



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of the CINCINNATI AREA

THE VOTER

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Visit LWVCA on

February 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.



SUSAN B ANTHONY LUNCHEON Saturday, February 25, 2012

By Marjorie Davies

Since 1986, the Susan B Anthony Luncheon has been *the* celebration of women's voting rights in Greater Cincinnati. Join local League members and guests on Saturday, February 25 at The Phoenix at 812 Race St downtown to continue this tradition of warm fellowship! Greeters will be on hand outside the elevator entrance on Ninth Street to welcome you to the ballroom. All-day handicap-accessible parking is available for \$2 at the adjacent Garfield Garage, 13 W Ninth St.

Keynote speaker is Cincinnati Vice Mayor **Roxanne Qualls**; her topic is ***Building Vibrant Neighborhoods: New Ideas in Transportation and Housing***. You will enjoy a delicious hot chicken or vegan entrée with salad, rolls, dessert, and coffee or tea for only \$35 (unchanged from 2004) or \$300 for a table of ten. Proceeds of the event benefit our tax-deductible Education Fund. Make your reservations today with the enclosed flyer or online at lwvcincinnati.org - and consider inviting friends!

Festivities begin at 11:00 am with a social hour featuring a cash bar and a tempting Silent Auction. You'll find opportunities to bid on tickets to cultural events, paintings by local artists, gift items and certificates donated by area businesses, handcrafted items and services from members, and baskets of wine, food, and baby items provided by LWVCA neighborhood units. Something for everyone, in every price range! There will also be a Chinese auction/raffle of special treasures.

As you peruse the Silent Auction tables, be sure to stop by the special exhibit of League program activities assembled by member **Sandra Mowell** to see an overview of our good work over the years. Your participation in the Susan B. Anthony Luncheon helps support the League's crucial nonpartisan voter services in the Greater Cincinnati Area, such as the *Who & What of Elections* voter guide, Smart Voter website, *They Represent Us* directory of public officials, telephone hotline 281-VOTE, and speakers' bureau.

For more information, or to donate Silent Auction items or place an ad in the event program, call **Marjorie Davies** or the League office at 281-8683. Be sure to mail your reservation by February 13 or book online by February 17. We are looking forward to seeing you on February 25!



"League positions are our spring-board for action"

Read on page 5 what our February discussion will cover.



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear League members,

February is the time we celebrate our accomplishments for the year at the **Susan B Anthony Luncheon**. I hope you will be able to join us for this annual event. I'm looking forward to talking with you.

Our keynote speaker for the luncheon is **Cincinnati Vice Mayor Roxanne Qualls** as she discusses the regional issues of "Building Vibrant Communities: New Ideas in Transportation and Housing." Please register today by check or online at www.lwvcincinnati.org.

Plans are in the works as we head into the 2012 election season, and I would like to thank Vice President of Voter Service **Glenda Bernstein** and our many volunteers for getting us ready for the primary and general election in the fall. I'm looking forward to doing my part to help educate the public on the candidates and issues that will be appearing on the ballot this year.

Finally, I would like to thank our staff for all the work they have done these many months. We couldn't do what we do without the guidance and hard work of Office Secretary **Sue Gorman** and Organizational Consultant **Jean Masthay**. I hope you join me in thanking them for all they do to help us achieve our mission.

In League,

Melissa Currence

MEMBER SURVEY

By Jean Masthay



A simple ten question survey was sent via email to LWVCA members the second week in January. **THANK YOU** to those of you who have already completed it. If you did not receive a survey, please let us know with an email message to jeanm@lwvcincinnati.org, or call the office at 513-281-8683 and leave a message for Jean Masthay. We will send a copy of the survey to you as soon as possible. **Your input is important** regardless of how long or how involved you have been as a member of LWVCA.

Anne Frank once said, "How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." We are embarking on this adventure of self evaluation and research so that we can sustain and improve LWVCA's impact on our democracy. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey. Your thoughts matter!

The Voter is the official monthly newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area (LWVCA).
 Editor: Marty Harrington.
 Office Staff: Susan Gorman.
 Proofers: Sarah Gideonse, Emily Hodges
 Layout and design: Kit Berger.

Please submit articles to:
newsletter@lwvcincinnati.org.
Next deadline: Friday 2/13/12
 for the March issue

IN MEMORIAM

Ruth Davis, Life Member of our local League, died on January 9, 2012. Mrs. Davis was an active member of the Cincinnati League for many years. She served as a Unit Chair in the 1960s and was on the LWVCA Board in the early 1970s. Her daughter **Marjorie Davis** is also a member of LWVCA. Our condolences to the family.

SHARE YOUR STORY WITH ADVOCATES FOR OHIO'S FUTURE

By *Melissa Currence*

The LWVCA recently joined Advocates for Ohio's Future, an organization that works to maintain vital public services, such as health, human services, and early care & education, at a level that meets people's basic needs and protects Ohio's most vulnerable populations.

Advocates for Ohio's Future is collecting stories through their OhioSPEAKS project, highlighting the ways that publicly funded health and human service programs and early care and education programs successfully build economic security and help children, families, seniors, and people with disabilities in need.

Do you have a story to share? They welcome short video clips or written stories from anyone who can speak to the benefit and success of state and federally funded programs such as direct beneficiaries, social service providers, and community, faith or business leaders.

To get more information or tips on how to frame your story, visit advocatesforohio.org and click on OhioSPEAKS.

