



# OHIO VOTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OHIO **SUMMER 2016**

## Ohio Lobby Corps Spring 2016 Advocacy Report

By Carrie L. Davis, LWVO Executive Director

Your LWVO volunteer lobbyists and issue specialists have been hard at work on your behalf this spring. We testified on legislation before the Ohio General Assembly, presented to committees of the Constitutional Modernization Commission, and supported coalition lobby days. Here's a report on all that your state Lobby Corps has been up to so far this year.



### Ohio Legislature

The Ohio General Assembly has recessed for the summer, after a very busy spring legislative session. While the big news was legislative passage of a medical marijuana bill, there were many other issues being debated by legislators. LWVO lobbyists were tracking and analyzing bills, researching issues, preparing testimony, and lobbying legislators for sensible policies.

### Bills Passed this Spring

In a marathon session that many around Capitol Square likened to "lame duck in May," the Ohio House and Senate cleared their calendars of dozens of bills before leaving for summer recess.

Good news: Online voter registration (SB 63) finally passed! Unfortunately, the majority in the Ohio House would only support passage on the condition that it won't take effect until January 2017. Despite the objection of Secretary of State Jon Husted, local election officials, and voting advocates – who wanted online voter registration (OVR) this year – the legislature agreed to delay implementation. LWVO election lobbyists Peg Rosenfield and Carrie Davis have been lobbying for OVR for years, and while we're disappointed voters won't have it this year, we should certainly count it as a win for new voters beginning in January.

Bad news: While our Voter Rights Coalition celebrated passage of OVR, we also once again had to rally in opposition to an anti-voter bill: SB 296, which would impose numerous hurdles for voters seeking a state court order to keep polls open late due to Election Day emergencies. SB 296 was raced through both chambers during May. LWV Ohio and our Voting Rights Coalition partners testified on SB 296 in the Senate and the House, urging both chambers not to pass this bill or at least to amend it to remove its many serious problems. Sadly, the legislature ignored our concerns, and we led an effort urging the Governor to veto SB 296.

More good news: The legislature passed HB 512, a bill that greatly improves Ohio's handling of situations in which lead or other contaminants are found in our water. HB 512 significantly shortens notification schedules for lead in drinking water and allows funding for clean-up from several sources. LWVO testified in favor, and the bill passed.

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### **Bills that saw action but have not yet passed**

Our stalwart energy lobbyist, Al Rosenfield, was kept busy tracking several green energy issues that continued to be moving targets much of the spring:

HB 190 - WIND FARM SETBACKS - Eases restrictions on wind farm location. LWVO prepared proponent testimony, but hearings were terminated (Also see HB 554).

HB 554 - RENEWABLE ENERGY REQUIREMENTS - Freezes alternative energy requirements at current levels. There are negotiations going on between the Governor's office and Legislature regarding alternative-energy legislation. It is expected that a bill will appear after the election combining elements of HB 554 and SB 320 (also possibly HB 190 and HB 541). Only sponsor testimony on HB 554. LWVO opposition testimony prepared.

SB 320 - RENEWABLE ENERGY - A complex bill, which apparently changes the solar-energy rules to favor utilities over existing rooftop providers. It is less harmful to alternative energy goals than HB 554. Only sponsor testimony so far. LWVO opposition testimony prepared.

SB 267 - GASEOUS FUEL VEHICLE CONVERSION PROGRAM – Tax incentives for conversion to natural gas. Sponsor testimony only. Similar to HB 176, which LWVO testified for last year. LWVO likely to support pending further study.

### **Bills we are watching for this fall**

One of the bills we worried would move during the flurry of activity this spring but didn't – and is now on our watch list for the "lame duck" session this fall – is HB 48, the "guns everywhere" bill. It would dramatically expand the places where guns would be allowed, including college campuses, vehicles in school safety zones, day care centers, public areas of police stations, private aircraft and public areas of airport terminals. HB 48 passed the House last fall and is pending in the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee.

Joan Platz, our education specialist, is monitoring several school accountability bills, including SB 298 - Charter School Contracts, which would strengthen accountability requirements for online e-Schools, and aligns with the LWVO education position that requires education funding systems to be accountable and responsive to the tax payers.

