



League of Women Voters Eden Area

VOTER

Vol. 50 No. 1 *Political Responsibility Through Informed and Active Participation* Jan/Feb 2007

WE NEED YOUR HELP

WORKSHOP ON LEAGUE ACTION POLICIES
AND IMPORTANT ISSUE POSITIONS

Thursday, January 25 at 5:30 p.m.

San Lorenzo Village Homes Association
377 Paseo Grande • San Lorenzo
Light dinner will be provided

- Do you want to tell the State League what to do about important issues?
- Do you have an opinion about affordable housing?
- Are you thinking about Global Warming and what we can do about it?
- Aren't you tired of being gerrymandered by politicians?

Join us for a spirited discussion-workshop to decide which of the many important issues of the day LWVC and our local League should be working on and how—education or advocacy.

We've included a short summary of each of the State League positions in this VOTER, but will be discussing in-depth those which a survey of the membership and board have selected as priorities for discussion.

We'll also hit the highlights on our local positions.

Information on the materials that will be used for this workshop are contained in this VOTER and on our website www.lwvea.org. If you need a hard copy of the full text of the LWVC positions, please call Suzanne at 538-9678.

**Please RSVP by January 15 to Suzanne
at 538-9678 or suzbarba@comcast.net.**

President's Report by Nancy Van Huffel

Program Planning for 2007-2009

Every two years members are invited to set the agenda for the LWVC for the upcoming biennium, keeping the work of the League a truly grassroots function. Each League member has the opportunity to influence the selection of the issues where the League will focus its time, talent and money. It takes the enthusiasm and interest of our members to make our program vital. This process gives your League the opportunity to review existing program, recommend new areas of concern, and state your ideas for needed effort. This is the first step in the process that ends with the adoption of program by delegates to the LWVC convention in Bakersfield next May.

This newsletter contains a summary of positions and a member survey which we are asking members to complete. The Program Planning Committee will then identify the top six priorities which will be discussed in detail at our January 25th meeting. At the end of the meeting, we will then prioritize the issues which we believe are the most important. It is important to know if the membership sees current LWVC positions as valid and useful, to know where there are gaps in existing positions, and to ascertain whether there are positions that no longer command member understanding or agreement. You will need to decide if you want to **retain, drop or update** each existing position. **Please complete the enclosed member survey!**

HOLIDAY SUCCESS

Kudos to all of you that participated in our holiday party, particularly Marianne Dimick, Chair of the committee, Winnie Thompson and Suzanne Barba who called folks for various auction items, and our wonderful auctioneers Steve Dimick and Brian Foster. I also want to thank everyone who came and brought food as well as who generously participated in our silent and live auction. We netted \$1800 by selling the various auction items.

Board Briefs—November/December

- Submitted proposal for Election Inspector to a local homeowner association. Discussed contents of the contract and costs.
- Board endorsed a proposal to have a humane and coordinated approach to homelessness in Alameda County by recommending EveryOne Home, the Alameda County-Wide Homeless and Special Needs Housing Plan.
- Appointment of HOA Election Committee : Suzanne Barba, Marian Handa, Angie Reyes, Dorothy Partridge and Millie Poon.
- Various ways were discussed as to how to recruit new board members and officers for next year
- A new calendar will be e-mailed out to Board members. We agreed to hold our March educational forum on health care. In Feb, we will also co host a Global Warming program.
- We received a final report on Voter Service activities
- ACC report—Suzanne indicated they discussed County elections, including observers for the election. The ACC discussed new priorities for ACC action including a Civic Education in High Schools, discussion group on Death Penalty and the homeless programs.
- 50th Anniversary Celebration Event – Committee has been meeting monthly and will be mailing out materials the first of the year.

Everyone needs to mark their calendar for Friday, April 13, 2007 for the biggest event in fifty years.

LWVC PROGRAM POSITIONS 2007



League program consists of those government issues chosen by members for concerted effort and action. The process of planning the program for the League begins with the review of our existing positions. After member discussion and review, each local League chooses those positions that it believes should be retained or deleted as well as those that the League should emphasize. The emphasis could be on advocacy or on education of League members and/or the community; or it could be a new study, an update of an existing position or a restudy of a long-held League position.

Only the positions in brief are given here; see the LWVC Action Policies and Positions, Updated 2006 for the full wording of the positions.

GOVERNMENT

CAMPAIGN FINANCING: adopted 1973; updated 1976--Support state campaign finance practices for candidates and advocates of ballot measure positions which will ensure full disclosure of campaign contributions and expenditures and enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office.

