



League of Women Voters of Palos Verdes Peninsula

Voter

lwvpalosverdes.org

(310) 784-7787

April May 2018

CALENDAR 2018

Wednesday	April 4	County Board Meeting	9:30 – 1:00	Pasadena Bank
Wednesday	April 11	PVP Board Meeting	Noon	Nell Mirel’s House
Wednesday	May 2	County Board Meeting	9:30-1:00	TBD
Wednesday	May 9	PVP Board Meeting	Noon	Nell Murel’s House
Saturday	June 9	Local Convention	9:30 – 2:00	Hesse Park

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Presidents' Message

As we go toward the end of the League year, we are planning for convention. Our local convention will be in June. This year we will be meeting at Hesse Park. This is a great way to take a first step to get involved in the League and hope all of you will be able to attend.

This is a busy election year. Nancy is very busy setting up different forums and will be doing pros and cons for the ballot in June. This is a great opportunity to become involved in a popular League activity. We address small groups around our area to explain the propositions. If you wish to help with this activity you will need to speak to Nancy Mahr (310-377-0735) as to her needs. If you wish to become a speaker, you will need to attend the ballot briefing on Sat. April 28, at Hollenbeck Palms, in East LA from 9:30 to 11:30 am. Please call Nancy to see what car-pools are set up. This June there are 5 ballot measures, 27 judge candidates for 11 seats, 4 Assessor candidates, and 3 Sheriff Candidates. Nancy will also need helpers for her forums. We are also involved in registering new voters. If you can help us, please let Nancy know.

Since there is also a new voting system coming, we are planning a community program to explain the new system to our local area. The system will be quite different with voting stations that will be open several days and you will have the ability to vote at any of these stations around the county. While this won't affect us for a while, we hope to answer all your questions at a program. You will still be able to vote by mail.

We are also working to set up a program about all of the changes taking place in our Ports. If you have a special area you would like to learn about, we are always open to your concerns and interests. Just let us know.

Wish all of you a most happy spring,

Karen Buresh and Vi Jungerich

Co-Presidents



The California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2018

Fund our schools and local communities by closing California's large-commercial- property tax loophole.

Our deadline to collect a least 600,000 signatures to get this proposition on the Nov. ballot is April 24. Please contact Linda Herman (lhermanpg@cox.net) if you would like additional petitions or are ready to mail them in so we can track how many signatures our League has obtained.

There is great pride in knowing the League of Women Voters of California is a prime leader in this effort. All members are encouraged to secure as many signatures as possible, perhaps from friends, family and the organizations you are active in. Although we have paid signature gatherers out, given the time constraint, our state League is counting on members to gather signatures as well.

This act will:

- ✓ retain full protection from property tax increases for homeowners, renters, agricultural land, and small business;
- ✓ provide for reassessment of non-residential, non-agricultural commercial property every three years;
- ✓ generate \$10 billion annually going directly to education, public safety, libraries, transportation, health clinics, job training, and other local services;
- ✓ eliminate some taxes paid by small businesses;
- ✓ mandate public disclosure of how the revenue is spent.

Welcome New Members!



Christina and Raul Vera
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Education Update by Pat Colby

STATE BUDGET:

The new tax law limiting deductions on state and property taxes to \$10,000 will probably curtail Governor Brown's chances to increase spending next year for priorities, like expanded preschool beyond minimum funding for Proposition 98.

On the other hand, according to a prediction by the Legislative Analyst's Office, 2018 could be a strong year for Proposition 98 that could enable Brown to pay the final installment on the Local Control Funding Formula two years ahead of his original projection.

TAX IDEA:

One tax idea that may be favored in our state is the "split-roll" property tax in which commercial and business properties would be assessed more often at market rate, and therefore, pay a larger share of property tax (requires amending Proposition 13). If this amendment is placed on the ballot and passed, it could bring billions to California schools and local services.

PENSIONS:

The cost sharing formula passed by the Legislature in 2012 to keep California's mammoth public pensions solvent is squeezing school districts. By the time payment increases level off in three years districts' contributions to CalPERS (hourly school workers) and CalPERS (teachers and administrators) will have risen by \$6 billion per year to more than \$10,000 billion annually.

U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION:

Betsy DeVos, U.S. Secretary of Education, has many objections to California's plan for meeting the demands of the Every Student Succeeds Act. In exchange for federal aid, the law, among other things, requires that states act to close the gaps between low-income students and their wealthier peers and fix worst performing schools. With battles over school reform (standardized testing, teacher evaluations etc.) between California and Washington D.C., it is possible the federal government may dock billions of federal education dollars for California.

