



THE VOTER

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Money in Politics



By Barb Singleton, Money in Politics Team Chair

Photo by Diz Swift

Since the 2010 *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* Supreme Court decision, Money in Politics has become a key priority for the League of Women Voters at all levels – national, state and local.

Two Supreme Court cases are important to understanding the situation: the *Citizens United v. FEC*, decided in 2010, and *McCutcheon v. FEC*, currently being considered.

***Citizens United v. FEC*:** The U.S. Supreme Court case ruled to allow corporations and unions to use their general treasuries to pay for political advertisements that expressly call for the election or defeat of a candidate – in campaign finance jargon known as “Independent Expenditures”. The court ruled that to not do so was a prohibition of First Amendment rights.

***McCutcheon v. FEC*:** A Supreme Court case currently being considered, will determine whether the aggregated cap (\$123,000) on the amount of money that individuals can donate to multiple candidates, political parties and political action committees is a violation of the First Amendment. The current limits are \$46,800 to candidates, \$74,600 to parties and PACs.

In California, three bills – SB3, SB2, and SB27 – comprise the Sunshine in Campaigns Act, co-sponsored by the League (LWVC) and supported in the legislature. These bills would make our elections more transparent and voters better informed. A related measure is SB52, the DISCLOSE Act.

Despite the best lobbying efforts of League members, LWVC and its allies, although Senate Bill 3 (SB3) was passed in this legislative session, the Governor sent it back unsigned to the legislature. SB3 was a first step toward a new online campaign disclosure system and would have required new online training for campaign committee treasurers. The Governor sent the following message to the legislature:

“I am returning Senate Bill 3 without my signature. This bill would require the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to create an additional online training course for campaign treasurers. This is a costly and unnecessary addition to the extensive training and outreach that the Commission already provides. Additionally, this bill requires the Secretary of State to write a report on what it would take to have comprehensive online campaign disclosure. There is no doubt the current system – widely viewed as outdated and cumbersome – needs upgrading. I am, therefore, directing the Government Operations Agency to consult the Fair Political Practices Commission and the Secretary of State and come back to me with recommendations on the best way to improve campaign disclosure.”

Your advocacy will be needed. SB3 has returned to the Senate for consideration of the Governor’s veto, and SB2 and SB27 still have not had a vote. All three bills are expected to be considered next year.

LWVBAE Money in Politics Team

welcomes your help in educating and advocating on the issues of Money in Politics.

We meet on the second Tuesday of each month. Our next meeting is Tuesday, November 12th, 5:30-6:30p at the LWVBAE offices, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, Suite F.

Contact: Barb Singleton, Chair barbmip@lwvbae.org

Read more at <http://www.lwvbae.org/about-the-league/our-committees/money-in-politics-team/>

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The battle continues for the Sunshine in Campaigns Act to keep our elections clean and transparent.

By Barb Singleton

Education Action 3

Our new Education Action Team takes on new dimensions.

*By Catherine Lynch and
Dianne McNenny*



The ACA and Beyond 4

In the keynote talk at our Fall Meeting, Alex Briscoe discussed implementation of the ACA in Alameda County.

By Gail Schickele

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Check for New Events at
www.lwvbae.org/calendar

ON THE WEB

December Holiday Events

As holiday events get on the LWVBAE calendar we will post them on the web. Check www.lwvbae.org/calendar and www.lwvbae.org/league-news.



Covered California

2.6 million Californians are eligible for subsidies under "Covered California". See www.lwvbae.org/league-news.

By Deborah Leveen

Berkeley Redistricting

LWVBAE has been supporting the redistricting process with the Council vote coming soon. See story at www.lwvbae.org/league-news.

By Sherry Smith



Climate Change Crisis

Science, Denial, Solutions. Recap of Sep 9, 2013 Environmental Concerns talk. www.lwvbae.org/league-news.