CONSTITUTION: adopted 1957; updated 1965-67--Support measures to secure an orderly and simplified State Constitution; provisions which enable the Legislature to deal with state problems efficiently, flexibly, and with responsibility clearly fixed; and constitutional guarantee of equal representation of all citizens in both houses of the State Legislature.

ELECTION SYSTEMS: adopted 2001, amended by concurrence 2003--Support election systems for executive offices, both at the state and local levels, that require the winner to receive a majority of the votes, as long as the majority is achieved using a voting method such as Instant Runoff Voting, rather than a second, separate runoff election.

INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM PROCESS: adopted 1984; updated 1999--Support citizens' right of direct legislation through the initiative and referendum process.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS: adopted 1981--Support an efficient, effective, and equitable balance of responsibility and authority among the levels of government with accountability to the public.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES: Adopted 1998--Support a public library system as a basic community service with a long-term, assured, stable and adequate funding source.

Support access by all persons to public library services as a major source of knowledge and information necessary for informed, active participation in a democratic society.

REDISTRICTING: adopted 1988--Support a state redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation in the state legislature and in the House of Representatives with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny. Support a bipartisan commission as the preferred redistricting body.

STATE AND LOCAL FINANCES: adopted 1969; updated 1975; new positions 1976, 1977, 1981, 1995--Support measures to ensure revenues both sufficient and flexible enough to meet changing needs for state and local government services; that contribute to a system of public finance which emphasizes equity and fair sharing of the tax burden as well as adequacy; which include long range finance methods that meet current and future needs while taking into account the cumulative impact of public debt.

Support a process which maintains statutory authority over tax sources, rates and tax expenditures; that makes limited use of direct voting by the public on revenue measures; and that allows adoption of revenue and finance measures by a simple majority vote.

Support the distribution of revenue sources between state and local governments in a manner to ensure adequate, equitable and flexible funding of public programs based on the responsibilities and requirements of each and which emphasizes accountability.

Support an equitable, broad based local property tax, easy and economical to administer, producing adequate revenue, with limitations on the types of services it funds.

Support assessment practices and policies that are equitable, accurate, easy to understand and well publicized, with like properties treated uniformly.

VOTING RIGHTS: adopted 1972; reviewed 1986--Support measures which will protect every citizen's right to vote and which will ensure government's responsibility to protect this right through regulations and procedures that encourage an informed and active electorate.

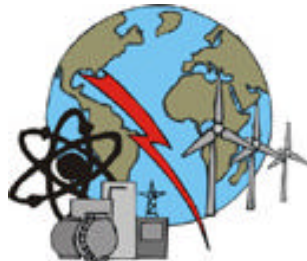
NATURAL RESOURCES

AGRICULTURE: adopted 1983--Support policies that recognize agricultural land as a limited resource which must be preserved for the economic and physical well-being of California and the nation. Appropriate agricultural land should be identified and its long-term protection should be based on regulatory and incentive programs which include comprehensive planning, zoning measures, and other preservation techniques. State policy which affects agriculture should ensure the conservation of soil and water resources through incentives coupled with penalties for noncompliance.

AIR QUALITY: adopted 1971; updated 1973 Support measures to establish air quality standards that will protect the public health and welfare, and the development of effective enforcement and implementation procedures at each level of government to attain these standards.

ENERGY: adopted in 1978, updated in 1980 and 2006

The League supports development of a state energy policy that will ensure reliability of energy resources and protection of the environment and public health and safety, at reasonable customer rates, giving primary consideration to conservation and energy efficiency. State government should provide an efficient, coordinated energy administrative structure with open transparent procedures.



HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: adopted 1986 & 1987--Support comprehensive measures to provide maximum protection to human health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous materials, including pesticides. An integrated approach should be taken to prevent harmful exposures through soil, surface and groundwater contamination, bio-accumulation, air pollution and direct contact.

Hazardous materials planning should promote pollution prevention. All levels of government share responsibility for preventing exposure.

LAND USE: adopted 1975

Support state land use planning that recognizes land as a resource as well as a commodity. The state should establish guidelines and standards for land areas of more than local concern. Decisions for these areas should be made at the lowest level of government feasible, but should be subject to state review. Citizens must have a meaningful participation in land use planning and regulation.

SOLID WASTE: adopted 1973--Support measures to assure environmentally sound and efficient solid waste management, to reduce the generations of wastes, to encourage resource recovery, and to increase the demand for secondary materials.

TRANSPORTATION: adopted 1981; revised 1985; new position 1991--Support a transportation system to move people and goods which: includes a variety of transportation modes, with emphasis on increased public transportation services and other viable alternatives to reduce vehicle miles traveled; is efficient, convenient, and cost-effective; is safe and secure; serves all segments of the population and diverse geographic needs; minimizes harmful effects on the environment; is integrated with land use; and is supported by extensive public education.

