Much About the Positions?** We don't plan to go over all the positions in depth and will just focus on those that are of importance to our members. We will also provide the information and small group discussions if that format seems workable. We are also planning to have a speaker(s) to provide additional information.

**Will it be Interesting or Will I Fall Asleep?** - It will be interesting and you will not fall asleep. We are serving breakfast and will have lots of coffee to keep you awake.

**SO SAVE THE DATE – FEB. 9, 2008**

Questions? Call Suzanne 538-9678 or [suzbarba@comcast.net](mailto:suzbarba@comcast.net).

## ARE OUR VOTES GOING TO BE COUNTED ACCURATELY IN 2008 ELECTIONS—Feb. 5, June 3, or Nov. 2?

Yes, but more than 4500 people will have to work very hard in Alameda County to make it happen.

**Paper Ballots for all.** In Alameda County, and in all of California, we can say this “Yes” with confidence. California has been ahead of many other states in correcting the potential problems of electronic voting and in having good election practices. Our official ballot is now always a paper ballot. Although the provisional totals of the election are gathered and reported electronically at the end of Election Day, the paper ballots are sampled and audited to make sure the electronic totals are correct.

**Top to Bottom Review.** The newly elected Secretary of State Debra Bowen ordered a “Top to Bottom Review” of voting systems that included the Sequoia systems now used in Alameda County. The tests were done without the many safeguards that are usually in place when the systems are used in real elections, so as to reveal as many weak points as possible and make sure these were all corrected or protected against in the future.

The experts who studied and tested the systems deliberately tried to cheat and change the vote in as many different ways as they could. They found many weak points in all the systems. The Secretary of State therefore decertified all the tested systems and recertified them only on condition that many involved corrections and improvements were made by the companies and by local registrars of voters.

The Secretary of State’s directives for Sequoia and the other companies and the full reports of the committees can be found at [http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_vsr.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_vsr.htm). Alameda County already had many of the required safeguards and

improvements in place and is complying promptly with the other requirements.

**Translating Regulations into Practice.** Our elections will now be safer, but also more complicated. The Registrar’s office faces a very demanding election year—running three county-wide elections under new and more stringent requirements. The Secretary of State’s new requirements have not yet all been spelled out in detail, so registrars are expecting more new instructions as they prepare for 2008.

These new requirements must be translated into procedures; permanent staff must retrain; they in turn will train the approximately 4500 poll and other temporary workers hired for each election, and develop new or revised instruction and reference materials to do so.

*Nancy Bickel, LWV Berkeley/Albany/Emeryville Election Systems Advisory Committee*



## SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT

LWVEA has been working with students at Chabot College on various projects including going into classrooms to explain the importance of registering to vote and getting educated on the issues.

Other students are interested in helping the League meet its Mission. If you have any short-term Service Learning, League-like project ideas, contact Trish Taylor at 886-1711 or [taylorfm@sbcglobal.net](mailto:taylorfm@sbcglobal.net)

## ASSEMBLY BILL X1 1

November 18, 2007

The Honorable Fabian Núñez  
Speaker, California State Assembly  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0001

Dear Speaker Núñez:

The League of Women Voters of California regrets that it must oppose ABX1 1, your revised bill to address problems in the health care system. ABX1 1 fails to meet the goal of universal, affordable, and comprehensive coverage on a continuous basis to all Californians.

Health care is too important an issue to pass reform legislation while it still needs improvement and development.

We have followed the bill carefully and believe the proposed individual mandate will not provide the insurance protection that Californians need. People who are exempted from the mandate because their premiums and out-of-pocket costs would be too high would simply be "freed" to go without health care coverage at all.

As the California Budget Project reports in "Making Ends Meet: How Much Does It Cost to Raise a Family in California?", measuring affordability in terms of the federal poverty line does not take into consideration the cost of child care in determining a family's basic needs, nor does it reflect California's high cost of living. Health care premiums and out-of-pocket costs compete with basic living costs.

Many families are hard pressed to balance health care costs with their rent or mortgage payments, child care, food, transportation, and unexpected but crucial bills. Many Californians forced under an individual mandate to obtain high-deductible insurance will postpone needed health care because they will not be able to pay the out-of-pocket costs. This will cost

more in the long run because untreated conditions will worsen over time.

The League is also concerned that ABX1 1 does not contain adequate cost controls. We feel the provisions to control increases in the cost to the state and local governments are not sufficient. There are no cost controls on premiums and no limits placed on co-payments, deductibles, co-insurance or hospital charges. Rising health costs will place a significant financial burden on stakeholders, with the notable exception of the insurance industry.

Additionally, employers will be required to pay up to 6.5 percent of payroll toward employee health care coverage. This spending range is less than many employers currently pay for employee coverage. There is concern that this lower standard for employer payments will erode the coverage benefits many individuals and families now have, as well as shift more of the cost burden to them.