Energy specialist Al Rosenfield has a few more bills on the watch list for this fall:

HB 541 - STATE AGENCY-CLEAN POWER PLAN - Prevents state funds being spent on Pres. Obama's Clean Power Plan. Introduced in May 2016. No hearings yet. LWVO will oppose. (also see HB 554)

SB 333 - WATER QUALITY – No hearings yet. We reached out to the LWV Lake Erie Basin Committee for comment.

HB 8 - OIL-GAS LAW – Includes ban on oil & gas drilling in state parks. Passed House; one hearing in Senate; LWVO support limited to park sections of bill and asks ban be extended to municipal parks. No action on bill for over a year, possibly because of objections to imposing drilling ban.

### **Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission**

Several of our lobbyists and issue specialists have also been involved with League issues being discussed by various committees in the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission (OCMC).

LWVO will be producing a report this summer on League issues in the OCMC, but here's a snapshot:

- Redistricting specialist Ann Henkener, Carrie Davis, and other members of our Fair Districts = Fair Elections coalition continue working with the OCMC Legislative & Executive Branch Committee on reaching a bipartisan compromise on Congressional redistricting reform.

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- Education specialist Joan Platz alerted us to a debate in the OCMC Education Committee about whether Ohio should have an elected or appointed school board, and LWVO submitted testimony in February using League positions to strongly oppose moving to an all-appointed board.
- LWVO was invited by the OCMC Bill of Rights and Voting Rights Committee to present testimony in May, as they began consideration of the section of the state constitution about voter registration. Carrie and Peg anticipate this will be a continuing dialogue.
- Elections specialist Peg Rosenfield is monitoring discussion in the OCMC committee related to potentially easing the initiated statute process to encourage more petitioners to go that route rather than a constitutional amendment, which would be harder to alter if there are problems with implementation.
- Judicial specialist Nancy Brown is monitoring discussions in the OCMC Judicial Branch committee for issues of interest to League.

### **Coalition lobby days**

Several of LWVO's volunteer lobbyists arranged for us to support lobby days hosted by our coalition partners this spring:

- April 5 - Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence hosted a virtual lobby day opposing HB 48, the "guns everywhere" bill. Special thanks to LWVO gun safety lobbyist Rosie Craig.
- April 6 - Ohio Juvenile Justice Coalition hosted a virtual advocacy day on school discipline and truancy. Special thanks to LWVO juvenile justice lobbyist Jean Byrd.
- April 12 - Ohioans to Stop Executions hosted Death Penalty Lobby Day, to demonstrate to legislators that their constituents want to make Ohio's broken legal system more fair and accurate. Special thanks to LWVO death penalty lobbyist Karen Leith.
- April 13 - Freedom of Choice Ohio (FOCO) hosted its annual Advocacy Day. Special thanks to LWVO lobbyists Anne Smead and Karen Rainey.
- April 20 - A group of nineteen organizations joined together to create Women United for Change, an educational and advocacy event opportunity to learn more about legislative solutions to issues impacting women.

For more information on LWVO's advocacy work, please visit our website [www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org) where you can read our testimony, action alerts, press releases, and Statehouse Day lobbyist reports.

### **Get involved from the comfort of your home or office!**



#### **LWV Ohio Monthly All Member Call**

The state League hosts a conference call open to all members on the first Tuesday of every month at 12 noon. The monthly call is a great way for League members across Ohio to connect, share ideas, get updates on hot topics, and plan action.

Here's how to join the discussion: Call (toll-free): 866-740-1260 Enter PIN Number: 4691505#. Watch your email several days in advance for an announcement of that month's call topic. Calls typically end just before 1pm.

Each month features a different topic. Check the state League website – [www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org) – for next month's call topic or check your email. Have an idea for a topic you'd like to cover in an upcoming call? Let us know at [lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org](mailto:lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org).

#### **LWV Ohio Lobby Corps Call**

LWVO's volunteer Lobby Corps meets via phone twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 12 noon. It's a great way to learn about what is happening in the Statehouse, and the conversations often reveal new League lobbying opportunities. You do not need to be a designated lobbyist to join the call. Anyone with an interest in League advocacy is welcome to join the conversation or listen.

Here's how to join the discussion: Call 712-432-0390 Enter PIN Number: 742886#. Calls end by 1pm. You are certain to learn something new about pending legislation and lobbying activities.