THE CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (CTA):

Later this year, the U.S. Supreme Court, with a conservative majority intact, will certainly rule workers don't have to pay fees to the public employee unions that represent them.

A new case, Janus v. AFSCME, out of Illinois, represents a threat to unions like the CTA. Based on what has happened elsewhere, a third or more members could choose to stop paying fees. Expect a year of activism while the CTA, the biggest spender in Sacramento, and its locals are still in the game.



Chris Carson Outlines League Priorities by Pat Colby

Chris Carson, President, U.S. League of Women Voters, identified League priorities at the 2018 Annual Convention at the Carson Event Center on March 24, 2018.

The U.S. League, she says, is on a transformational journey. In 1970 the Young People's Task Force was established at the behest of a passionate young speaker, Hillary Rodham. In 1994, the Crossroads Project was adopted at convention (recommendations developed for the future of the League). In 1998 the Diversity Tool Kit was developed and sent to local Leagues. Ultimately, talk superseded action, so recently the LWVUS Board of Directors decided to stop talking and get moving. Just do it!

So what has actually been done?

June 2016: Membership Engagement and Structure Committee appointed.

January 2017: Data summit convened.

June 2017: The National Leadership Council defined objectives and short and long term goals.

January 2018: A Transformation Steering Committee appointed, with the goal to approach major donors and foundations.

What processes are needed?

- Lighten administrative burdens in the local Leagues (payment of Per Member Payments--PMPs); looking a new ways to finance the League.
- Strengthen state Leagues.
- Simplify local League formations.
- Pilot program for students
- Simplify requirements for state and national League approval (reduction of number of documents required).
- All-in data base to improve poor interface technologically between local, county, state and national Leagues. Need to instantly share information at all levels.
- Improve diversity in Leagues nation-wide (training to begin at the 2018 Chicago Convention).
- Allow those who so desire to join the League through PayPal.
- Loosen up; avoid phrases such as "That is not the League way."
- Need to speak up and stand up against critical attacks within a League group; need to assume the good intentions and desire to succeed in others even if we disagree. Talk through differences.
- Embrace change while remembering our goal is to engage citizens and engage in democracy.
- Don't be afraid to fail. Don't be afraid to engage and to listen.

Recall the Following:

We trust ourselves.

We trust each other.

We trust the process.

LWV Interview with State Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi, District 66

On Friday, January 26, 2018, Terry Furey, Torrance League and Pat Colby, Palos Verdes Peninsula/San Pedro League, interviewed State Assemblyman, Al Muratsuchi, District 66. These are the questions to which he responded:

QUESTION 1: MONEY BAIL REFORM

Currently, release pending trial is based on an arrestee's capacity to post money bail. Do you support legislative changes to a risk-assessment based system, so that release is contingent on the arrestee's threat to the public rather than the arrestee's finances?

ANSWER: Fundamentally an individual's freedom should not be based on his ability to pay bail. I am concerned that the way AB42's risk-assessment approach was drafted may compromise public safety. Last year, I abstained from voting for two bills on this subject as I believed it was premature for the legislature to be passing reform without the input from our Chief Justice. Now that our Chief Justice has issued recommendations on a risk-based and supervision program for less serious offenders, I can say that I am conceptually in support of reform.

Note: In late 2017, the committee established by Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye to study California's bail system issued a slate of recommendations, saying money bail should be replaced by a risk-based assessment and supervision program that determines whether

to jail defendants before trial based on their threat to public safety and their likelihood of making a court appearance. The recommendations include replacing California's current money bail system—which the committee called “unsafe and unfair” with a pretrial assessment that gathers information about each defendant, better arming judges with information about that person's potential risk to the public. Pretrial programs would also give judges more tools to supervise defendants, such as drug testing, home confinement and text reminders for court dates.

Several California counties—including Santa Clara, San Francisco, Ventura, Humboldt, Riverside, Imperial and Santa Cruz—have programs that provide risk assessment information to judges that helps them decide in a limited number of cases, which defendants can be safely released before a trial. In recent years, New Jersey and New Mexico instituted sweeping reforms to limit or end money bail. For decades, Kentucky and Washington D.C. have run systems that primarily rely on risk assessments with very limited use of money bail. (California Courts Newsroom, 2017)

“The cash-bail industry, which includes local bond agents backed by multinational insurance giants, is a morally tainted enterprise that systematically violates the constitutional rights of America's most vulnerable citizens in the name of profit—and with no discernible benefit to the public.” (New York Times Editorial, “Locking Up the Poor”)

QUESTION 2: CEQA REFORM

What is your view regarding the use of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to delay affordable housing projects? While recent legislative changes have streamlined the CEQA process for in-fill (low income) projects, do you think other legislative changes to CEQA are needed?

