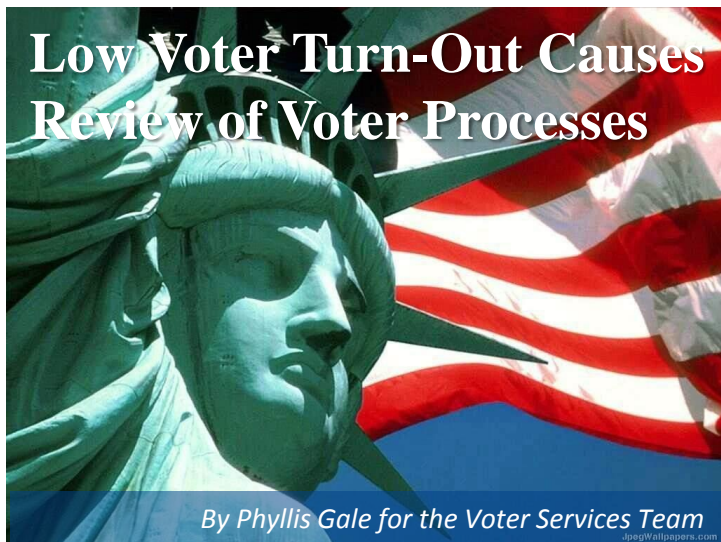


## Low Voter Turn-Out Causes Review of Voter Processes



By Phyllis Gale for the Voter Services Team

Since the California Voter statistics were published for the 2014 elections, there has been a lot of analysis done to find out why there is such low registration and voting – especially among 18-24-year-olds. Members of your LWVBAE Voter Services Team have been attending seminars and (trying) to keep up with the latest news on the topic so we can plan our campaign for the June and November 2016 Elections.

LWVC is a partner with the “The Future of California Elections” (FOCE), a collaboration between election officials, civil rights organizations and election reform advocates to examine and address the unique challenges facing the State of California's election system. Their 2015 Conference highlighted the development of the State's new, single voter database – VoteCal – along with an emphasis on targeting high schools to register new voters. The VoteCal database will be implemented with the 2016 Presidential election.

We also attended an online seminar by the UC Davis California Civic Engagement Project (CCEP) reviewing their research on the low 8.5% turnout for the 18-24-year-old voters. Voter Registration lead-member Ruby MacDonald has downloaded their data for Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville so we can analyze data specific to us. We have also begun targeting high school voter registration with an event earlier this winter at Berkeley High School.

California Secretary of State Alex Padilla recently announced that he will be working with the legislature to

### ► From previous column

pass a new law that automates voter registration based on either getting a driver's license or state ID. If you are qualified to vote, then you are automatically registered to vote without filling out additional forms as you do now. We will keep you informed of the progress.

More information on CEP's *California's 2014 Youth Voter Turnout: Decline and Future Opportunities* policy brief along with the FOCE's news can be downloaded from our LWVBAE.org website's Election Page. The Team meets the first Monday of the month at 10:30 am at the Office. And you are always welcome!

## Join Us at Annual Meeting

**May 28, 5:15 – 8:45p**

**Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley**

Kim Thuy Seelinger, the Director of the Sexual Violence Program of the UC Human Rights Center, will highlight our Annual Meeting with a presentation on "Conflict Zones and Living Rooms: Common Challenges in the Fight Against Sexual Violence". Her program recently received the prestigious 2015 MacArthur Foundation Award for Creative and Effective Institutions – a prize of one million dollars given to only nine non-profit organizations around the world.



Ms. Seelinger will tell us what her program has accomplished in its first 20 years, what their plans are for creating an endowment and expanding their program, and how the League might be of assistance in advancing their goals. Her presentation will begin at 6:30.

At 5:30 the buffet dinner will feature a delicious array of salads provided by Bette's Diner, along with baked dessert goods, coffee, and lemonade. The charge for dinner is \$17, and diners can call the office (843-8824), send email ([office@lwvbae.org](mailto:office@lwvbae.org)) or pay online by credit card or PayPal

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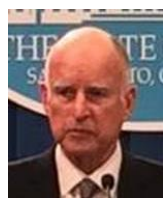


### Review of Voter Process 1

Low voter turnout – especially among 18-24 year olds – has stimulated a hard look at voting processes.

### Annual Meeting 1

UC's Kim Thuy Seelinger will speak on the fight against sexual violence.



### Climate Legislation 3

Two bills now in the California Legislature are critical to our continued efforts to mitigate climate change.