GAS HYDRAULIC FRACTURING (FRACKING) IN OHIO – LET'S GET INFORMED!

By *Nancy Dawley*

It's time for Ohioans to inform themselves on fracking, the new way of extracting natural gas from deep underground. Learn what fracking is, what dangers it imposes on Ohio water and air, why Ohio is storing fracking waste from other states and how that storage affects may be causing earthquakes, and what laws are currently in the Legislature to monitor this industry.

Two sources to begin your research:

2010 Annual Report from Chesapeake Energy. A full pdf copy can be found at www.chk.com – click on the 2010 Annual Report Icon. The report includes this disclosure of risk to the company's shareholders, at page 75 of the pdf:

“Natural gas and oil drilling and producing operations can be hazardous and may expose us to liabilities, including environmental liabilities.

“Natural gas and oil operations are subject to many risks, including well blowouts, cratering and explosions, pipe failures, fires, formations with abnormal pressures, uncontrollable flows of natural gas, oil, brine or well fluids and other environmental hazards and risks. Our drilling operations involve risks from high pressures and from mechanical difficulties such as stuck pipes, collapsed casings and separated cables. Some of these risks or hazards could materially and adversely affect our revenues and expenses by reducing or shutting in production from wells or otherwise negatively impacting the projected economic performance of our prospects.

If any of these risks occurs, we could sustain substantial losses as a result of:

- injury or loss of life;
- severe damage to or destruction of property, natural resources or equipment;
- pollution or other environmental damage;
- clean-up responsibilities;
- regulatory investigations and administrative, civil and criminal penalties; and
- injunctions resulting in limitation or suspension of operations.”

The purpose of this annual report is not to inform Ohioans, but to notify shareholders of the risks to their investments.

Bills before Ohio Legislature dealing with Fracking.

HB 345 urges a moratorium on fracking while the US EPA investigates proper regulations for the industry while ensuring a safe environment for the people of Ohio. The entire bill can be viewed here: http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=129_HB_345

HB 351 would make the fracking process more transparent by requiring disclosure of chemicals used in the process, providing funding for baseline water testing prior to drilling, and outlining a plan for recycling and disposal of fracking waste. The entire bill can be viewed here: http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=129_HB_351

Both bills have been referred to the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

ELECTRIC & GAS AGGREGATION IN CINCINNATI

By *Pinky Kocoshis*

On November 8, 2011 Cincinnati voters passed electric and gas aggregation. "Aggregation" means forming a buying group, allowing consumers to reap potential savings due to the size of the buying group pool having more pull to negotiate better rates and terms than an individual does. This includes opportunities to choose different and cleaner sources of energy as well as cheaper rates. Residential and small business customers have the option of opting out of the aggregation program if they choose.

There will be two public hearings on electric and gas aggregation, which are required by law. These hearings will be the best opportunities for residents to let city council and the administration know what we want when they are getting bids for our residential and small businesses' energy services.

The first hearing will be held Monday, January 30 at 6 p.m. The second will be February 6 at 1 p.m. Both public hearings will be held in council chambers at Cincinnati City Hall.

Please consider attending a public hearing, and speaking out about our future energy options in Cincinnati.

For more information please contact: Rachael Belz, Ohio Citizen Action, 513-221-2100 or rbelz@ohiocitizen.org

COMPOSTING GETS A BOOST IN HAMILTON COUNTY

By *Sue Gorman*

The Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District will debut a new program to encourage residents to start composting their yard trimmings and food scraps. Beginning in March, the County will conduct one-hour backyard composting seminars to teach people everything they need to know to get started.

Participants will receive a coupon toward the purchase of a backyard compost bin at Greener Stock or Worm's Way.

The District will continue their other popular programs in 2012. Check out their website HamiltonCountyRecycles.org for information about their programs and tips on waste reduction. Click on

"Backyard Composting" in the side bar for more information, or call the Yardwaste Hotline at 513-946-7755.



FROM YOUR BULK MAIL COMMITTEE OF 2

By *Pinky Kocoshis and Bridgett Pincus*

We are starting our new year and take this opportunity to remind folks about the procedures for bulk mail use.

As you know, the VOTER mailings are assigned to units each year on a rotating basis. These dates are fixed in advance to assure that VOTER arrives in a timely fashion, usually by first of the month. This allows us to set aside those dates on our calendar each year. Each unit is asked to supply 3-4 volunteers, and we start at 9:30 AM or 10, your choice. We can also schedule it at another time of the day if the unit is an evening one and that is their preference. We like to have the names of the volunteers given to us in advance of mailing day.

For other mailings by committees or projects, we appreciate knowing about the mailing as much in advance as possible. It is important to contact us about design of mailing so that it complies with USPS requirements. Also, the committee is responsible for supplying volunteers once the date of mailing is determined.

We enjoy our work and realize its importance to LWVCA. Additionally, we enjoy meeting and working with all our volunteers. Keep up the good work.

"We can either have democracy in this country or we can have great wealth concentrated in the hands of few," remarked US Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis. "But we can't have both."

FEBRUARY DISCUSSION TOPIC: LOCAL PROGRAM POSITIONS

By *Gretchen Langdon, Program Development Committee*

During February, in Unit Meetings around our area, the LWVCA will review our existing local program positions to ensure that we are keeping current with evolving realities. In other months, we propose new topics: e.g., in March we will discuss a potential new position on Privatization of Government services.