ANSWER: Yes, changes are needed. CEQA should not be abused to undermine the planning and development of projects which serve the public interest. At the same time there are legitimate CEQA claims with public in-pu that determine housing density, traffic patterns and the character of a neighborhood. It is important to keep a balance between CEQA protections, including citizen participation in the land use planning and regulation process and the desire to expedite production of affordable housing.

One solution might be to allow streamlining only for all-affordable in-fill (substantially surrounded sites with less than 150 units) developments. Other legislative changes might be possible without destroying the intent of CEQA. (LWVUS)

QUESTION 3: SEA LEVEL RISE

We need a regional, coordinated effort of several state agencies to combat sea level rise. And since the threat is swift in terms of typical infrastructure projects, we need to coordinate now. What is the path forward to assure continuity of infrastructure as we approach 2050 and beyond? What can be done legislatively?

ANSWER: Appropriate responses include climate mitigation (a global response with

California in a strong leadership position) and adaptation in specific localities along our coast to include consideration of land use and studies which identify those areas that are most vulnerable. Earth's global surface temperatures in 2017 ranked as the second warmest since 1880, according to an analysis by NASA. As temperatures continue to increase, so does global ice melt and some estimates suggest that for every foot of global sea rise, California will see 1.25 feet of rise. I have supported measures such as AB184 and SB100 which will help California plan for the future to reduce the impact of climate change and sea level rise. The legislature could give resources to local communities to help them address sea level rise, but any funding must be directed toward projects that do not further jeopardize the environment or our coast line and emphasize sustainable land use.

A consensus of scientific research makes catastrophic projections that, in the worst case, will be reality by the end of this century:

- *The San Francisco and Oakland Airports will be unusable due to flooding.*
- *Housing perched on coastal bluffs in Pacifica and elsewhere will continue to crash into the sea.*
- *Malibu's Broad Beach will dwindle into a seldom-seen slice of sand.*
- *Delta Flooding will overwhelm rivers and strain levees critical to our water supply.*
- *Power plants, nuclear waste sites and other sensitive waterside sites need to be fortified or lost.*
- *Roads, bridges and railways along the coast from Mendocino to San Diego will be abandoned and relocated inland.*
- *San Francisco's Embarcadero and low-lying cities such as Huntington Beach*

will flood more frequently and more severely.

- *More than 42,000 homes in California will be under water—not merely flooded, but with seawater over roofs.*

The problem becomes more urgent with much of California’s wealth huddled along the coast, supporting an ocean-dependent \$44 billion economy. In the end, state and local officials may come to the gut-wrenching conclusion that some coastal land should simply be abandoned.

“We’re not doing that well at all,” said Democratic Assemblyman Mark Stone, chairman of the Select Committee on Coastal Protection and Access to Natural Resources. We have yet to really start to answer the hard questions and make policy—saying, ‘No, we are not going to put public money here.’ Eventually we should get to the point that we are not going to do any public investment in those places anymore.” (CALmatters)

QUESTION 4: THE LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA (K-12 SCHOOLS)

How would you ensure that LCFF funds are being spent on disadvantaged kids as they were intended to be?

ANSWER: The Local Control Funding Formula is legislation that gives school districts (K-12) the autonomy to decide which programs and services to spend state funding on. It’s primary goal was to ensure equity by devising a complex recipe of budgeting mechanisms, in part by giving additional money to districts based on the numbers of high-needs students they had—English learners, low-income children and foster youth. Given the flexibility the law provides, the law is also prone to

unintended consequences—namely, broad interpretations as to how the money is spent and poor accountability for allotments to improve services for vulnerable youth. The Los Angeles Unified School District, for example, faces law suits for budgeting money meant for these children on other expenses, such as teacher raises.

Public school funding is the largest program in the state budget, receiving more than 40% of the state’s general fund resources. The governor’s proposed budget includes a K-12 education omnibus bill that allocates \$1.36 million in ongoing Proposition 98 funding to further implement the LCFF funding, including additional measures that require local schools and districts to specifically show how those targeted LCFF funds are directed at disadvantaged kids.