### Communications! 3

For a vibrant League we need new members and more communication with current members.



### Improve Home Efficiency 4

Do you want to make your house more energy and water efficient but just don't have the money? It just got easier!

### California Droughts 5

What did we learn from the Great California Drought of 1977 and what didn't we learn? And what now?



### Say What? 5

Learn how social studies instruction will likely change in the era of Common Core State Standards.

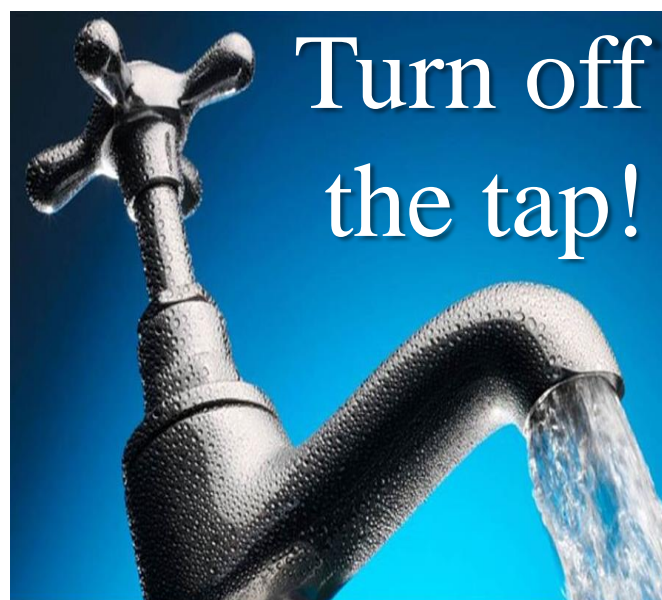
### ► Annual Meeting from previous page

([www.lwvbae.org/annualmeeting](http://www.lwvbae.org/annualmeeting)) by Friday, May 25. You may also bring your own food.

At the 7:30 business meeting, members will be asked to approve changing the tax status of LWVBAE by merging LWVBAE and LWV Berkeley Foundation, a concept approved at the 2013 Annual Meeting; elect a new Board for 2015-16; approve a budget; and adopt a program of study and action for the coming League year.

The Annual Meeting Kit with agenda and supporting materials will be mailed separately in early May..

**Please put May 28 on your calendar and bring your annual meeting kit with you to the meeting.**



Think you are just saving water when you turn off the tap? No, it's more than that! You are saving energy and reducing global warming as well, because saving water saves energy. In California, 20% of electricity and 30% of natural gas is used just to transport, treat, and heat water and process wastewater.

## Also in This Issue

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- 5 Donations to Our League
- 6 Calendar

## ON THE WEB

To keep up with League news, check our website regularly at <http://www.lwvbae.org/>



# Legislation to Continue Greenhouse Gas Decline



*By Diz Swift for the Climate Change Team*

Two bills now in the California Legislature are critical to our continued efforts to mitigate climate change. California's ground-breaking climate change legislation – AB 32 and the Renewable Portfolios Standard – only extend to 2020. SB 32 and SB 350, recently introduced, would increase those goals and extend them to 2050 and 2030 respectively. The LWV-California supports SB 32 and supports in concept SB 350. The concept of the bills was described by Governor Brown in his State of the State address on January 5, 2015.

**SB 32** AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, required California to reduce its GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. SB 32 would continue the trend, requiring California to reach emissions 80% below the 1990 level by 2050, with intermediate targets for 2030 and 2040.

**SB 350** California's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) was established in 2002 under SB 1078, accelerated in 2006 under SB 107 and expanded in 2011 under SB 2. The RPS requires investor-owned utilities, electric service

providers, and community choice aggregators to increase procurement of energy from renewable sources to 33% by 2020. SB 350 will extend that trend and add some new targets. SB 350 would implement new Golden State Standards, "50-50-50" benchmarks. These are:

- Increase renewables in California's electricity portfolio from 33% to 50% by 2030
- Reduce petroleum use by 50% by 2030
- Increase energy efficiency in buildings by 50% by 2030

The passage of SB 32 and SB 350 is not guaranteed. Proponents argue the bills are essential to continue progress toward climate change mitigation. Opponents fear that the bills will hurt our economy. In fact, our economy has not seen a negative impact with the implementation of AB 32. And, according to the Environmental Defense Fund, since California announced the cap on carbon in 2006, more than \$12 billion in clean energy venture capital has come into the state, a figure higher than all other states combined.