## Statehouse Day Recap

This year's Statehouse Day on April 26th was enjoyable and informative with engaging presentations and networking opportunities among local League members.

LWVO's volunteer lobbyists were recognized and given special "LWV Volunteer Lobbyist" pins as a thank you. We couldn't do what we do without our wonderful, dedicated group of volunteer lobbyists. The cover article of this issue of the Voter chronicles much of our lobbyists' work, and their Statehouse Day issue reports are available on the LWVO website.

The keynote speaker at our Statehouse Day luncheon was Michael Li, from the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU. Mr. Li's talk focused on gerrymandering and the need for redistricting reform at the congressional level. His talk focused on how gerrymandering especially impacts underrepresented minority communities across the county and how redistricting reform will help in making the upcoming general election as fair and accessible as possible for all Ohio voters.

League members left Statehouse Day on April 26th with greater understanding of key issues facing Ohioans – judicial elections, equitable school funding, infrastructure, and gun safety. If you could not attend this year, go to the state website ([www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org)) for more information about the day's activities, session presentations and handouts.

Thank you to all our Statehouse Day sponsors and lobbyists for making this year's event a success!

- Partnering Sponsors: Alison S. Ricker, M.L.S., and Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick, Ph.D.
- Host/Hostess Sponsors: Ellen Chamberlin, Janet Chittock, Andrea and Vincent Cobb, Darci Congrove, Meg Flack, Tammy Hardgrove-Shomo, Martha Kleinfelter, Marlene and Bill Muse.

## LWVO Volunteer Opportunities Available

We are always on the lookout for League members who want to volunteer their time and talent to grow our state League. Current projects in which we'd welcome volunteers to apply include:

- If you like advocacy: Join LWVO's volunteer lobby corps, who monitor issues of interest to League in the state legislature and draft advocacy materials.
- If you enjoy fundraising: We seek LWV leaders to join the Steering Committee for our 5-year fundraising campaign.
- If you like helping Leagues grow and thrive: Apply to be a coach for the Membership and Leadership Development Program.
- If you want to build a strong state League: Work with the nominating committee to identify future state board members.
- If you enjoy public education and writing: Help review content for the new edition of our "Know Your Ohio Government" book.
- If you are passionate about voter rights: Volunteer to help with "Election Protection" this fall. We will need volunteers all around Ohio, and free training is provided.

Contact the LWV Ohio office at 614-469-1505 or [lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org](mailto:lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org) for more information or to apply. Thank you!



## A Moment in League History

By Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick, LWVO Co-President

The battle for women's right to vote having been won, LWV turned its attention immediately to assuring that all votes would be treated equally. Through the ensuing decades, state leagues have used both the ballot and litigation to try to rectify the kinds of unfair representation seen throughout the country. The 1962 Supreme Court decision in Baker v. Carr declaring that district lines drawn to favor one group over another might violate the equal protection clause and could be litigated in federal court opened the gates for such lawsuits.

Two significant steps in the battle were spearheaded by the state leagues of Alabama and Colorado. In Alabama, a league study showed the egregiously disproportionate treatment of votes from one district to another, resulting in rural votes having greater weight than urban ones. This finding led to the 1964 Supreme Court decision in Reynolds v. Sims declaring that equal protection meant "no less than equal representation for all citizens, of all places as well as all races." In Colorado, a coalition including the state league sued in federal court after Coloradans had passed a reapportionment plan that heavily favored mining and agricultural interests. In Lucas v. Colorado, the Supreme Court declared, again in 1964, that even a referendum approved by a majority of voters could be overturned if it did not protect "an individual's constitutionally protected right to cast an equal weighted ballot."

As some members of Congress, led by Sen. Everett Dirksen, moved to nullify this decision, state leagues urged LWVUS to add an emergency study to its 1965 agenda so that they could fight against this effort at both the national and state levels. The board agreed and the battle ensued. Sen. Paul Douglas, leader of the opposition to the Dirksen amendment, credited LWV with being instrumental in its defeat, noting that LWV's work "would go down in history as [giving] the crucial public support" needed for the principle of one person, one vote. As shown by Ohio's successful effort in passing Issue 1 on state legislative redistricting reform, the battle for fairness in our electoral process continues to this day.