League positions are our springboard for action. They provide the principles by which we determine whether or not to support or oppose local, state and national political actions and legislation. League members also need a thorough understanding of major public policy issues in order to meet our mission of educating the public.

How the Consensus Process works: In her May, 2009 Remarks about the League's Consensus Process, national president Mary Wilson wrote (in part):

"From its inception, the advocacy work of the League of Women Voters has been directed at issues on which action by a branch of government will have an impact on the lives of individuals and on our democracy. We use our advocacy voice to spur government to take action that will have a positive effect on the issues about which we care. In other words, the advocacy work of the League focuses on "making a difference" on public policymaking.

*At our national Convention, delegates may select a new issue (or new twist on an old issue) to study further because they think the voice of the League could be useful. But, in order to speak about the issue, we must "discover" how League members feel about that issue. **The process by which the League makes that discovery is called study and consensus. The first step is vital: STUDY. League members across the country must look at all sides of an issue, study the facts, the ramifications of all approaches, alternative solutions, the impacts on people, places and things, the costs and benefits. Only after studying the issue do League members come together to arrive at the "consensus" of their League on the issue. The results of all local Leagues discussing the issue are compiled to determine the CONSENSUS of the League as a whole.***

In discussing the issue, League members must turn the issue upside down, sideways, backwards and forwards. Because of our nature, training, upbringing, and experience, League members will see an issue differently. We cherish the fact that we bring different perspectives on issues. Because the process of coming to consensus is an amalgam of members' thoughts, ideas and ways of looking at the facts, members attending the consensus meeting must dig deeply into the issue."

This process has been very successful for developing positions at the local level, with our Annual Meeting being our "convention." However, as our membership changes, many of our members were not participants in the original studies or consensus process. They were not part of the turning of the issue upside down, sideways, backwards and forwards. Our program planning meetings are a time to educate our members about the study that went into our positions and to re-assess our consensus. A unit may decide that a position should be dropped, or a new study may be recommended. See the buff pages to begin this interesting and important work.

LEAGUE LINGO (a continuing series)

Otherwise known as "do you understand what I'm saying?" One of the things that gives the League special credibility is its long and rich history of dealing with issues. All those years of working out procedures and terms can sometimes leave newer members at a loss, however. Here is a glossary to help all the newcomers get up to speed!

- § **CONCURRENCE:** Agreement of League members with position reached by a small group or another League.
- § **CONSENSUS:** Collective opinion of League members on a particular subject. Also, process used to arrive at positions on issues.
- § **POSITION:** League's point of view, arrived at through member study and consensus (or concurrence.)

OPPORTUNITIES TO PREPARE FOR PRIVATIZATION CONSENSUS DISCUSSION IN MARCH

By Nancy Dawley

With local, state, and federal governments looking for budget savings just about everywhere, it is important that League members understand the many issues of privatization or outsourcing work to for-profit companies.

The Buff Pages in March will provide some information in preparation for our Consensus unit meetings. But you can start to educate yourself even sooner with other options:

1. Attend a lunch-time forum at Christ Church Cathedral Undercroft, 4th and Sycamore, 12 noon, Thursday, February 9, planned by the LWVCA and Applied Information Resources (AIR). A panel will discuss issues for the public and government entity to consider before moving a service to the private sector. Carpool with friends and unit members to this discussion. You can bring your lunch, purchase one there, or just attend. More details later on LWVCA website.
2. Access the LWV website and enter "Privatization" as a search item. You can read the Consensus Questions and then explore articles that will help you answer them, including: Privatization, The Public Policy Debate, Strategies for Best Practices, and many case studies.
3. Other useful articles on privatization:
 - *LWV Seattle: Privatization Study*: Go to seattlelwv.org/library, and click on "Privatization" under the year "2009"
 - *A Guide to Evaluating Public Asset Privatization*: Go to inthepublicinterest.org and click on the "ITPI Asset Privatization Guide" (the first of the revolving featured articles)
 - *Privatization Myths Debunked*: www.inthepublicinterest.org/node/457
 - *State of Illinois Report on Privatization*: www.ilga.gov/commission/cgfa2006/Upload/2006Gov_Privatization_Rprt.pdf

KROGER COMMUNITY CARDS – AN ONGOING FUNDRAISER

By Sherrie Heyse

Remember to use your **Kroger community cards**! This quarter, the LWV Education Fund received just over \$200 for our participation. We receive 4% of the amount that you spend at Kroger using your LWV Community Card.

Don't have a card? Call the office and we will send you a one in the mail. Then just go to Kroger and "load" the card before you

check out. The checkout clerk can walk you through the process of "loading" the card; so can the people at the front desk. It only takes a minute.

The card can be loaded with any amount. You then use it like a debit card to pay for your purchases. You can use the card for groceries, pharmacy, beer/wine, gas and everything else you can buy at Kroger. You still get your fuel points and other discounts as always so really, there is no cost to you and the LWV gets back 4% of whatever you spend.

Many thanks to all who are using a card; and more thanks to those of you who request a new card today!