WATER: adopted 1959; updated 1961, 1967, 1971, 1979--Support measures which promote the management and development of water resources in ways that are beneficial to the environment with emphasis on conservation and high standards of water quality that are appropriate for the intended use.

SOCIAL POLICY

CHILD CARE: adopted 1989--Support state and local policies, legislation and programs which meet the need for accessible, affordable, and quality child care.



COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM: Adopted 2003--Support a statewide community college system with sufficient resources to fulfill its overall goal: to offer all Californians access to a quality higher education.

Resources should be stable, accommodate all enrolling students, be fairly distributed among the college districts, and provide opportunities for long-range planning.

Governance should allow greater authority within the system itself with local districts making key decisions about mission priorities to meet community needs.

EDUCATION: PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 12 adopted in 1973, updated in 1985 and 2005--Support a comprehensive pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade public education system that meets the needs of each individual student; challenges all students to reach their highest potential; develops patterns of lifelong learning and responsible citizenship. Support improvements in public education, based on access with both equitable and sufficient opportunities to learn for all students. Support a system of public education funding that is adequate, flexible, equitable, reliable and sustainable; derived from a combination of revenue sources; and distributed fairly to support access and equitable opportunities for all students. Support formulating broad general guidelines at the state level, with flexibility at the local level for developing and implementing program.

HOUSING: adopted 1970; updated 1973, 1993 Support equal opportunity in housing. Support measures to provide state programs to increase the supply of safe, decent, and adequate housing for all Californians. Support action at all levels of government for the provision of affordable housing for all Californians.

JUVENILE JUSTICE/DEPENDENCY: adopted 1997 and 1999 Support a juvenile justice/dependency system which works to prevent child abuse and neglect and juvenile delinquency, which serves foster children and their families and status offenders, and which rehabilitates juvenile offenders, by promoting the safety and well-being of children and helping to prepare them for productive participation in society. Support early identification of at-risk children and families
LWVEA Voter

followed by appropriate referrals to services which work with children, youth, families and schools. Support community efforts to provide safe supportive environments for children and their families and institutions that respect them and promote non-violent solutions to problems. Support the rights and best interests of the child in preference to those of any other individual.

LEGAL AID: adopted 1971; revised 1983 Support measures which will enable the judicial system of the state to provide for all citizens adequate access to legal services.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE: adopted 1997 Support for an adequately funded mental health care system which provides comprehensive services to the acutely, chronically and seriously mentally ill of all ages; maintains optimal mental health services for all clients; places emphasis on meeting the needs of children; offers mental health services for the homeless; seeks additional funds for preventive services; implements a master plan to integrate services; raises awareness of critical unmet needs; and emphasizes case management.

LEAGUE LINGO

• Program

Program is the word we use to describe issues we wish to study to reach consensus or just inform ourselves or members of our community.

• Program Priorities

When the word priorities, is linked with the word program the meaning changes. Program priorities is the phrase we use to designate issues that LWV will focus on for the January-December calendar year.

• Issues

Issues are subjects on which congress or state and local governments might take action (vote). The publication, **Impact on Issues**, contains a list of all our positions on issues that have been adopted nationally. **Where We Stand** is the publication that documents all our positions that we have adopted at the state level. Both documents give you a brief statement of our position, a detailed statement of our position and the history of how we arrived at each issue. A League may write a letter, make a public statement or launch an action campaign on any issues where the League has a position.

IMPORTANT PROGRAM PLANNING MEMBER SURVEY– Please complete

If a position should remain part of our program planning, assign it a priority (X) of High, Medium, or Low – with no more than 8 ranked in each priority category. You can also indicate in the “High” column if you believe a position should be Dropped (D); or if you think a position needs to be Updated (U), place a “U” along with your ranking. Please FAX to 481-5627 or mail to LWVEA, P.O. Box 2234, Castro Valley 94546.