## Membership and Leadership Development: Engaging the "New Breed" of Volunteers in the League \*

By Meg Flack, LWV Ohio MLD Coordinator

Did you know that volunteers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century are a different breed than those of even a generation ago? The new breed of volunteer is:

- Very busy, has many obligations, and often volunteers for multiple organizations.
- Wants flexibility.
- Expects to be empowered.
- Wants to have a positive experience.
- Is tech-savvy.
- Wants to have an impact -- to make a difference.
- Doesn't want to be micromanaged.

Ensuring that potential and new members are *engaged early on* with the League in ways that they find interesting and worthwhile will lead them to enriched interactions and experiences, to a deeper League relationship, and ultimately to a more impactful organization.

Thus, in order to engage the "new breed" of volunteers, it is important for us to ...

- Understand our volunteers' motivations.
- Make our volunteers feel appreciated.
- Offer our volunteers privileges & perks.
- Be available to our volunteers.
- Provide tangible incentives to them.
- Create a sense of community within the group.
- Establish accountability for our volunteers.
- Allow time for team "huddles."
- Empower our volunteers.

Volunteers want to make a difference – and the League is just the place for the new breed of volunteers to do that through meaningful engagement!

\*Based on LWVUS's *Opportunity for Guidance: Engaging the "New Breed,"* January 2016 – available by entering the key words "lwv engaging the new breed" in your search engine or going to [http://forum.lwv.org/sites/default/files/jan\\_2016\\_engaging\\_new\\_breed\\_updated\\_kms.pdf](http://forum.lwv.org/sites/default/files/jan_2016_engaging_new_breed_updated_kms.pdf)

## Fact Sheet #3: What We Know About Ohio's 2016 Statewide Primary

By Lynda Mayer and Dianne Herman, Co-Chairs, Primary Election Systems Study Committee

This third of four Fact Sheets summarizes for Ohio's League members some of the expected and unexpected results of our observation of Ohio's congressional, legislative and countywide primaries on March 15th of this year. But don't look here for findings about presidential or judicial primaries. -- We can't do much to influence the national political parties who control the former, and LWVO already has positions on how the latter ought to be conducted in Ohio (nonpartisan primary AND general election, unlike the current peculiar hybrid). We also did not compare Ohio's statewide primary with those of other states, the massive scope of which would have overwhelmed our resources. So, with those caveats.....

Each member "observed" and analyzed one race, from U.S. Senate down to Summit County Clerk of Courts -- an unscientific sample, to be sure, but one which did nevertheless represent a demographic, political and geographic cross-section of Ohio. We gathered vote totals and computed percentages of ballots cast in each race, and we contrasted districts or counties by many variables, hoping to find promising correlations.

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES.** Over 70 percent of Ohio's voters (prior to this primary) were officially unaffiliated, as they had no recent history of voting in Ohio's partisan primaries. However, overall turnout was over 42 percent this March, which means that many "independents" did indeed vote, at least for president. That proves that unaffiliated status does NOT prevent the interested from voting in Ohio. Newspaper reports also put the percentage of "crossover" voting (from one party to another) at over five percent. As our focus travelled further "down" the ballot, however, the participation shrank considerably -- congressional races averaged 33 percent and legislative and countywide races sank to 25 percent and lower. Readers may recall the results of our municipal primary research last summer, which was an even more dismal 15 percent. So, with these numbers in our heads, we went looking for variables that could possibly explain them....

**UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES:** One might think that the following factors might produce some answers: income levels, population density, diversity, gerrymandering, competitiveness, party endorsements, incumbency, publicity, or the preponderance of one party's voters over the other's. Although our sample was too small to trust our exact figures, we were disappointed to learn that participation rarely varied a point or two above or below the 25 or 26 percent mark. We cannot venture many accurate guesses based upon comparing these variables. We did, however, surmise (intuitively but without proof) that contested elections featuring strong party involvement, good public information, and unpredictable outcomes should attract more interest and hence more turnout.

**WHY DID THE WINNERS WIN?** You will not be surprised to learn that the most frequent answer was lack of opposition, followed closely by the fact that the winner was a popular incumbent or had wide name recognition.