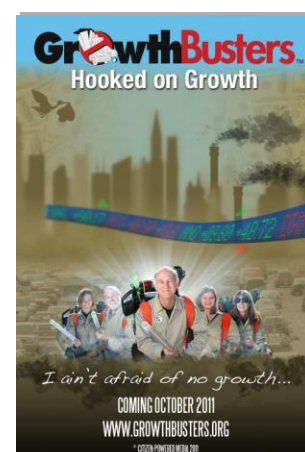
UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Fixing the Future:

Building a Just and Sustainable Economy

This series, co-sponsored by the League and held at First Unitarian Church on the first Friday of every month, continues with these intriguing programs:

- February 3, 2012 ~ 7-9 PM: **Urban Farming and Local Food Security**, with farmer Charles Griffen and other activists in Cincinnati's Urban Agriculture movement.
- March 2, 2012 ~ 7-9 PM: **Growth Busters**, Cincinnati premiere for this documentary.
- April 6, 2012 ~ 7-9 PM: **Journey to Planet Earth**, a screening of the PBS documentary from Lester Brown's Plan B.



CALENDAR:**FEBRUARY UNIT MEETINGS**

Discussion Topic: **National Program Planning**
Unit meetings are our grassroots discussions, located at different places and times so that there's always one convenient for YOU! This is your chance to get involved. All meetings are open. Come, and bring a friend!

2nd Wednesday 02/08/12

Anderson: 7:00 pm Anderson Government Center, 7850 Five Mile Road (note time change!)

Central Evening: 7:15 pm League Office, 103 Wm H Taft

2nd Thursday 02/09/11

Eastern Day: 12:00 noon. Brown bag or order lunch in MPL Dining Room. Free valet parking. Marjorie P Lee Home, 3550 Shaw Ave.

2nd Monday 02/13/12

Hilltop: 1:00 pm at home of Sylvia Mersfelder.

Northeast Evening: 7:00 pm Madeira Public Library, Euclid and Miami Ave

2nd Tuesday 02/14/12

Central North: 12:00 noon, Friendship United Methodist Church, Springfield Pike & Fleming Rd

Warren County: 7:30 pm Mason United Methodist Church, 773 Mason-Montgomery Rd.

3rd Wednesday, 02/15/12

Metro Day: 12:00 noon League Office, 103 Wm H Taft

UNACCOUNTED COSTS RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE

(Reuters) - Deaths and health problems from floods, drought and other U.S. disasters related to climate change cost an estimated \$14 billion over the last decade, researchers said on Monday.

“When extreme weather hits, we hear about the property damage and insurance costs,” said Kim Knowlton, a senior scientist at Natural Resources Defense Council and a co-author of the study. “The healthcare costs never end up on the tab.”

The study in the journal Health Affairs looked at the cost of human suffering and loss of life due to six disasters from 2000-2009.

For the entire article, go to www.Reuters.com and search on “health cost climate disasters.”

STICKING WITH THE LEAGUE

By *Mary VanAusdall*

League members who are engaged, having fun, and feeling fulfilled by the work being accomplished are the ones who stick with the League for the long haul. Thank you, members, for your commitment to making democracy work. You confirm how important it is to educate voters, improve elections, and improve government and other systems affecting our lives.

This is a great time to invite others into the League. Tell them about how the League educates the electorate about the candidates and issues on our ballots, how the League moderates informative and productive debates between candidates, how the League studies and advocates for action through our numerous committees (Education, City and County Government, Natural Resources, Health Care, Housing, Transportation and more.) Maybe, just maybe, they'll join!

For those who have not renewed your League membership, please reconsider. This is the right time to make democracy work for all of us.

Join the League of Women Voters***Making Democracy Work***

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



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



FEBRUARY 2012
LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

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

- Wednesday Jan 25 7:00 pm February Discussion Leaders Briefing
- Thursday Jan 26 Voter Collating – Northeast Evening Unit in Charge
- Saturday Jan 28 1:00 pm February Discussion Leaders Briefing
- Monday Feb 6 Voter Registration Deadline for March 6 Primary Election
- Monday Feb 6 6:30 pm Board Meeting
- Thursday Feb 9 7:00 pm Natural Resources Committee
- Friday Feb 10 VOTER COPY DUE for March Issue
- Monday Feb 13 DEADLINE for mail-in reservations, Susan B Anthony Luncheon
- Tuesday Feb 14 8:00 am Membership Committee
- Friday Feb 17 DEADLINE for online reservations, Susan B Anthony Luncheon
- Monday Feb 20 6:00 pm Health Care Committee
- Monday Feb 20 7:00 pm County Government Committee
- Wednesday Feb 22 5:15 pm Program Development Committee
- Wednesday Feb 22 7:00 pm March Discussion Leaders Briefing
- Thursday Feb 23 Voter Collating – Eastern Day Unit in Charge
- Saturday Feb 25 11am **Susan B Anthony Luncheon,**
 The Phoenix, 812 Race St, downtown
- Tuesday Feb 28 7:00 pm Housing Committee
- Wednesday Feb 29 6:00 pm Executive Committee
- Saturday Mar 3 4:00 pm March Discussion Leaders Briefing
- Monday Mar 5 6:30 pm Board Meeting
- Tuesday Mar 6 Primary Election

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

Celebrating 92 Years of Women Voting
Susan B Anthony Luncheon

***Building Vibrant Communities:
 New Ideas in Transportation & Housing***



Roxanne Qualls
 Vice Mayor, City of Cincinnati

**Saturday February 25 2012
 The Phoenix 812 Race St Downtown**

**11 am - Noon: Social Hour & Silent Auction
 Noon - 2 pm: Luncheon & Keynote Speech**

**Luncheon \$35 Table of ten \$300
 Sponsorship table of ten \$1000**

Luncheon includes chicken or vegan entree, salad, rolls, dessert, and coffee/tea
 Event benefits the League's tax-deductible 501c3 Education Fund. Fair Market Value Received is \$25 per person

Reserve by February 13 with coupon below or online by February 17 at lwvcincinnati.org
All-day Saturday parking \$2 at adjacent Garfield Garage, 13 W Ninth St

Guest Name	Chicken or Vegan?	Guest Name	Chicken or Vegan?
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Your email or phone _____

_____ No of single tickets @ \$35	\$ _____
_____ Table for ten @ \$300	\$ _____
_____ Sponsorship table @ \$1000	\$ _____

I can't attend but enclose a tax-deductible contribution to support LWVCA nonpartisan services \$ _____

Mail with check payable to "LWVCA EF" by February 13 to: LWVCA, 103 Wm H Taft Rd, Cincinnati OH 45219
 For more information, call the League office at (513) 281-8683
 Thank you for supporting the League of Women Voters!

