

The *Voter*

February 2013

Hooray for Sustainable Claremont

On January 24, Claremont held a city-wide celebration – CHERP (Claremont Home Energy Retrofit Project) had met its first goal: 1% of Claremont's homes had been retrofitted and were now energy efficient. About 400 people gathered at Taylor Hall to recognize the effort this represented and the many people who had been involved in making it happen. League had a table at the event with illustrations of our role in promoting the concepts of sustainability.

Devon Hartman, CHERP co-founder and major sparkplug of the retrofit effort, was the evening's moderator. Sustainable Claremont was a major honoree; its Co-Chair Freeman Allen accepted two notable awards.

Certificate of Congressional Recognition from Congresswoman Judy Chu to Sustainable Claremont:
"In recognition of your high standards of excellence and outstanding achievements. Your leadership in Home energy retrofits is truly commendable and greatly appreciated. Thank you for your remarkable dedication to energy efficiency and the City of Claremont".

Certificate of Recognition from State Senator Carol Liu to Sustainable Claremont:

*"Claremont Home Energy Retrofit Project
On behalf of the California State Senate, I congratulate you on meeting your initial goal of retrofitting over 130 homes. Completing Phase One is truly a noteworthy accomplishment. This success serves as the catalyst for not only Phase Two of the Claremont Home Energy Retrofit Project but sets the standard for all San Gabriel Valley communities. Thank you for your continual commitment to preserving our natural environment. Best wishes for all your future endeavors!"*

Claremont Area League has reason to be proud of its long involvement in the issue of sustainability. Had Marilee Scaff not been a constant presence at the City Planning meetings, sustainability would not have appeared in the city plan. Had Jack Sullivan, Sue Schenk, and Freeman Allen not been involved in a myriad of activities and events, we would not be where we are today. Much is yet to be done, but it's important to take time to recognize progress and the people who helped make it happen.

Program Planning

As a grassroots organization, LWV depends on its members to do program planning; to decide what needs study, education, advocacy; to say where we lack needed positions and so are remaining silent when we should be part of the public conversation.

This year our focus is on state and local positions and issues. We must decide if existing positions should be reaffirmed, reviewed, or given up; if education and advocacy are needed on existing positions and on which ones; and if issues on which we have no position should be studied. (Next year, we will ask the same questions about national, county, and local positions. Local program planning is done every year; the others, every two years.)

Campaign finance reform, budgets, taxes, school financing, court closures and access, climate instability,

health care, wealth disparity, resource depletion, pollution, mental health care, affordable housing, water acquisition and/or conservation, social safety nets, political corruption, financial disclosure – what energizes you? What deserves your/our attention and energy?

Give it some thought. Write an email. Make a phone call. Be ready to share your ideas, concerns, suggestions, etc., at the next LWV meeting. Where do we need to be more active? What current issues should concern us? What are we overlooking?

This is your/our organization. It is most effective when the greatest number of us participate. Let us hear from you.

SAS

Co-President's Message

For me, one of the great benefits of League membership is the abundance of opportunities to learn in more depth about public policy issues. Recently, I've encountered several such opportunities, and even my faltering 81-year-old brain feels much better informed.

At our January local League Unit meetings we reviewed our national LWV position on federal fiscal policy. LWV/US studied tax policy, deficit issues, and entitlement funding in the 1980's, and its adopted position has continued to guide us in supporting a progressive federal tax system; opposing a constitutionally mandated balanced budget because of possible needs for deficit spending in times of economic depression and national security crises; and supporting the federal role in providing for old-age, survivors, disability, and health insurance – the so-called entitlement programs. Members attending our two discussion sessions had many questions and comments, and I hope we all came away with more understanding of these issues.

The Los Angeles County LWV held a "League Day" luncheon late in January, at which we discussed current issues in public education in California. In the morning small discussion groups grappled with current issues - my group considered whether or not an armed guard should be stationed at each of our elementary schools (a unanimous "No!"), and whether student test scores should be factors in compiling teacher evaluations (no unanimity on this one). In the afternoon we heard from

Dr. Larry Picus, USC Professor of Education and President of the Board of Directors of Ed Source - a non-profit educational research organization, formed a number of years ago with the support of LWV and the California PTA. Dr. Picus told us that, despite the recent cuts in school funding, in general, student scores on state tests have gone up – however, "gaps" remain for children in poverty and English-language learners (ELL). Now that Proposition 30 has passed, Governor Brown is proposing a weighted distribution of education money, with more funds allotted to special education and ELL programs and for students in poverty areas.