**DID THE PRIMARY PAVE THE ROAD TO A MEANINGFUL GENERAL ELECTION?**

Emphatically, no. All but two of our observers reported "no contest," either because of no opposition or due to a heavy partisan imbalance in the jurisdiction. Nearly all outcomes are completely predictable, a finding which should surprise no one. And this survey alone did not produce or suggest solutions to the problem.

Stay tuned for Fact Sheet #4, which will summarize the feedback of many experts, advocates and state League representatives from around the country, surveyed in the hope that consensus might emerge from a wide net of knowledgeable election buffs. There MUST be a better system, right ??????

## **MLD Tip: Empowering the Voters of Tomorrow: Developing Winning High School Registration Programs\***

By Meg Flack, LWV Ohio MLD Coordinator

Want to further the League's mission – while simultaneously increasing your League's impact and visibility among potential future members? Voter registration is critical to spurring young people to get involved in the political process, a cornerstone of the League's work.

LWVUS offers a comprehensive training manual – *Empowering the Voters of Tomorrow: Developing Winning High School Registration Programs* – that provides a complete, proven game plan to Leagues for executing and evaluating high school registration drives, including tips for conducting the follow-up with young registrants that are critical to transforming them into lifelong voters.

The manual has four sections:

- 1) Planning a High School Registration Program;
- 2) What to Expect: A Lesson Plan That Works;
- 3) After the Event: Quantifying Results & Furthering Your Impact; and
- 4) Leverage Your Program for Visibility and Growth.

The manual also includes everything from a Sample Outreach Letter to School Officials – to a Registration Drive Checklist – to a Sample Work Plan – to talking points, scripts, and templates for letters and press releases.

You can find this excellent resource by entering the key words “LWV High School Voter Registration Training Manual” in your search engine or go to <http://lww.org/files/Empowering%20the%20Voters%20of%20Tomorrow.%202015.%20LWVEF.%20Full%20Manual.pdf>

\*Based on *Empowering the Voters of Tomorrow: Developing Winning High School Registration Programs*.

### **Did your local League elect a new board at your annual meeting?**

Please remember to send your updated board lists to the LWVO office. Updates can be emailed to Gail Burns at [lwwinfo@lwwohio.org](mailto:lwwinfo@lwwohio.org).

LWVUS encourages each League to keep its active officers list up to date in their database as well. Those lists are used to communicate with League leaders on different projects, programs, and notifications. If your local League is still unable to access the LWVUS database, please email LWVUS at [RosterSupport@lww.org](mailto:RosterSupport@lww.org) with any questions!

## **Women's Voices: Training the Next Gen of Women Leaders – Pass Thru Grants**

Congratulations to the LWVs of Greater Dayton, Kent, and Greater Cleveland, grant awardees in our Women's Fund of Central Ohio-funded effort to train the next generation of women leaders. These projects each plan to engage young women (and young voters) in exciting and innovative ways.

LWV Greater Cleveland has experience with forums featuring members who've gone on to elected office, and plan to provide hands-on assistance to high school students, “League fellows,” interested in creating and hosting a similar event. LWV Cleveland expects the fellows will gain an understanding of and appreciation for League advocacy, nonpartisan civic education, and voter participation.

LWV Kent will engage a traditionally underserved and disenfranchised group of girls in order to both acquaint them with and excite them about voting and the political process. The League will partner with a local community center to connect girls with female city and county officials in an exploration of the important roles women play in the community.

LWV Greater Dayton plans to leverage 2016's first presidential debate, to be held in September at Wright State University, as part of its effort to inspire young women's participation in government. Their partners will be the WSU's Women's Center, Dayton Barnes & Noble's American Girl Project and Wright Patterson Air Force Base, and activities will include debate watch parties and discussion groups.

There are still pass-through grants available, so if your League is interested in the next generation of women leaders, please apply as soon as possible. More information about grant expectations and application materials can be found on our website.

LWVO wishes to thank the Women's Fund of Central Ohio for making this exciting election year project possible.

## From the Co-Presidents' Desk

Our first year as co-presidents was a bit of a roller coaster ride as the two of us became familiar both with our leadership position and with the wonderful staff, state board members, volunteer lobbyists, and local leagues who have been without equal in their willingness to get things done. Together, we got through the thickets of campaigning to pass Issue 1 “Fair Districts,” establishing statewide access to Vote411 and Judicial Votes Count online, heading off voting problems during the primary election, and lobbying an often recalcitrant legislature on the issues so important to all League members. The work never seems to stop, and indeed never does!