LOCAL PROGRAM PLANNING - 2012

Program is the League's basis for both education and action efforts. League program consists of those governmental issues that League members choose for concerted study and action at the local, state and national levels. It includes both adopted positions, statements of where the League stands on issues of public policy that are used for action, and issues for study that will lead to a position and action.

League program originates with League members. Once members have been stimulated to think about the widest possible range of choices, the League collects the members' ideas as presented at biennial program planning meetings.

On a local, state or national level the procedure is the same. The Board of Directors reviews the suggestions from the planning meetings, evaluates and coordinates them with the rest of the League's projects and then recommends the program, as either recommended or non-recommended study items, to the members at their local annual meeting, state or national convention.

The League program process begins with selection and adoption; continues with study and discussion, followed by consensus/concurrence; and culminates in action and change.

This year, all of our local program committees have reviewed the positions they are currently using in their work. Along with those positions, they have included comments and recommendations for members to consider for the future.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE CINCINNATI AREA PROGRAM GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES

Support of Modernization of Hamilton County Government

Position: The LWVCA supports the modernization of county government through some form of reorganization, such as adoption of a county charter or one of the alternative forms of county government permitted by Ohio Law.

Criteria to be used in defining/judging "modernization":

Group A

1. The county executive should be appointed by the county governing body.
2. The county executive should have budgetary responsibilities and powers of policy execution and be directly answerable to the county governing body.
3. Hamilton County governing body should have implied powers and some self-taxing ability.

Group B

1. The county governing body should be elected in combination method including districts and at-large and should have 5-11 members.
2. Means of citizen participation should be explicitly provided.

Group C

1. Members of the county governing body should serve 4-year, staggered terms.
2. Means of citizen recourse should be explicitly provided.
3. All county department heads should be appointed.

Background: The LWVCA initially supported county reorganization in 1933 and supported a charter for Hamilton County in 1935. Our present LWV position for modernization was adopted in 1967. In 1980, after a two-year study, LWVCA adopted a set of criteria by which to judge any future attempt at county reorganization. In 1981, we were part of a coalition that drafted a county charter and circulated petitions to place it on the ballot. Support in the community was not forthcoming, so the effort ended.

2012 County Government Committee Statement:

This is a current focus of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) with a view toward some restructuring that will support expanded sharing of services, etc. The CG Committee feels that this Position, adopted in 1967, can be an important basis for LWVCA involvement in monitoring BOCC deliberations and possible advocacy of certain proposals or considerations.

Recommendation: RETAIN

Criteria for Hamilton Countywide Voted Property Tax Levies

Position: A model tax levy process would include:

1. A committee of citizens with the authority to review tax levy proposals and tax levy recipient organizations; to review the requesting agencies' financial, management and performance audits; and make recommendations to the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners. This committee must be adequately funded and staffed.
2. Reduction of the total number of voted levies without sacrificing needed services.
3. Timing that prevents placing all levies on a ballot at the same time.
4. Funding county services based on a determined level of need that balances funds, services and resources.
5. Funding broadly defined services that can respond to changing conditions and needs.
6. The provision of meaningful opportunities for citizen involvement, input, monitoring and review.
7. Assuring agency accountability to the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners for the appropriate use of tax levy dollars.
8. Ballot language that is understandable to citizens and accurately describes services funded by the proposed levy.

Background: In May 2004, at the request of membership, the County Government Committee initiated an "Evaluation of the Procedure for Voting on Property Tax Levies in Hamilton County." The extensive eighteen month study determined criteria for evaluating proposals to change our property tax levy system. After member discussion and consensus, the LWVCA approved the Committee's recommendations as a local League position in December 2005.

2012 County Government Committee Statement:

Adopted by the Board in December 2005, this Position is quite relevant to current BOCC considerations about possible improvement to its property tax levy process. These criteria were the basis of a letter sent in 2008 by LWVCA to the BOCC and the chairman of the Tax Levy Review Committee in support of the chairman's inflation adjustment proposal, as well as a 2010 meeting with Commissioner Portune.

Recommendation: RETAIN

Support of Certain Criteria for Methods of Service Delivery

Position: The LWVCA supports criteria for service delivery in areas of:

1. Relationships with other governments and service providers
2. Accountability and responsiveness
3. Taxes, fees and assessments
4. Quality of service.

I. The LWVCA believes the following features are of primary importance in judging proposals for service delivery whether directly by government unit, public/private contract or a special district:

A. In regard to relationships with other governments or service providers, service provider should take part in cooperative planning for the region. In the case of special districts, the proposal should include firm guidelines for dissolution or merging with another district or governmental unit.