Additional arguments against SB 350 are that achieving 50% reduction in petroleum use is not doable, that the agency set to define the path (CARB) is not an elected body, and finally we should focus on reducing emissions, not single out petroleum.

The LWV-California supports SB 32 and supports in concept SB 350. Both bills will be monitored as they move through the Legislature. Our League, together with the LWV-Bay Area, will be presenting a caucus on these bills, and strategies to support them, at the May LWVC Convention.

## Communications, Communications, Communications!

*By Deborah Malbec for the Communications Team*

Want a vibrant, self-sustaining League? For that we need growth – growth both by adding new members and growth in the participation of current members.

**New Members.** New Ideas. To attract new members, we are using a variety of social media:

**Facebook:** JOIN the group. Then post about your own activities and read about others.

**Twitter.** Follow us @lwvbae.

**Meetup** is a website that helps people meet others with similar interests, and then shares announcements of events. Click on the link to see our League's own Meetup group. Join and encourage your friends to join too.

**More Active Members.** Build Your Skills; Build the League; Help Make Democracy Work! It's not all work, it's

fun too – and rewarding. We are breaking down jobs so that members can be active while not committing to long-term projects. See our [web page](#) for a partial list of open jobs – or create your own job.

Are you interested in a topic we don't currently work on? Start your own team! Just get a couple of other members to join you and off you go!

For comments, questions, suggestions, or to get started, contact the Communications Team at [COMM@lwvbae.org](mailto:COMM@lwvbae.org) or Nancy Bickel at [president@lwvbae.org](mailto:president@lwvbae.org).

Or join your Communications Team! The current team is: Diz Swift – VOTER and Web editor, Cynthia Chen – Press Releases, Linda Carothers – Web Manager, Deborah Malbec – Eblasts, and Nancy Bickel – President.

# Home Efficiency Made Easier



Do you want to make your house more energy and water efficient but just don't have the money? Well, it just got easier! Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing returns to Berkeley, the birthplace of the program. Low-rate loans are now available for residential and some commercial efficiency improvements such as electric vehicle charging stations, energy efficient upgrades, water efficiency products, and solar. Most homes are eligible and loans are transferable upon sales in most cases.

**A Rocky Start** Although the idea started in Berkeley, it has had some setbacks. In 2008, Cisco DeVries, then Chief of Staff to Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates, recommended that homeowners be allowed to finance energy improvements through a loan on their property taxes. The cost of the loan would be spread over a period of time with payments made through a special assessment on the property tax bill.

Berkeley moved forward with a PACE pilot program called Berkeley FIRST. The pilot served as a model for PACE programs across the country.

The program ran into difficulties in 2010 when Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac refused to back mortgages with PACE liens on them. (PACE liens take priority over mortgage companies in the event of foreclosure). Berkeley was among the communities that dropped out of PACE.

In 2011 the HERO PACE program was started in Riverside County, which uses the contractor community to market the

program to property owners. And in 2013, California passed Senate Bill 96 that removed the concerns raised by mortgage companies. That opened the doors for the PACE programs to expand in California.

**The New PACE** Funding is now available with no upfront costs and long-term, fixed-cost financing. Unlike a typical mortgage, loans are secured by the property rather than the owner's credit standing. There are two PACE providers in Berkeley and one in Albany.

The California FIRST program is available in Berkeley for both residential (up to 3 units) and commercial or multifamily (5 units or more) properties. California FIRST provides PACE financing that can be repaid over the course of up to 25 years. Online go to <https://californiafirst.org/> or call 888-839-1857.

The HERO program is now available in Berkeley and Albany for home energy products permanently affixed to the property. Loans with low fixed-interest rates are financed for up to 20 years. HERO has been adopted by 296 cities and counties in California and helped to fund over 16,500 residential projects, totaling more than \$300 million in financing. Online at <https://www.heroprogram.com/> or call 855-HERO-411

More detailed information, risk acknowledgement, and technical assistance can be found at the City of Berkeley Office of Energy and Sustainable Development website <http://www.cityofberkeley.info/PACE/>.