I've found another learning opportunity in the state LWV update study of California's Initiative and Referendum (I & R) system. Has our I & R process, which originated as a way for citizens at the grassroots level to propose and pass laws for the benefit of the many, been hijacked by wealthy individuals and organizations to achieve more wealth and privilege for the few? Leagues throughout the state studied and formed a position on I & R in the 1980's, but we wonder if we could improve our position to counter the current trends. Our local League has an I & R study committee to lead us in a consensus meeting to consider all this on March 21, 2013.

And I'm looking forward to another chance to pack in some understanding of what's going on in the world on Saturday, February 9th when Ed Haley speaks at our local LWV get-together at Padua Hills. Come join me in my information quest.
Betsey Coffman

Board Highlights

The LWV of the Claremont Area board met Wednesday, January 16, 2013, and passed several important motions. Last April our local League joined with a number of other Leagues in applying to the IRS to change our tax status from 501(c)(4) to 501(c)(3). Although we have not yet received approval from the IRS for this change, we have every expectation that this will happen when our request is taken up by the IRS, which we hope will be in February or March. At our January meeting we passed amendments to our Bylaws and to our Articles of Incorporation listing our tax status as 501 (c) (3). We included a proviso that the amended Articles will not be filed with the California Secretary of State until our Board of Directors, in consultation with LWV California, is confident that the IRS will approve our application; and we included a proviso with the amended Bylaws which stated the amendments shall not be effective until the date of certification of the amended Articles by the California Secretary of State. In addition, our amended Bylaws must be approved by our membership at our annual meeting in June. All of these timing issues are a little confusing, but

luckily we are being guided by the LWVC Treasurer Tom Carson, who is also Treasurer of the Glendale/Burbank LWV and has already done this tax status conversion for his League. When we have achieved the 501(c)(3) tax status, donations and membership dues will be tax deductible for donors and members. And when we receive IRS approval for this status, the effective date will be the date the IRS received the request, not the date it is approved.

Also, at the January meeting the Board voted to offer extended memberships to those who join our League between now and June 30, 2013 – membership for those who join during this time period will extend until June 30, 2014. So, membership will be for almost a year and a half for the price of one year - What a Bargain!! Our membership number has dropped this year, and we are hoping this incentive will boost our roster. Invite your friends and relations to join us!

B.C.

Initiative and Referendum Study

The Initiative and Referendum are forms of direct democracy, in which citizens vote directly on issues rather than through elected representatives. Although the United States established a representative form of government in 1784 that is reflected in our state governments, periodically people's movements seek to restore the voice of the ordinary citizen as they sense their interests being threatened by organized and powerful groups exerting influence on those we elect to serve the common good. So it was in 1910 in California, when the Lincoln-Roosevelt League, a group united in their disgust with government officials behaving as puppets of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, was successful in backing the election of Hiram Johnson to the governorship. Johnson was aided in his victory by the establishment of the direct primary, which enabled the voters rather than political party convention delegates to select general election candidates. And in his inaugural address Johnson urged the adoption of the Initiative, the Referendum and the Recall – all direct democracy procedures. In 1911 the state Senate and Assembly both passed amendments establishing these procedures, and in a special election on October 10th the Initiative and Referendum Amendment became part of the California Constitution with a 76% vote of approval.

Despite the initial zeal for direct democracy procedures, initiatives were little used for over 60 years. However, the popularity of the process accelerated after the stunning success of Proposition 13 in 1978, which froze property tax assessment levels, required a supermajority vote for raising taxes and increased the state's role in the collection and distribution of these taxes. It spurred the entrance of professional organizations to manage every aspect of the initiative process, which, in turn, caused observers to refer to a new "initiative industry". This industrialization of the "peoples' voice", plus the advent of modern communication methods spewing often confusing messages, the influence of great amounts of money to promote or oppose ballot propositions, the inability to correct initiatives once they are approved for the ballot, conflicting ballot measures, and the frequent need for post-election judicial review are just some of the problems encountered in today's initiative process.