While most of us would no doubt like to take a summer break right now, this is the time to start early planning for the fall general election. It's especially important if a local league is considering using novel methods, such as video interviews, for getting information before the voters. If any local leagues have incorporated innovative best practices, we hope you'll share those with us. In an effort to get the information into local league hands as soon as possible, the state board will be considering a significant part of the Voter Guide's content at our July retreat. New voting restrictions passed by the Ohio legislature will mean a redoubling of efforts to help all eligible voters fulfill their civic duty, and getting young people in the habit of voting is crucial to the future strength of our democracy. Inactive voters (since 2008) need to be encouraged to check their voter registration and re-register if necessary. Leagues situated in college/university towns may need to strengthen collaborative efforts on their respective campuses to help students register, update registration, request absentee ballots, etc.

Collaboration has in fact been much on our mind. In an effort to establish greater lines of communication between the state board and local leagues, we'll be sending local league presidents an online survey asking for their input. We are also considering other ways to get to know each other, such as inviting local league presidents to attend one of our board meetings. At our July board retreat, we hope to incorporate all these ideas into a larger discussion about how we can best work together. We very much look forward to sharing this coming year's ride with all of you on board!

- Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick and Alison Ricker



### LWV Ohio League Voter Service Email Listserv

Should my League switch to Vote411? When will candidate questions be available? Has anyone found a good way to motivate reluctant candidates to participate in the voters' guide or candidate forums? Every League wrestles with voter services questions. Join the LWV Ohio voter service email listserv and share questions to get helpful advice and suggestions.

There is no limit to how many people from each League can be on the list. It's up to you. Some Leagues have just one voter service person who miraculously does all voter service related work, and other Leagues have a team of people who cover everything from the voter guide or Vote411 to voter registration to candidate forums. Please email the name and preferred email address of anyone who should be added to the list to [lwvinfo@lwvohio.org](mailto:lwvinfo@lwvohio.org).



## Thank You to All of Our Donors!

A sincere thank you from all of us at LWVO to each and every donor who gave to support our Annual Campaign as of June 10, 2016. Every single dollar contributed helps us continue our critical voter education and advocacy work.

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**The League of Women Voters of Ohio/  
 Education Fund also offers thanks to the  
 many donors who wish to remain  
 anonymous for their generous support.**

## Your Donations at Work!

We know you value the League's work, and here is how we are putting your donations to good use in this critical election year.

The LWV Ohio Education Fund, our 501(c)(3) side, provides voter and civic education programs.

- This year, for the first time ever, League is providing statewide voters' guide coverage of candidates and issues through Vote411, and we are off to an amazing start! Ohioans' use of Vote411 had the second highest site traffic in the country. Vote411 analytics from January through March revealed that the candidate information was viewed 33,000 times by voters in Ohio. That's *14% of the entire nationwide total*, which was 223,000 during that timeframe.
- We are in the process of updating a 10th edition of our booklet "Know Your Ohio Government," used by educators, schools, colleges and libraries statewide since 1963.
- We distributed over 5000 Voting 1-2-3 voter info cards in the first month they were available, with more voter info materials in the works, and we plan to train and support Election Protection observers and hotline staffers for fall.

LWV Ohio, our 501(c)(4) side, conducts our advocacy and membership work.

- Our LWV Ohio advocacy team has been very active – winning passage of Issue 1 state Fair Districts reform last fall, organizing to extend those same fair districts rules to how we draw Congressional districts, and lobbying the legislature and administration to stop voter suppression bills, advocate for sensible gun safety, press for more accountable schools, argue for clean water and green energy policies, and more issues near and dear to the League.
- The LWVO board and staff, through the Membership Committee, is creating a series of newly updated membership materials to help recruit more people to join.

We need your support to keep those efforts going!

### Donate today!

**Yes, I want to support the work of the LWVO!**

\$25    \$50    \$100    \$250    \$500   Other \_\_\_\_\_

Gifts can be made payable to:

LWVO (non-tax deductible)

LWVO Education Fund (tax deductible)

Split evenly between LWVO and LWVO Education Fund

Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please return to:**  
**League of Women Voters of Ohio**  
**17 S. High Street, Suite 650**  
**Columbus, OH 43215**

### Election Protection & Observers

We are excited to announce that the League has been approached by the Carter Center about election observer training. The Carter Center wishes to use their renowned international election observer program and apply it domestically.