I have also been directly engaged in education, one of my chief budgetary priorities. Through the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, I have authorized state audits to review all accounts in public school funding, checking for transparency and accountability. I have additionally been working with a coalition of the California School Employees Association (CSEA), the California Board of Education, the California Association of School Administrators and local South Bay educational leaders to increase the base grant portion of the LCFF so that school districts throughout the state have adequate funds to meet their base operational needs. We aim to meet Proposition 98’s goal to be the top state in per student spending. If the “Make It Fair” proposed constitutional amendment passes on the November ballot, it would bring billions of dollars to education. “Make It Fair” would close the \$9 billion commercial property tax loophole by assessing

under-valued commercial properties at their actual value. Disneyland, for example, has not been assessed since Proposition 13 passed in 1978. The bill guarantees that Proposition 13 remains in effect for homeowners, residential renters and farmers.

QUESTION 5: AREAS OF FOCUS

Given the many committees on which you sit and the demands of your constituents, what are your major areas of focus?

- Working with the League of California Cities, an association of 482 cities within the state, that advocate for cities at the state capitol, including proper distribution of state taxes to the cities.
- Creating equitable school funding through interface with Torrance Mayor, Patrick J. Furey, other elected officials and Los Angeles City Mayor, Eric Garcetti.
- Implementing a fast-track development of the Green Line Metro Rail from its current terminus at Redondo Beach to a new transit center in Torrance. Under the Measure M spending plan, the project is scheduled to break ground in 2026.
- Re-introducing legislation (AB1775) to ensure that pipelines and other infrastructure cannot be built in California waters to support any new federal oil development. This, in support of 30 years of opposition to off-shore oil drilling in California.
- Maintaining pro-business approaches through AB427 which establishes the California Aerospace and Aviation Commission to serve as a central point of contact for businesses engaged in the aerospace/aviation industries and to support the health and competitiveness of these industries in California.
- Continuing to ensure safety at oil refineries in the state, including the Torrance Refinery. Last year, I was proud to author the California Refinery Jobs and Safety Action Plan, which includes the following important assembly bills to improve safety at all refineries:
 - AB1646 Communication Notifications: Require notification to residents for flares (reverse 911, text, email, PSAs, etc....) and emergencies (alarms, sirens, etc.).
 - AB1647 requires that the refinery install and maintain air quality monitors at both fence-line and in the community and that the refinery publicly report the monitor readings in real time.
 - AB1649 will codify and make permanent the existing Interagency Refinery Task Force created by Governor Jerry Brown.

The Interview concluded and Assemblyman Muratsuchi was off to his next meeting.

New Housing Bill Unpopular by Vi Iungerich

Recently LA City is opposing a state bill to increase affordable housing in the state. Senate Bill 827 is designed to relax several rules to allow more affordable housing to be built. It is intended to spur construction of more apartment building near transit stations. It would relax restrictive zoning codes and would hope to drive down prices for housing for either rent or to buy. This bill was hoping to help the current “under-product” of about 100,000 housing units every year in our state. Under the bill multi-housing units would be allowed of up to 4 or 5 stories in height if within .5 miles of a rail line or a high frequency bus line (every 15 minutes during rush hour). Taller buildings of up to 7 or 8 stories would be allowed within ¼ mile of those transit stops. This bill would also relax parking requirements.

The LA City Council and other several other neighborhood councils are strongly opposing this bill. In addition, more than 3 dozen LA affordable housing tenants’ rights and transit equity groups

are also opposing this bill arguing this bill would undo the positive effects of Measure JJJ, a voter approved initiative in LA City that requires affordable units be included in certain types of new developments.

The main issues for the opposition is that this bill would lead to displacement and gentrification, removing rent controls units, which could be demolished and replaced by new market-rate units,

devastate historic buildings, prevent LA City from zoning regulations and disallow city and local communities to have any say over local land use. Everyone agrees we need to address the affordability of housing, access to transit, and environmental benefits but this bill does none of that.

For those of you interested, this information was collected from <https://la.curbed.com> which publishes a variety of housing issues.





Join The League!

WHO ARE OUR MEMBERS?

Membership in the League of Women Voters, the most respected and effective grassroots organization in the country, is open to all men and women who are registered voters.

Our members make a visible difference by serving as community leaders using their experience to create positive, lasting change in our communities.

HOW DO I JOIN?

Just fill out the membership form below and mail it to:

LWV PVP, PO Box 2933, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA
90274. Please make checks payable to *LWV PVP*

Membership Form

Name _____

Name(s) of additional member(s) in household _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (home) _____ Phone (work/day/cell) _____

Email address _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

\$80.00 one member

\$40.00 additional member in the same household.

Dues are tax deductible. LWV PVP is a 501(c)(3) organization.

LWV PVP Officers and Board Member Contact Information:

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