The League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) studied the Initiative and Referendum process in 1983-4 and again in 1997-9. Another update was undertaken this past year, and the Study Committee found much of the current position to be useful and relevant. It includes

support for adoption of an indirect initiative procedure, which existed in the state's original Initiative and Referendum amendment, but due to lack of use was repealed in 1966 as part of the California Constitution Revision Act. The indirect initiative provides for proponents of a statutory initiative to gather signatures and then to present the measure to the Legislature for consideration and voting. The LWVC position also supports realistic limits on initiative campaign contributions and expenditures, disclosure of campaign contributors, provision of free time for radio and TV information programs by initiative campaigns, pre-review of initiative proposals for clarity and legality, and readable ballot pamphlet analyses. But the Study Committee also noted gaps in the position and sent study materials and consensus questions to local Leagues for our consideration. The questions involve changes or additions in the position's specifications about pre-review, number of signatures required on initiative proposals, time limits for gathering signatures, signature gathering methods (e.g., paid, volunteer, electronic), Initiative Constitutional Amendments, conflicting propositions, legislative amendments of laws passed by initiative, supermajority approval for initiatives prescribing supermajority vote, and Principles that should apply in considering the Initiative and Referendum process (e.g., transparency, respect for rights, comprehensibility).

The first question asks if we want to keep the Initiative and Referendum process. Included in our resource materials from LWVC is a 2005 statement by the LWV of Minnesota opposing an Initiative and Referendum Amendment to Minnesota's Constitution. Their arguments are deserving of consideration. But as one of the members of our local LWV Initiative and Referendum committee observed, "Without the initiative process we would not have our new Redistricting law" (which ended gerrymandering in drawing California electoral districts).

Our local committee includes Elana Barach, Anne Bellemin, Tressa Kentner, Ellen Taylor, Sally Seven, and Betsey Coffman. We will be leading Unit consensus meetings on Thursday, March 21, 2013, at 9:30 am, Mt. San Antonio Gardens, Building D, 4th floor lounge, and at 7:00 pm at Sue Schenk's home, 845 N. Indian Hill Blvd., Claremont.

Betsey Coffman

2013 Child Care and Development Budget: State Budget Policy Workshop

This five-hour workshop was attended by about 40 local area administrators from various CD programs. It was provided by On The Capitol Doorstep (OTCD, a statewide newsletter on legislation), the Child Development Policy Institute (CDPI, a non-profit organization promoting public policy for California's children) and the Children's Defense Fund - California (CDF-CA, a branch of Marion Wright Edelman's national CDF). This article attempts to explain some of the issues that were discussed. The providers of the workshop should not be held responsible for this writer's interpretations.

One in three children in California receives benefits from some of the safety net services for children, such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security. There is a push at the federal level to include cuts and changes to these services in the federal budget deal. Cuts in these services to children now, show up later in children's delayed development and in increases in areas such as incarceration services. There is much statistical research that shows that money spent on child development in the early years saves many dollars in costs in later years. Safe and affordable child care also helps parents to obtain and retain jobs.

Nearly one in four California children lived in families below the poverty line in 2011. Among Black and Latino children the ratio is one in three.

There have been deep cuts to children's programs over the past 5 years: K-12 education - \$7 billion; CalWORKS - \$4 billion; Medi-Cal - \$3.6 billion; Child Care - \$1 billion.

In the governor's 2013-14 budget proposal there are no new cuts in these areas, BUT all the past cuts are continued so that programs are still behind in their funding. This means that where programs have skimped to provide access to children, their deferred costs will not be provided and programs will suffer. The projected new monies will not make up for the five years of losses. Remember that California is 49th in the US in per capita spending in K-12!

An important issue in the governor's proposed budget concerns changes in categorical funding for school districts. (LWVC has a position against categorical funding in the budget.) In the State budget there are 60 different categorical programs (e.g., after school care, K-3 classroom ratios). They make up about 30% of school funding. Problems with this current system are that it is overly complex, inequitable, inefficient and highly centralized. It is based on historical need rather than on current need. (Numbers of children in a category change over time and different categories arise.) The requirements for about 40 categorical programs have been suspended;

i.e., the funds are still distributed on the same basis (grants to those who apply), but districts may spend the money differently. This allows more local flexibility but it also allows for the possible redistribution of funds in unfair ways. This flexibility will remain through 2014-15.