The state League and our partners at the Voting Rights Coalition will be integrating the Carter Center election observer training into our state's Election Protection program.

Through the national Election Protection coalition, of which LWVUS is a member, we will continue to offer the 866-OUR-VOTE hotline as well as having on-the-ground field volunteers trained to troubleshoot and help voters.

Volunteers can sign up by contacting the LWVO office at 614-469-1505 or email [lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org](mailto:lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org).

## Executive Director's Column: Election News

Welcome to another presidential election year in Ohio! While this election is sure to have its wild and unpredictable moments, local and state Leagues are hard at work planning to make things as smooth as possible.

### Legal Updates

We have a running joke in our office that election law is like the weather: wait ten minutes and it will change. That's certainly proving true so far this year.



Carrie L. Davis

The big legal controversy during the March primary was whether 17-year-olds who will be 18 by the general election could vote for delegates to nominate candidates for US President. The law in Ohio for years had been applied that 17-year-olds could *nominate* candidates that would appear on the general election ballot when they would be 18 but could not *vote* for a candidate or issue to be decided in the primary. Secretary of State Husted claimed that voting for Presidential delegates was a *voting* activity not a *nominating* activity. The Fair Elections Legal Network filed suit on behalf of 17-year-old voters, and a Columbus judge sided with them that 17-year-olds could vote for US Presidential candidate delegates in the primary.

More recently, we've had two additional major cases decided in favor of voters.

In *Ohio Organizing Collaborative v. Husted*, US District Judge Michael Watson ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and ordered the state to restore "Golden Week," the one week of early voting that precedes the voter registration deadline. Golden week had been eliminated by the legislature in the 2013 bill SB 238. The state has appealed.

### LWV Ohio Voter Education Materials

The state League will be updating Voting 1-2-3 cards and other voter education materials regularly with the latest legal updates, as these lawsuits (and any others that may occur) are decided.

An all-in-one general Voting 1-2-3 card was published in April and is available from the state League office and website.

Additional materials that will be available later this summer include: Voting 1-2-3 for College Students (card); What's Changed Since the Last Time Ohio Voted for President (fact sheet); and a Pledge to Vote card. We will also be producing some [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org) promotional materials.

In *NEOCH v. Husted*, US District Judge Algenon Marbley ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and struck down two recent state laws pertaining to absentee ballot forms (2013 SB 205) and provisional ballot forms (2013 SB 216). Both laws required voters to provide more information on the forms in an exact format, rejected any form that was not filled out perfectly, and prohibited election workers from helping voters fill out the form. Plaintiffs argued this led to a great many ballots being rejected for immaterial reasons. The state has appealed.

### Voters' Guide Timeline

In response to requests made by local Leagues, the state League board will finalize candidate questions for the general election at our July board meeting. We hope that making this information available earlier in the cycle will help Leagues respond to the demand for voters' guides to be available earlier in the fall for early voting.

As of this writing, it does not look like we will have any statewide ballot issue this fall, but we will let you know if that changes.

Local League district assignments will remain the same as from the March primary.

The state League will contact US Senate candidates for the voters' guide and make their responses available on [Vote411](http://Vote411.org) for local Leagues to use.

Please note that there are filing deadlines in August for minor party, independent, and write-in candidates. State League candidate profiles will be updated during August to reflect any additional candidates certified for the ballot.

As a reminder, Judicial Votes Count will be responsible for contacting candidates for ALL judicial races throughout Ohio – state, county, city, and other local courts. Leagues are encouraged to download judicial candidate info from the website [www.JudicialVotesCount.org](http://www.JudicialVotesCount.org) for use in your local voters' guide, but please do not send duplicate questionnaires to judicial candidates. Leagues are, of course, welcome to contact judicial candidates to participate in local forums.

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

**For membership information,**  
call (614) 469-1505,  
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**YES, Sign me up as a Member of the League of Women Voters of Ohio!**

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**17 South High Street, Suite 650**  
**Columbus, Ohio 43215**

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