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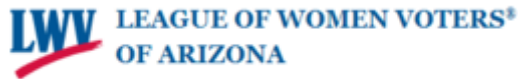
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Subject: LWV Arizona Opposes Proposition 123



PRESS STATEMENT

April 7, 2016

**Contact: Shirley Sandelands, LWVAZ President, shirsande@gmail.com
Anna Dolak, LWVAZ Voter Services Chair, aedolak@gmail.com**

LWVAZ OPPOSES PROP 123; WILL ASK JUSTICE DEPARTMENT TO INVESTIGATE DISENFRANCHISEMENT OF ARIZONA VOTERS BY GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATIVE FAILURE TO ENFORCE PEOPLE'S VIEWS ON PROP 301

Saying the Governor and Legislature of Arizona have violated the will of the people and refused to follow the directives of courts, the League of Women Voters of Arizona is urging a "no" vote on Prop 123. It is also asking the Department of Justice to expand its current investigation into voter fraud in Arizona to include the disenfranchisement of Arizona voters by the Governor and Legislature refusing to follow Proposition 301.

Voters will go to the polls on May 17th to decide the fate of the compromise proposal to resolve the financial crisis in Arizona's education system.

"This 'crisis' was totally caused by the Governor and Legislature refusing to follow the will of the voters when Proposition 301 was passed in 2000," says Shirley Sandelands, president of the League of Women Voters of Arizona. "That proposition created six-tenths of a cent sales tax to fund education in perpetuity. But the funds raised by Prop 301 have been diverted and used for other purposes against the will of the people."

Sandelands and the LWVAZ Board say Prop 123, devised by Governor Doug Ducey and legislative leaders, is offered as a solution, but in reality only provides 70% of the funding promised by Prop 301. It also puts the State Land Trust in future jeopardy by dramatically increasing withdrawals from the Trust.

"We realize educators in Arizona have been placed in the unenviable position of being willing to accept almost anything at this point and the numbers being touted by supporters of Prop 123 sound good but it's not a long term solution," Sandelands said. "Voters in 2000 provided that long term solution and our political leaders decided to ignore them."

In addition to voting to oppose Prop 123, the LWVAZ Board voted to ask the Justice Department to investigate what the Board calls the "disenfranchisement of Arizona voters" by the political leaders simply ignoring the results of Prop 301.

"Proposition 301 passed with 53.5% support from the voters. It was a well thought out measure, well explained to the voters. The voters spoke. Our political leaders ignored them," Sandelands said. "Now it's time for responsible people in

Washington, D.C. to investigate this fraud on the people.”

The Arizona Supreme Court ordered the legislature to follow the voter’s will and increase funding to education by \$300-million a year but that order was ignored and is tied up in legal maneuvering on appeal.

“Meantime our children suffer,” says Sandelands. “Arizona is 50th in the nation when it comes to education funding. Proponents of Prop 123 will tell you that it’s a solution to the problem. It isn’t. It’s a short term Band-Aid that will cause even deeper funding problems in ten, fifteen or twenty years.”

The League is urging the Legislature to get serious about education funding and do it the right way.

“They should consider restoring dramatic corporate tax cuts made over the past decade,” Sandelands said. “They should also get serious about doing their job for the people of Arizona rather than large corporate backers to their campaign war chests.”

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

For questions or further information, please contact the LWVAZ office at 480 966 9031 or info@lwvaz.org

128 E. Highland Ave. F104-277, Phoenix, Arizona 85016, United States

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