The passage of Proposition 30 and the projection of some increased revenues are preventing some of the earlier proposed "trigger cuts" in many areas of the budget. The budget analyst's office says that the proposed budget is 'more or less' stable. That is the 'upside'. The 'downside' is that the budget does not restore losses to the programs that have been incurred over the last five years. So what happens when Proposition 30 runs out in five years?

Interesting, Complicating Items to Consider:

-CalWORKS funding is in two separate departments. Stage 1 funding is the Dept. of Social Services and Stages 2 and 3 are in the Dept. of Education. They have different reporting methods and requirements. (Some other CD programs also have this problem.)

-Child Development Programs have been doing more with less (serving more children with less funding, by cutting corners) which masks the effect of the funding cuts.

-There can still be mandates for services at the local level without the requirement that they be paid for by the State.

-The increase in sales tax does not include a provision that the State must send these revenues to local jurisdictions.

-Although there are no cuts to Community Colleges proposed, the transfer of all adult education to community colleges has financial implications at all levels.

-There has been no new COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) for CD programs for eight years.

Check your new LWV Yearbook for the LWV positions on Child Care and on Education at the National, State and local levels.

Between now and the May Revision of the Budget Proposal, CDPI and CDF will be participating in hearings and meetings to advocate for CD programs and Education. OTCD will be publishing the developments in the various areas. There was also brief discussion at the workshop of proposals relating to "Gun Violence and Children" and "Immigration Reform and Children". That discussion is for another time!

If there are questions about the content, please contact me for clarifications. Lots of handouts are available.

Katie Gerecke

Discussing Fiscal Policy

As of 3 February 2013, the 16th Amendment and the federal income tax are 100 years old. When adopted, the top tax rate was 7%; it soon went to 77% to cover the costs of WW I. (There had been a federal income tax for about a decade to raise funds for the Civil War. Many were sorry to see it end, according to historians, because they considered the alternatives worse.)

Our January units were devoted to Fiscal Policy, a choice motivated by the debt ceiling debate, concern about budget deficits, the “fiscal cliff” and sequestration. Adopted as a national study in 1984, the topic was timely then and the results impressively relevant today. The three-part position which resulted from grassroots consideration of the complex subject almost thirty years ago remains remarkably appropriate to the issues we face today.

The Fiscal Policy study was divided into three parts: tax policy, the federal deficit, and entitlements. At the risk of oversimplifying the LWV position, League’s tax policy position supports fair, equitable, progressive taxation to provide adequate resources for government programs and flexibility for future changes. Income taxes should be the major source of federal revenue, capital gains should be taxed as ordinary income, the rate structure should be progressive, loopholes should be eliminated, and tax preferences should be minimized. League opposes a national sales tax or a value-added tax because they are regressive measures.

As for the deficit, League believes it should be reduced, primarily through selective cuts in defense spending and increased revenues. League opposes across-the-board federal spending cuts and recognizes that deficit spending is sometimes appropriate: to stimulate the economy during recession or depression, to meet social needs when unemployment is high, or to meet defense needs in times of crisis.

League’s position on entitlements is clear and specific. League “believes that the federal government has a role in funding and providing for old-age, survivors, disability, and health insurance. For such insurance programs, participation should be mandatory and coverage should be universal. Federal deficit reduction should not be achieved by reducing Social Security benefits.

There was a lively discussion of “entitlements” at our meeting, not concerning the substance or support, but semantics. Some felt the term had become so contaminated by the effort to disparage the concept and imply that it is associated with freeloaders that the term itself needs to be left behind, a substitute found. Others felt the sense of “earned benefits” needed to be reclaimed, by emphasis and reinforcement, not abandonment. There was no consensus on the point.