B. In regard to accountability and responsiveness, there should be

- 1) clear responsibility for planning and delivery of the service,
- 2) a clear line of recourse for unsatisfactory service,
- 3) preannounced open board or council meetings,
- 4) accountability to citizens through an elected official and
- 5) annual financial and program reports readily available to the public.

C. Elected officials should approve fees and assessments.

D. The service delivery plan should be the best service delivery option in terms of cost-effectiveness (assuming cost-effectiveness means the best service for a reasonable price, not just low bid); provide for qualified staff to plan, to write RFPs (requests for proposals) and contracts and to monitor and evaluate service.

Other features considered important but without consensus on the level of importance are:

- 1) the service provision not be duplicated by another source,
- 2) the proposal not have an adverse effect on prospects for change in county structure,
- 3) annual financial and program reports be reviewed at state and local level with results of that review published, and
- 4) there be a public referendum on new taxes.

It is the intention that these criteria for service delivery be applied in Cincinnati and other municipalities and townships as well as at the county level. Before League members in a unit of government may take action, they first must do a survey of their government (such as KNOW Hamilton County, the Wyoming School District study, etc.). Following the survey, members study the issue, and if a consensus is reached, the Board approves a position statement based on the group's agreement. Note: Before any action is taken, the Board considers a number of criteria, i.e. are the members knowledgeable, supportive of the position and willing to help?

II. LWVCA members support special districts, contractual arrangements (both public/private and intergovernmental) and general-purpose government as appropriate means of service delivery.

Explanation: Note that LWVCA Board must approve any action applying LWV criteria for effective action. When applying the criteria to a particular service delivery program, a judgment will have to be made about how many features of importance must be present for support. Criteria will also be used for comments during the proposal development process at hearings, etc.

Background: In 1986, determining that the chances for a major structural change in county government seemed remote, the LWVCA approved a study of alternative methods of service delivery in Hamilton County. Material for unit discussions on special districts (1987) and privatizing and contracting out of services (1988) led to consensus (April, 1988) on the criteria for judging new proposals for service delivery. In 1990, after a series of service breakdowns and criminal charges that could be traced to a lack of administrative oversight, LWVCA stated that county government had serious administrative deficiencies. LWVCA Board declared county government a high local action priority. In the late 1990s, the LWVCA promoted the establishment and maintenance of a tax levy review process with adequate time, information and accountability. In 1996 the position was reaffirmed at Annual meeting. In 2000, several lines regarding rules for League action were added to the position.

2012 County Government Committee Statement: As the BOCC scrutinizes the services that it provides within current budget constraints, this Position, adopted in 1988, is an important one for

League reaction to possible County proposals.

Recommendation: RETAIN

Support of the Council/Manager Form of City Government for Cincinnati

Position: The LWVCA supports the council-manager form of government for the City of Cincinnati including:

1. Support for at-large election for City of Cincinnati council members using semi-proportional (weighted or cumulative voting) or proportional representation (that is, the single transferable vote) method of election,
2. Support of a nine-member council for the City of Cincinnati,
3. Support of a four-year term of office for members of Cincinnati's City Council including the mayor,
4. Support for separate, direct election of Cincinnati's mayor by majority vote on a non-partisan ballot at the general election. Support for the mayor as a regular voting member of council with such powers as would enhance the role of mayor as council leader within the council-manager form of government.

Background: The LWVCA has supported the council/manager form of government from the time of the adoption of the 1926 Home Rule Charter in Cincinnati. This position has been reaffirmed and enhanced numerous times in response to proposed changes in the city's governmental structure. Support for four-year staggered terms was added in 1970. Support for staggered terms was dropped in 1996 but support for four-year terms continued. Support for a nine-member council was added in 1982, and for an expanded description of at-large elections in 1993 (point #1). Most recently, in February 1996, League members developed a new position for the direct election of a 4-year term mayor with enhanced powers (point #4).

2012 City Government Committee Statement:

Discussion continues on different ways to elect council members including by district and/or at-large. Cincinnati council members continue to have 2-year terms whereas the League supports 4-year terms. Possibilities for additional Charter Amendments include provisions for recalling the Mayor, changing to an Executive Mayor, changing council salaries, provisions for referendum and initiative, and provision for council to meet in Executive Session.

Recommendation: RETAIN

Support of Independent Boards and Commissions in the City of Cincinnati

Position: LWVCA supports provisions in the Cincinnati City Charter for the existence of independent boards and commissions in the functional areas of parks, city planning, health, and recreation. The League also supports measures, which would make more effective the operations of the independent boards and commissions.

Background: This position was adopted in May 1990 following a study of the four boards and commissions in the city of Cincinnati commonly thought of as "independent" - the Park Board, Recreation Commission, Board of Health, and City Planning Commission. Each of these independent boards and commissions grew out of grassroots citizen initiatives that predated the city's Charter of 1924. League members agreed that independent boards and commissions are a unique tradition of citizen involvement in decision making in Cincinnati government and that they should be continued and strengthened.

2012 City Government Committee Statement: Recent discussions have brought up talk of combining city parks and recreation departments; the possibility of combining city and county health departments; and the possibility of moving the health department under the city manager rather than under the Board of Health. The City Planning department now is under the City Manager but still has an advisory Planning Commission.
Recommendation: RETAIN

PLANNING

Support of Comprehensive Planning at the Municipal, County and Regional Levels

Position: The LWVCA supports the following criteria for evaluating planning proposals.