Return by January 12, 2007

HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS—LWVC (January 2007)
GOVERNMENT <i>Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.</i>			
			Campaign Finance --full disclosure of contributions and expenditures
			Constitution —equal representation of all citizens
			Election Systems —support a process which requires a majority vote
			Initiative and Referendum Process —support citizen’s right to initiative process
			Intergovernmental Relationships —support equitable balance of government
			Public Libraries —should be a basic community service with adequate funding
			Redistricting —fair and representative government; bipartisan commission
			State & Local financing —sufficient and flexible for adequate government services
			Voting Rights —every citizen has a right to vote
NATURAL RESOURCES - <i>Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources</i>			
			Agricultural Policy — Promote adequate supplies of food at reasonable prices to consumers
			Air Quality — Promote measures to reduce pollution.
			Energy —ensure reliability of resources
			Hazardous Materials —maximum protection from adverse effects of materials
			Land Use — Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource
			Solid Waste —reduce generations of wastes
			Transportation —support variety of transportation
			Water — management and development of water resources
SOCIAL POLICY -- <i>Secure equal rights and opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans</i>			
			Child Care —accessible, affordable and quality
			Community College System —access for all to quality higher education
			Education (pre-kindergarten through 12 —sufficient opportunity to learn for all students
			Housing —increase supply of safe decent housing
			Juvenile Justice/Dependency —prevent child abuse and neglect
			Legal Aide —adequate access
			Mental Health Care —comprehensive services

**Measure A, the Alameda County Essential Health Care Services Tax Ordinance
(0.5% sales tax) Oversight Committee report for fiscal year 2004/2005
BY Ken Ballard, Fremont, Union City League**

At the December 2006 Committee meeting members largely agreed on the contents of our first annual report to the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) on the conformity of expenditures to the purposes set forth in the Measure. After Measure A passed, the BOS approved funding for non-Alameda County Medical Center (ACMC) health projects through June 2007 at which time funding will be reconsidered.

The Committee determined that the \$14 million spent under the direction of the BOS in 2004/2005 generally in compliance. Six million dollars were rolled over into 2005/2006 largely because of the limited time agencies had to formulate requests and for the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency to review and approve the contracts.

The remaining funds from Measure A are allocated by the Directors of the ACMC. For fiscal year 2004/2005, the total amount was about 72 million dollars or 75% of the total funds collected. ACMC medical facilities are composed of three hospitals-Highland in Oakland, and Fairmont and John George Psychiatric Pavilion in San Leandro-and four "free standing" clinics- Eastmont in Oakland, Juvenile Hall in San Leandro, Winton in Hayward and Newark. Measure A funds represented about 18% of the ACMC's operating budget.

The Committee met monthly since December 2005. Most of the 17 members (including two from ACLWV (Ballard from Fremont and Sal Tadesco-vice chair of the Committee- from Eden) attended regularly. We spent much time hearing from representatives of non-ACMC health programs who generally provided detailed descriptions. When ACMC representatives presented their utilization of 75% of Measure A funds we were told that they mixed in the funds into their total budget and, thus, it was not possible to distinguish Measure A funds from the many other funding sources ACMC receives.

Now that the Committee is entering its second year of oversight we have agreed upon areas in which reporting compliance to language of Measure A needs to be presented in enough detail that we can verify compliance. Specifically, we need more information from private hospitals, ACMC and the Bay Area Consortium for Quality Health Care.

In the case of ACMC, Measure A was very clear that the new tax revenue "may not be used to replace the funding currently provided by the County to the ACMC pursuant to the existing indigent care contract between the County and the ACMC." The Committee will develop a reporting format that encourages a consistent and detailed report from all Measure A recipients. It needs more information regarding the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency' auditing mechanisms with respect to contract monitoring and compliance. The Committee suggests that the BOS, when appointing new members, take more into consideration the diversity of the County's citizens. There is the potential of a conflict of interest perception when members represent recipients of Measure A funds. Lastly, the Committee requests of the BOS that future fund allocations be made in a more transparent manner, especially when unspent funds are carried over to the next fiscal year

For Internet posting of the final version of the Oversight Committee report, try
<http://www.acgov.org/health/meetings.htm>

League of Women Voters of Eden Area

P. O. Box 2234 – Castro Valley, CA 94546 • 510/538-9678
 Representing cities of Hayward and San Leandro
 and unincorporated areas of Ashland, Castro Valley,
 Cherryland, Fairview, Hillcrest Knolls and San Lorenzo

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

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS FOR 2007

DATE/TIME	Event
1/25 Thursday @5:30pm	Membership Program Planning Meeting San Lorenzo Village Hall, 377 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo
2/8 Thursday @6:00pm	An Inconvenient Truth by Al Gore (tentatively scheduled) San Leandro Main Library, 300 Estudillo, Theater Room
3/9 Friday @ noon	Membership Program on Health Care San Lorenzo Village Hall, 377 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo
4/13 Friday– @ 5:30pm	LWVEA 50 th Anniversary– Dinner and celebration
5/5 Saturday @ 9:30am	LWV Bay Area Education Forum
6/2 Saturday @9:30am	LWVEA Annual Membership Meeting
6/28 Thursday @5:30pm	Meet your Elected Officials

Visit our website for up to date information: LWVEA.org