Postscript: Social Security (SS) taxes are imposed on workers’ earnings up to a maximum level, set year by year. The cap means that income above the set level is not taxed, only the amount below the cap. In 1937, when Social Security taxes were first imposed, the cap was set at \$3000. By the late 70’s and throughout the 1980’s, it sometimes increased by \$3000 or more in a single year. In the three years from 1978 to 1981, the cap rose from \$17,700 to \$29,700 (an average increase of \$4000 a year). From 2009 through 2011, the taxable earnings cap stayed at \$106,800; for 2012 it went to \$110,100 and in 2013 it is \$113,700.

Since 1982, increases in SS taxable earnings have been indexed to the average wage. In that year, 90% of earnings were taxed. Increased earnings inequality has meant that only 85% of earnings were taxed in 2005; that figure is expected to be 83% by 2014.

LWVC Comments on Brown’s Proposed Budget

On Thursday, January 10th, Governor Brown released a multi-year balanced budget. The proposed budget projects both spending and revenue increases and anticipates \$1 billion in reserves. Included in this next budget is \$350 million for the expansion of Medi-Cal under the federal Affordable Care Act.

Many, including the Legislative Analyst’s Office, are cautiously optimistic that the budget will be balanced

and there might be an end to several years of budget woes. The LWVC has issued a statement in line with this cautious optimism. We are also reminding local Leagues that they must contact the LWVC before lobbying or speaking publicly on state issues or lobbying state legislators. This process ensures that we, as the League, speak with one voice and gives our collective voice greater impact.

Developments in Changes to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, 1970) is the most important California Environmental Law. Public agencies, when considering a public or private project, must consider carefully how their actions will substantially change the existing environment. This law helps public agencies to make informed decisions about activities that could degrade public health and damage the environment. Public Agencies must examine and disclose the potential significant adverse environmental consequences of their actions and avoid or mitigate the adverse environmental impacts caused by their actions. Whenever feasible this must take place before the agency approves or carries out a project.

Moreover, this Act makes it possible for the public to participate effectively in all steps of the environmental review process at all phases, from notice of pending process through the proposed mitigation measures that may alter the public agencies' decision to approve the project. No state agency enforces the CEQA rules: the only way the public can affect the process of CEQA is through public comment and litigation (*Voter, LWV of the Claremont Area, 4/2010, K.G.*).

CEQA protects public health, natural resources and our quality of life by requiring project proponents to disclose and minimize environmental impacts. It ensures that communities are informed about and can influence how land-use changes will affect air and water quality, traffic and other shared resources such as views and open space (*Mogavero & Reznik, San Francisco Chronicle, 1/23/13*).

Some critics use anecdotal evidence to show that CEQA works against building development and efforts to develop renewable energy. Studies refute this kind of evidence; e.g., the Public Policy Institute of California has issued a report (CEQA Reform 2005), based on a study by the Natural Resources Defense Council, including the following points:

- More than 90% of 30,000 projects reviewed have to undergo only the most minimal environmental review.
- Fewer than 2,000 projects required more extensive EIRs (Environmental Impact Review) and those were large projects that seriously threatened the environment in various ways.
- Two-thirds of projects with EIRs were ultimately approved and the majority of those not approved faced unrelated problems.
- Only one of every 354 CEQA reviews (0.3%) was ever taken to court.

A recent complaint about CEQA is that it hinders green development, such as infill development (efforts to build self-sustaining communities rather than urban sprawl).

However, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research 2012 report states that CEQA ranked 12th out of 16 barriers to development listed by municipal planning departments, and in numbers listed it was far below other barriers.

In recent years there have been efforts in the legislature directed at changing (sometime stated as 'reforming') CEQA. In the last legislature, last minutes efforts were made to weaken CEQA. Fortunately they did not succeed. However, new efforts are 'heating up' in the current legislature.

There are several State legislative committees currently working on environmental issues, including changes to CEQA. Among them are the Senate Environmental Quality Committee (chair, Senator Michael Rubio) and the Committee on Natural Resources (Assembly) (chair, Assemblymember Wesley Chesbro). Although it is not clear at this point where the committee chairs are on CEQA issues, there are several environmentally oriented members on each of the committees mentioned here.