Such proposals should:

1. Be responsive and adaptable to changes;
2. Provide for citizen education and participation at all stages;
3. Consider social and environmental values as well as physical and economic development;
4. Be concerned with preserving historical and cultural assets of the local areas of the region;
5. Be fair and non-discriminatory, considering the welfare of the entire region rather than that of special interest groups;
6. Be able to be implemented under existing financial and political constraints, but allow for

possible changes, e.g., changes in national or state laws, change in governmental structure, etc.;

7. Take into account the goals and priorities of all levels of planning (municipal, county), striving to avoid duplication and to promote compromise;
8. Be compatible with the established goals of the regional planning authority.

Explanation: A definition of comprehensive planning is the study of the relationship among all aspects of an area's history, organization, growth, and natural environment at local, metropolitan and regional levels for the purpose of defining an organized program of development that maximizes the achievement of the area's goals and objectives.

Background: LWVCA first became interested in land use planning in 1951 and has restudied and expanded its positions since then, arriving at the present statement in 1971. Meanwhile, land use became a concern of League members nationwide; in 1972 the LWVUS convention added a land use study item to its program. By 1985 we had a national consensus, now stated as "Action to support responsible management of our finite land resources and developed environment to ensure consideration of public interests and private rights."

Recap of past action: Beginning in 2002, League members participated in meetings that culminated in the development of Hamilton County Comprehensive Master Plan and Strategies (COMPASS), and LWVCA was an Associate member of the follow-up Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission Planning Partnership from 2004 – 2008. The Planning Partnership is a collaborative initiative of the HCRPC taking a long range comprehensive approach to planning. League members participated in the Planning Partnership 2010 – 2011 Reinventing Our Communities workshop series. Since then the Planning Partnership has offered technical programs for particular constituencies. In the recent economic downturn, there has been a significant restriction of funds for Planning Partnership activities including maintaining the Associate membership level in which the LWVCA participated and for jurisdiction participation in the Planning Partnership.

League members participated in the OKI Land Use Commission meetings that resulted in the

2005 Strategic Regional Policy Plan for linking Land Use and Transportation planning. The Plan encourages local governments in the region to create up-to-date, consistent and coordinated comprehensive plans. League members participated in meetings to seek funds for an update to this Plan without which there will be a more prolonged implementation of the Plan.

Plan Cincinnati, the City of Cincinnati process to update the City Comprehensive Plan, was begun. This is an ongoing process which will incorporate the work of other area plans such as Agenda 360 and COMPASS. League members have participated in public meetings and presentations associated with Plan Cincinnati.

These planning activities are a means to implement the more detailed LWVCA Planning position in SUPPORT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AT THE MUNICIPAL, COUNTY AND REGIONAL LEVELS. The local League Planning position complements more general LWV and LWVUS planning positions.

2012 City Government Committee Statement: Pending League member interest the LWVCA Planning position enables the organization and its members to promote planning locally and link planning to larger regional goals.
Recommendation: RETAIN

2012 County Government Committee Statement: This Position was adopted in 1971 and is viewed as an important League statement for many of the reasons cited above.
Recommendation: RETAIN

TRANSPORTATION

Support of a Publicly-Owned Transportation System for the Cincinnati Metropolitan Area Position: The LWVCA supports the establishment of a public transportation agency, such as an authority or a district, on as wide a geographic base as feasible. The League prefers a nine-county base (Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana); the next most desirable would be a tri-county base; or at least one including all of Hamilton County. The LWVCA believes that local governments share the responsibility to assure the existence of an adequate mass transportation system. The LWVCA supports public ownership of a mass transit system, and opposes subsidies to privately owned transit systems.

Background: Following studies in 1966-67 and 1972, the LWVCA arrived at the present support position on transportation. In 1969, the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA) was created by Hamilton County. SORTA's area of jurisdiction is Hamilton County. However, under state law any contiguous county is permitted to join the transit authority upon a vote of its county commissioners. In 1972, enabling legislation was passed, allowing a vote on taxes for mass transit by individual townships and municipalities instead of on a countywide basis only.

Recap of past action: In 2002 LWVCA supported the Metro Moves Regional Transit Plan. The ballot issue seeking funds to implement the plan was defeated. League members have observed the monthly SORTA (Southwest Ohio Regional Transportation Authority) Board meetings. For a more regional approach, the SORTA Board has been expanded to 13 members and now includes a member each from Butler, Clermont and Warren counties.

League members have followed the deliberations regarding a Cincinnati Streetcar proposal. LWVCA opposed the November 2009 and November 2011 proposed Charter Amendments directed at the Cincinnati Streetcar Plan but which would have impeded the development of adequate transportation for the city and the region. Both proposed Charter amendments were defeated by the voters. Construction for the Cincinnati Streetcar is scheduled to begin early spring 2012.

2012 Transportation Committee Statement: Pending League member interest and involvement, there are opportunities for LWV involvement in regional transportation planning. Federal policy promotes multi-modal transportation including bus, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and motor vehicle transportation. The LWVCA Transportation position coupled with the LWVUS Transportation position enables the League organization and its members to be actively involved in promoting the development of an adequate regional transportation system. Currently discussions are ongoing about developing bus rapid transit in the area. Plans are continuing for rail passenger service along the Eastern Corridor from Cincinnati to Eastgate in Clermont County. There is growing recognition that a regional funding source for transportation is needed.