# California Droughts

## What Have We Learned?

Environmental Concerns Speaker Series  
Monday, May 11, 2015, 7:30-9:00p

**Antonio "Tony" Rossmann** of the Berkeley Law faculty, an expert on land use and water policy, will speak on: *The Great California Droughts of 1977 and Today: What We Learned and What We Didn't.*

Antonio Rossmann has served for the past 35 years as counsel in some of California's and the West's leading water and land-use proceedings, including the Owens Valley groundwater war, the Mono Lake public trust litigation, South Pasadena's resistance to the 710 freeway, Nevada's opposition to the MX missile and the Yucca Mountain nuclear repository, the State Water Project Monterey Amendments challenge, the Imperial-to-San Diego Colorado River water transfer, and protection of California groundwater regulation against constitutional attacks.



In 2010 the Los Angeles Daily Journal named Mr. Rossmann one of the top 100 lawyers in California, and in 2012-2013 he served as a consultant on water resources law to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome.

Contact Gail Schickele [gail.schickele@gmail.com](mailto:gail.schickele@gmail.com) or Carol Stone [action@lwvbae.org](mailto:action@lwvbae.org) for more information.



Environmental Concerns is going on summer vacation!  
Our new season will begin in September.

## Membership Report

March-April 2015

*Mina Jenner, Membership Secretary*

### New Members

Ken Bukowski  
Janice Tolman  
Maryl Gearhart

A warm welcome to our new members.



*The League is its members*

Come to any of our meetings to learn what is happening and get involved. For meetings see the calendar on the back page.

## SayWhat?

### Common Core's Impact on Social Studies

Tuesday, May 19, 12:15-2:00p  
Albany Public Library, Edith Stone Room

The May 19 "Conversation with the League" will be offered in collaboration with the Albany Public Library and feature a presentation by Bill Chapman titled "SayWhat?! Language, History and the Common Core". In his talk, Bill, a League member and former U.S. History teacher, will explain how social studies instruction will likely change in the era of Common Core State Standards. He will give examples from U.S. History, and tell why this will probably be a very good thing.



Those attending will also get to participate in a short U.S. history activity aligned with a Common Core standard. Bill was invited to make a similar presentation recently at a conference of the California Council for the Social Studies. He is currently writing a book on critical thinking for use by secondary U.S. history teachers and students, and all interested others.

## Donations to Our League

March-April 2015

*Elizabeth Russell, Donations Secretary*

### To the LWVBAE General Fund

Joan Grossman  
Audrey Ichinose  
Anita Navon  
Dirk Neyhart

Meredith Stout  
Elizabeth Warrick  
Phoebe Watts

### To the LWVB Foundation

Eva Bradford  
Mary Jacobson  
Phoebe Watts

Many thanks to our donors.



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Editor: Diz Swift  
Current and past issues of the **VOTER** are posted on our website [www.lwvbae.org/newsletter](http://www.lwvbae.org/newsletter)

*The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages active and informed participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*

**Calendar** – Locations are the LWVBAE office, 2530 San Pablo Ave, Suite F, Berkeley, and area code is (510) unless otherwise noted. [www.lwvbae.org/calendar](http://www.lwvbae.org/calendar)

### May

4	Mon	10:30-11:30a
11	Mon	7:30-9:00p

**Voter Services Team** P. Gale 548-0591  
Environmental Concerns C. Stone. 549-0959  
**Tony Rossman** – “The Great California Droughts of 1977 and Today: What we learned and What We Didn’t”, 1174 Euclid Ave, Berkeley

15-17	Fri-Sun	
19	Tues	12:15-2:00p

**LWVC Convention** N. Bickel 684-6302  
**Conversations with the League** S. Smith 548-1769  
**Bill Chapman** – “SayWhat?! Language, History and the Common Core”  
Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave, Albany

25	Mon	12:00-1:30p
26	Tues	2:00-4:00p
28	Thurs	5:15-8:30p

**Action Team** C. Stone 549-0959  
**Economic Inequality Team** P. Kuhi 526-6589  
**LWVBAE Annual Meeting** N. Bickel 684-6302  
**Kim Thuy Seelinger** – “Conflict Zones and Living Rooms: Common Challenges in the Fight Against Sexual Violence”  
Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley

### June

1	Mon	7:00-9:00p
6	Sat	11:00p
16	Tues	12:15-2:00p
19	Fri	1:30-3:00p
23	Tues	2:00-4:00p
29	Mon	12:00-1:30p

**Board Meeting** N. Bickel 684-6302  
**VOTER Deadline** Diz Swift 548-4808  
**Conversations with the League** S. Smith 548-1769  
Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave, Albany  
**Climate Change Team** R. Beatus 524-6904  
**Economic Inequality Team** P. Kuhi 526-6589  
**Action Team** C. Stone 549-0959