The governor has stated that he supports regulatory changes to CEQA to prevent what he and others call "needless delays". Some say there are technical changes that would make the law more efficient. A most important issue is whether to change the EIR process to allow newer, more focused laws on such things as water quality and air quality to be substituted for the more general provisions in CEQA, to streamline the process from one point of view. Opponents of this change argue that it would prevent the public from weighing in on important aspects of development projects. There are complaints about delays through CEQA to projects such as solar energy facilities, but others see advantages to the public in a more lengthy process (*San Francisco Chronicle, 2/2/13*).

The Planning and Conservation League has developed a Protection Campaign (CEQA PC) to work on these issues relating to CEQA through gaining public support and making efforts to improve CEQA. It includes several like-minded organizations. The League of Women Voters of California has a CEQA Task Force that is keeping up with developments. Members of that group have met with the CEQA PC.

As a result of the work of the LWV CEQA Task Force, LWVC has issued the following statement:

The League of Women Voters of California, a long-time advocate of citizen involvement in the political process, is concerned about recent assaults on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA is one of the few State laws

ensuring that the public has a chance to weigh in on major land use decisions. It helps assure that both decision-makers and the public have adequate information to make informed decisions and that significant environmental impacts are avoided.

One of the major enforcement aspects of the law would be lost if provisions for citizens to go to court are weakened. The public's effort to enforce the law when public agencies fail to follow it is not a trivial undertaking. Judicial action requires financial resources often limited to those concerned about environmental impacts of poor land use decisions. Current efforts to undermine

citizen participation in land use decisions will not serve the public well.

Possible changes to CEQA are rising to the fore statewide. Check out the LWV positions in brief (at National, State, County and local levels) on the environment in the new Claremont Area 2012-13 LWV Yearbook. In the League library there are more detailed positions and action policies available.

Sources: LWVC Task Force, Planning and Conservation League, National Resources Defense Council, California League of Conservation Voters, *Sacramento Bee*, *San Francisco Chronicle*. Voter LWV of the Claremont Area.

Katie Gerecke

In Memoriam

Long-time League member **Anne Bowers Waggoner** passed away on Thursday, January 17, 2013, at the age of 92. She had been a resident of Claremont since 1951, and she was a well loved and respected teacher for many years at Claremont High School. Even as her health declined, she made a point of keeping in touch with our local league.

Mary "Tinker" Williams died this past August in Pilgrim Place Health Services Center. Mary came to Claremont and Pilgrim Place shortly after she and her husband retired from missionary work in 1997. She was a cheerful and faithful supporter of our League.

Nominations for 2013-2014 Slate of Officers

The nominating committee is seeking suggestions and volunteers for the Local League board. Areas of interest for directors include Government – campaign finance, privatization, redistricting, reproductive rights; Natural Resources – agriculture, air quality, energy, environmental action, land use, waste management/hazardous materials, water; Social Policy – children's issues/foster care, education, health care, housing, juvenile justice, mental

health care; and Others – fiscal policy, sustainability, transportation; plus, additional areas where any level of League has a position.

If you or someone you know would be interested in a position as an officer or a director, please call Maralyn Tipping, chair of the nominating committee at (909) 625-3713.

Diann Ring Awarded the Caroline Beatty Award

As attendees at the annual League holiday party learned, the 2012 Beatty Award honoree was Diann Ring. An active League Board member and President in the 1970's and 1980's, Diann then served the city of Claremont as Planning Commissioner, City Council member, and Mayor, and the community as a volunteer for innumerable organizations. In the midst of her busy life, she always found time to support League. Co-inventor of our dinner-action over 35 years ago, she has continued to create fabulous meals and memorable recipes to our lasting benefit. Her selection as our Beatty Award recipient was both well-deserved and widely popular. Congratulations and many thanks, Diann!



Lecture by Renowned Climatologist James Hansen of February 24

NASA climate scientist Dr. James Hansen, author of *Storms of Our Grandchildren*, alerted the world to the catastrophic consequences of global warming and climate change if the use of fossil fuels continues unabated. His reports were suppressed, but they are proving all too accurate. He will be speaking on *Global Warming Is Here, and It Is Worse than We Thought*. This program for the general public will be on Sunday, February 24, 7 p.m., Claremont United Methodist Church, 211 W. Foothill Blvd., Claremont. There is a \$10 per person charge.