Recommendation: RETAIN

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Support of Different Techniques to Achieve Improved Integrated Education

Support of Policies and Programs Leading to Improved Educational Opportunity

Position: The LWVCA supports different approaches to achieve high quality integrated education for every child. Methods of desegregation that the LWVCA supports include: alternative schools, open enrollment, pairing of schools, re-districting. The LWVCA supports a program of educating the public for school desegregation. We support the League's participation in the desegregation plan. The LWVCA supports open enrollment in all Hamilton County area schools if there is no financial burden to the receiving district.

Background: The consensus on integrated education was reached in 1976 and reaffirmed in 1996. In February, 1984, the Cincinnati Public Schools, the NAACP and the Ohio Department of Education reached a tentative out-of-court settlement (approved by the court in June, 1984) ending ten years of litigation in the Bronson suit and avoiding a bitter court battle. In the Agreement the Cincinnati School District agreed to reduce racial isolation over the next seven years, using standards established by the Agreement, and was given the discretionary authority to select the methods of meeting that responsibility. In 2000 a proposal to restudy this position was defeated at Annual Meeting.

Recommendation: NO RECOMMENDATION

Cincinnati School District Tax Levies and Bond Issues

Position: For the Cincinnati School District: The LWVCA supports tax levies and bond issues to implement policies for operations and improvements in the system. The Board, in determining LWVCA action on a proposed Cincinnati Public Schools tax levy or bond issue, should consider the following information:

1. proficiency scores,
2. drop-out/graduation rates,
3. the spending per student,
4. the condition of the physical facilities,
5. the socio-economic background of the student body,
6. programs offered, and
7. student/parent satisfaction survey results.

The trends for these data should be that the district is showing improvement toward meeting its

announced goals, and where progress is not being made, remediation efforts are in place.

In addition to the above information, the Board should examine the CPS budget to determine what monies are coming into the district and how they are being spent. Moreover, before any position is taken, the Board must be confident that the LWVCA members have been thoroughly updated on the state of the CPS and that their activities are being routinely monitored.

2012 Education Committee Statement and

Background: Because our Education position had been modified in bits and pieces over the years, the LWVCA found itself with a position that indicated unqualified support for virtually any tax levy or bond issue proposed by Cincinnati Public Schools. Members decided in 2001-02 that we should develop criteria which the Board would use in determining whether a proposed levy or bond issue warranted our support. After study and discussion by the membership, the section beginning "The Board, in determining LWVCA action on a proposed Cincinnati Public Schools tax levy or bond issue....." and the paragraph ending with "their activities are being routinely monitored" were added to the Cincinnati School District Tax Levies and Bond Issues Position.

Recommendation: Definitely RETAIN

Support of All Prevailing Community Priority for Quality Education for Wyoming (Ohio) Students

Position: For the Wyoming School District: The LWVCA is in support of all prevailing community priority for quality education for Wyoming students:

- Continued emphasis on meeting the individual educational needs of all Wyoming students;
- Increased interaction between school and community to utilize citizen resources, both volunteer and monetary, for the Wyoming Public School System;
- Financing necessary to maintain the educational objectives of the WPSS;
- Capital improvements to preserve and enhance the educational facilities of the Wyoming Public School System.

Background: The LWVCA has studied the educational facilities of the Wyoming Public School System and as a result of the LWVCA Wyoming unit's study and evaluation (1971-74), updated in 1989 and again in 1999, it is felt that School

Financing and General Fund Operating Budget reflect the community priority for quality education. The LWVCA supports the current high standard of budgeting and operation.

2012 Program Development Committee Statement: In 2010 this position was voted to be re-studied. It has not, nor is there current interest.
Recommendation: DROP

NATURAL RESOURCES

Support of the Little Miami River as a Scenic River

Position: The League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area supports the protection of the Little Miami River from its source to its mouth at the Ohio River in the State System of Scenic Rivers and in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Systems.

- The LWVCA believes that continued action is needed to protect, maintain, and improve available water resources of the Little Miami River. Ground water recharge areas should be protected. Ground water that seeps into the river provides the base flow--the low flow that is sustained through the driest part of the year--and is an important source of public water supply. Citizen action is also needed to safeguard the ecosystem, some rare species of wild life, irreplaceable historic sites, and an open area for the recreational use of thousands of people.
- The LWVCA favors restrictions on any industry located in the flood plain of the Little Miami River through zoning restrictions and strict enforcement of present and future regulations.
- The LWVCA opposes any highway construction that threatens the future status of the Little Miami River as a State and National River, its ecosystem or its historic sites.
- After the Little Miami River is designated as Scenic or Recreational, the LWVCA favors seeking funds for its maintenance and administration from federal, state, local (government) or private sources, or a combination of them.

Action taken on position: Several years ago the Natural Resources Committee took an active interest in an Eastern Corridor plan to build a new bridge across the Little Miami River at the "Horseshoe Bend" area. The League position was helpful in giving us standing to request information about the project. Such proposals occasion-

ally resurface as an Eastern Corridor for traffic is discussed, so the position is still pertinent.

2012 Natural Resources Committee Statement: This position could guide action on future threats to the integrity of the Little Miami River as a Scenic River and source of safe water. Though the extent of Fracking and Fracking waste storage along the Little Miami River is unknown at this time, this position may again be of future use. The committee is learning about the Fracking process with the view of understanding safeguards that need to be put into effect to reduce negative impacts on Ohio's water and air. The LWVO has designated a leader to assist leagues interested in this topic. We welcome new members.
Recommendation: RETAIN