



Call to Action on Priority Issues

May 24, 2019

The LWVCT Board established four priority areas for our legislative work this session - Election Laws, Campaign Finance, Open Government/transparency, and the Bottle Bill. Six days remain in this session, beginning May 28. Here is a summary of the bills our Legislative Specialists Yvonne Senturia, Pam Klem, Pua Ford, and Kathy Golas have been following.

Please pick some bills here that you particularly care about and contact your legislators to thank those who have been supportive and to urge all to bring these bills to the floor for a vote next week. Find your Legislators here cga.ct.gov. Also, SENATE DEMOCRATS - 860-240-8600 and SENATE REPUBLICANS - 860-240-8800. Legislators often scroll through and read their email while they are on the floor of the House or Senate. You will also find a lot of information about each bill at cga.ct.gov; type in the bill number in window at bottom of screen. PLEASE READ TO THE END OF THIS MESSAGE in honor of ALL the work LWVCT's Legislative Specialists do on our behalf. Thank you, Judy Lhamon, VP, Public Issues

Election-Related Bills Supported by LWVCT (as of 5/23/2019).

(Testimony previously submitted for all the following by Yvonne Senturia, LWVCT Legislative Specialist on Election Laws.)

HB 5844- Housing Authorities to Provide Voter Registration Applications for Prospective Tenants

SB 266-Polling Places at Institutions of Higher Education

- Note: Suggest clarifying definition of institutions of higher education and size of student body for determining whether mandatory or voluntary.

HB 6047- Ballots Used at Polling Places that Serve Multiple Voting Districts

- Note: Support either different ballot colors or separate tabulators

SB 25-Restoring Electoral Privileges to Felony Convicts Who Are on Parole

SB 156-The Secretary of the State and Absentee Voting

SB 1036- Regionalism for Elections

SB 1046- EDR in Polling Places and Extending the Hours of EDR

SB 1049- Modern Elections

SB 1050 -Study of Ranked Choice Voting (separate message sent out yesterday in support)

HB 6059- Organizational Changes to Election Day

- Note: Support for giving registrars discretion in adding more EDR locations.

HB 7160- Increasing Voter Access, including Automatic Voter Registration at Certain State Agencies

SB 24- Automatic Voter Registration at Certain State Agencies

HB 6063- Changes to the Process of Absentee Voting

SB 1095- Municipal Ethics

HJ161 (Early Voting) Strong support and it's over for this year. Will continue in 2021, with some efforts beginning in 2020.

Campaign Finance-related Bills Supported by LWVCT (as of 5/23/2019).

(Testimony previously submitted for all the following by Pam Klem, LWVCT Legislative Specialist on Campaign Finance Laws, and by Judy Lhamon.)

SB 642 - Social Media Platforms & Campaign Finance

SB 914 - Coordinated and Independent Political Spending

SB 918 - Supplemental Grants for Certain Candidates Under Citizens Election Program

HB 7210 - Campaign Consultants and Coordination

HB 7212 - Primary Petitions for Candidates for State Legislature

HB 7294 Bottle Bill Redemption in the State of CT Testimony submitted by Kathy Golas, Legislative Specialist on the Bottle Bill. Since we have sent out some recent detailed reminders about this, here is a link to that info:https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/leagues/wysiwyg/%5Bcurrent-user%3Aog-user-node%3A1%3Atitle%5D/call_to_action_update_bottle_bill_may_9.pdf

OPEN GOVERNMENT: Community Access Media in Connecticut needs your help, May 23, 2019

Pua Ford, LWVCT Legislative Specialist, Open Government/Transparency

Do you depend on your local Public, Educational or Governmental Access TV channel to keep an eye on local issues? After years of effort, the nonprofits that run those channels have a chance to improve.

#1 - Restore PEGPETIA (Public, Educational, and Government Programming and Educational Technology Investment Account) grant fund: The money for community access TV capital expenses has been swept into budget deficits since 2013. In 2017, a section of the 2017-19 budget bill (passed in autumn of 2017) put a perpetual sweep of the money into the general statutes (section 16-331ii). The Finance, Revenue & Bonding were persuaded to repeal that statute in the 2019-21 revenue bill (**SB 877**). If the repeal succeeds, there may be enough in the account to reopen the grant process administered by PURA. The grants are also used for technology equipment in educational institutions.

As the budget goes before the Senate and House, amendments happen. In huge bills like this, little pieces like this section may be deleted.

Please contact your legislator and urge her or him to **preserve Section 52 of Senate Bill No. 877 - AN ACT CONCERNING REVENUE ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT THE BIENNIAL BUDGET (LCO 913)**.

And if one of the following is your legislator, **thank them for their continuing support** on this issue.

Sen. Derek Slap, Sen. John Kissel, Sen. John Fonfara, Rep. Dave Yaccarino
Rep. Joe Verrengia, Rep. Jillian Gilchrest, Rep. David Michel, Rep. Josh Elliott
Rep. Joseph P. Gresko, Rep. Edwin Vargas, Rep. Julio A. Concepcion
Rep. John K. Hampton, Rep. Joshua M. Hall, Rep. Vincent Candelora
Rep. Mary Mushinsky, Rep. Jason Rojas

#2 - High definition for PEG TV: Community Voice Channel (CVC)-a nonprofit PEG organization for Ellington, Tolland, Vernon, Bolton, Andover, Hebron & Marlborough-presented a compelling story to the Energy and Technology Committee. Comcast officials told CVC that if they bought their own equipment to deliver a high definition signal, Comcast would give them a HD channel. CVC raised funds from their community and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and bought the equipment. (It was not nearly as expensive as Comcast implied.) But newer Comcast officials said they couldn't have the HD channel and would not say why.

CVC argues that if they want more community support-from people producing programs as well as financial contributors-they need to show that their content looks as good as possible. There is [video](#) online of testimony from their board members and producers (including a [RHAM High School student](#)). **If you want to know what advocacy is about, you should take a moment to watch.**

Ask your state senator to support SB 677 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE DELIVERY FORMAT OF COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAMMING (LCO 157).The legislation had overwhelming support from the Energy and Technology Committee. It compels companies to provide **high definition** for PEG programming as long as the PEG organization can deliver it. It is still on the Senate Calendar as of 05/20/19. The leadership (Senate President Pro Tem Martin Looney, Sen. Bob Duff and Sen. Len Fasano) need to bring it forward for a vote.