LWVC and Disclosure Laws

by Chris Carson, LWVC Campaign Finance Program Director



One of the League's primary goals has always been to promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive, and that assures opportunities for citizen participation in government decision making. To further this goal, for more than three decades the League has been a leader in seeking campaign finance reform at all levels of government.

As an example, all of us are deeply concerned about the current state of political financing in California. Due to the high cost of campaigning, candidates focus heavily on raising funds rather than addressing the concerns of voters. And too often, they raise those funds from sources that seek and receive special access, special consideration and special treatment once the candidate is elected to office. Equally troublesome is the proliferation of independent expenditure ads by groups unrelated to the candidates— sometimes overshadowing what the candidates themselves spend.

This year, the League of Women Voters of California has begun working intensively to strengthen California's disclosure laws to ensure that voters can get the information they need to make informed decisions about candidates and ballot measures. We want public disclosure about the sources of previously secret money coming from all interest groups—individuals, corporations, unions and trade associations. The League is supporting:

- strengthening the disclosure regulations about contributions for both candidate and ballot measure campaigns
- “stand by your ad” candidate statements on TV and radio ads
- disclosure of sources of funding for political ads
- measures to increase and simplify voter access to contribution information
- stricter enforcement and higher penalties for those who seek to flout those laws

Overall, we want to make sure that the now infamous \$11 million donation to defeat two November ballot measures cannot happen in California again.

Right now, the most important thing we can do to preserve the integrity of our electoral process is to increase transparency and let the sunlight shine in. Substantive improvements to California's disclosure laws will allow voters to identify who is trying to influence them as they make their decisions. And we need your help! Talk to your family and friends about what the League is doing. [Sign up](#) for LWVC Action alerts so that you can support our advocacy as we go forward. It will take all of us – not just League members – but millions of concerned citizens across California raising our voices together to achieve victory.

January 2013



Shortly before Election Day last November, an out-of-state nonprofit organization made an \$11 million contribution to a California ballot measure committee that clearly violated California law. This sparked an outcry throughout the state. Californians are demanding that our campaign contribution disclosure laws be tightened up. The League of Women Voters is a leader in this effort and has begun working with our good government partners and the legislature to pass measures that will do just this.

This is a complicated issue, with many different aspects to be addressed. One size—or one bill—will not fit all. The League is sponsoring several bills and will be supporting others that, taken together, will improve the situation. We are focusing on a ‘package’ which addresses three broad areas:

- Election filings and disclosure
 - Make it easy for campaigns to make their reports—with online filing and schedules more like federal reporting schedules
 - Make it easy, clear and quick for Californians to see who is contributing where
- End the “dark money” loophole
 - Prevent the use of nonprofits and Super PACs to hide the real sources of campaign funds
- Enforcement
 - Strictly enforce all the campaign regulations
 - Ensure that penalties are sufficiently painful to make compliance more likely

Whether it be candidates filing reports of contributions, ballot measure campaigns filing reports of contributions, or paid political ads and slate mailers revealing who paid for them, we are supporting changes that will make “following the money” and identifying who’s behind the advertisements much more transparent for voters. In addition, we will work for stiffer enforcement and stronger penalties so that violators will not juscynically chalk up the fines as the cost of doing business.

Sign up for Action Alerts from LWVC and stay aware of what LWVC is doing and how you can help at ca.lwv.org/user/register.

January 2013

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Date	Type	Location/Time	Topic
Sunday, Feb. 24	Lecture	7 pm, Claremont United Methodist Church, 211 W. Foothill Blvd., Claremont.	Climatologist James Hansen <i>Global Warming Is Here, and It Is Worse Than We Thought</i>
Thursday, Mar. 21	Unit/Discussion	MSAG, D Building, 9:30 am Sue's, 845 N. Indian Hill, 7 pm	Initiatives and Referendums
Saturday, Mar. 30	LWV/LAC County Convention	9am to noon Rio Hondo Country Club	
Thursday, Apr. 18	Unit/Discussion	MSAG, D Building, 9:30 am Sue's, 845 N. Indian Hill, 7 pm	Health Care
Thursday, May 16	Unit/Discussion	MSAG, D Building, 9:30 am Sue's, 845 N. Indian Hill, 7 pm	Observer Reports
Saturday, June	Annual Meeting	Padua Room, Hughes Center 10 am to noon	TBA