It also is important that full details be available regarding the proposed funding mechanisms, employer responsibilities, and cost protections for consumers through such mechanisms as subsidies, tax credits, and Section 125 plans. Until such provisions are fully disclosed, your overall package of this bill plus an anticipated initiative cannot be fairly evaluated by consumers or employers.

The League of Women Voters of California urges you to fully consider the unintended outcomes of your proposal for health care reform. We ask you to continue to work for reasonable and affordable health care legislation for all Californians in the coming year, instead of going forward with ABX1 1.

Sincerely,  
Janis R. Hirohama,  
President

cc: Senate President pro Tempore Don Perata  
Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

**ALAMEDA COUNTY MEASURES  
ON 2-5-08 BALLOT**

The following is a summary of Measure A and B which will be on the ballot for Alameda County residents.

**Measure A - Special Tax to Support Children's Hospital Construction**

**Measure B - Children's Hospital Special Tax Initiative**

Each needs 2/3rds vote to pass. If both pass, the one with the most votes wins.

**The Way It Is Now:** Children's Hospital Oakland is a non-profit private hospital. It provides treatment to children from all over Northern California, including Alameda County, who have serious illnesses like cancer, diabetes and birth defects. The hospital needs to be fixed for earthquakes, and also needs new buildings.

**What Measures A and B would do:** Measures A and B are both plans for a new tax to support Children's Hospital Oakland. Both would start a new parcel tax\*\* in Alameda County. Once a year, for 35 years:

- each house would pay \$24
- each small business would pay \$150
- each large business would pay \$250.

Alameda County would collect the tax money and keep track of it.

Measure A would pay up to 1.7% of the total money collected to the County for collecting the tax. The County would only be paid for things they actually do, like collecting the tax, and auditing the funds.

Measure B sets a limit of 1% that the County would be paid for managing the tax. It may cost the County more to manage the tax than they would be paid, so they might have less to spend on other county services.

**\*\* A parcel tax is a tax that is the same for each parcel, or lot, of land. It is not based on the value of the land, or the size of the land. It is paid by the person who owns the land.**

**Arguments for – Measure A:**

This is a sensible way to provide part of the money to help rebuild Children's Hospital Oakland. This is a compromise worked out among Children's Hospital leaders, the County Supervisors and Mayor Ron Dellums

**Arguments against:**

Children's Hospital wants Alameda County voters to pay for a big fancy building

Children's Hospital has expanded without seeking neighborhood input

**Arguments for – Measure B:**

The people who submitted Measure B want you to vote for Measure A instead. They think it is a better plan.

**Arguments against:**

Everyone says Vote No on Measure B

***A Pro and Con analysis of State Ballot Measures is attached to this newsletter as a separate file.***

**OPPORTUNITIES GALORE  
Speakers' Bureau**

With the upcoming election on Feb. 5, 2008, LWVEA is looking for people willing to educate the public on the Pros and Cons of each Proposition. The text is supplied by the LWVC and training for speakers provided by the LWVEA.

We already have several organizations requesting this service . One person or teams of two can present. For more information contact Suzanne at 538-9678 or [suzbarba@comcast.net](mailto:suzbarba@comcast.net).

**HOA Elections Assistants**

LWVEA is assisting Home Owner Associations (HOA) conduct their elections. There are many one-time-jobs available for League members to help—including counting ballots. If interested in getting training and assisting the League with this service to the community, please contact Nancy at [NVanHuffel@aol.com](mailto:NVanHuffel@aol.com)



**Of Eden Area**

P. O. Box 2234 – Castro Valley, CA 94546  
 Representing cities of Hayward and San Leandro and unincorporated areas of Ashland, Castro Valley, Cherryland, Fairview, Hillcrest Knolls and San Lorenzo

**IT'S EASY TO JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS** Just mail this form with your check to: League of Women Voters of Eden Area, Treasurer, P.O. Box 2234, Castro Valley, CA 94546.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (D) \_\_\_\_\_ (E) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues: Regular \$50  
 Same Household \$25, Student \$20**

*The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan, 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.*

| DATE    | TIME             | CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS                                  |
|---------|------------------|--|
| Jan. 9  | 5 to 7 p.m.      | LWVEA Board Meeting, Rm. 2A, Hayward City Hall             |
| Jan. 17 | 5 to 7 p.m.      | Immigration Study Review Session, Hayward City Hall, Rm 1C |
| Jan. 24 | 4 to 8:30 p.m.   | Immigration Consensus Meeting, Miley's Conf. Rm. CV        |
| Feb. 5  | 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. | ELECTION DAY - DON'T FORGET TO VOTE                        |
| Feb. 9  | 9 to 11:30 a.m.  | Program Planning, Place TBA                                |
| Feb. 13 | 5 to 7 p.m.      | LWVEA Board Meeting, Rm. 2A, Hayward City Hall             |

**Please visit our website for up-to-date event information - [www.lwvea.org](http://www.lwvea.org).**