By Gail Schickele

Berkeley Measure M

LWVBAE has been supporting the process to determine how Measure M (Streets and Watershed) money should be spent. www.lwvbae.org/league-news

By Diz Swift



Mark Your Calendars

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|--|
| Jan 11, 2014 | 12:00-2:00p | Program Planning Help decide our priorities and propose studies for our Local League and for the LWVUS. Come prepared with your proposals.
Edith Stone Room, Albany Library, 1247 Marin Avenue, Albany |
| Feb 1, 2014 | 9:00a-2:00p | Bay Area League Day Preserving Open Space in the Bay Area.
http://www.lwvbayarea.org/calendar.html |
| May 16-18, 2014 | | LWV-California Council is the bi-annual meeting of all presidents and other participants from Leagues across California – usually held in Sacramento
http://ca.lwv.org/event/2014/may/event-may-2014-lwvc-council-2014 |
| May 22, 2014 | 5:30-8:30p | Annual Meeting
Northbrae Community Center, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley |

Education Action Team



Ed Team Takes on New Dimensions

By Co-Chairs Dianne McNenny (left) and Catherine Lynch

Photo by Diz Swift

Education will be an area for emphasis for LWVBAE and all California Leagues this coming year (see story bottom page 4). The new Education Action Team (or Ed Team) is taking this on with eager determination. The Ed Team combines the work of Civics Education, Juvenile Justice, and other Education concerns. The new Ed Team held its first meeting in September beginning many new areas of action, while continuing the efforts begun last year. Our work will focus in three main areas:

Support quality pre-school education for all, with plans to lobby for more funding in conjunction with a statewide League effort. One of our new challenges will be to collaborate with Berkeley PTAs and the PTA Council. We want to familiarize ourselves with

the people who have a passion for these issues and to let them know the League is there to listen and support PTAs for the long haul.

We will be attending PTA workshops in the next few weeks when the school communities will meet the new superintendent and be providing each workshop we attend with a letter stating our presence and support.

Work to close the achievement gap in our schools and finding alternatives for suspension. The Ed Action Team has been meeting with the middle schools and learning about Peer Courts, giving our support to the efforts the district is making on the concept of Restorative Justice.

Join the State Education Study. We will join a study of funding for the three levels of California Public Higher Education which is beginning this fall as a statewide three year project.

Join the Education Action Team

If you believe that the education of our kids is one of this state's MAJOR concerns, join us!

We meet on the second Friday of each month from 1:30-3:30p. Our next meeting is Friday, November 8th, at the LWVBAE offices, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, Suite F.

Contact: Co-Chair Dianne McNenny, mcnennyd@aol.com

I N T H E N U M B E R S

401

Number of U.S. climate change-related disasters from 2011 through August 2013.

FEMA

24

Estimated \$ cost in billions (0.6% of GDP) for this Fall's three-week government shutdown.

Standard and Poor's

1 to 3

Estimated \$ cost in millions to get an initiative on the California ballot.

League of Women Voters of California

8

Years to term limit for most Berkeley city commissions.

City of Berkeley

Fall Meeting Keynote

Health Care: A Basic Human Right

By Gail Schickele



A new level of health care will be available to Alameda County residents insured under The Affordable Care Act according to the LWVBAE Annual Meeting keynote address, "Health Reform in Alameda County: The ACA and Beyond."

Speaking to League membership in Berkeley's Northbrae Community Church September 25, Alameda County Health Care Services Agency Director Alex Briscoe said, "This is the most sweeping legislation of our lifetime."

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148) is the greatest federal health care reform legislation since Medicare

was created in 1965. The bill creates an individual mandate to carry health insurance coverage while also requiring most employers to offer coverage. The new law will add 16 million Americans to Medicaid, costing approximately \$940 billion over the next 10 years. Most provisions of the federal bill begin in 2014, with full implementation by 2018.

In California, nearly four million uninsured will be eligible for coverage expansion programs (i.e., MediCal) while another 960,000 will be ineligible for financial assistance but still required to purchase insurance and able to use the California Health Benefit Exchange. It is projected that \$11 billion in federal subsidies will come to Californians through The Exchange. Small businesses also would be

eligible for subsidies to provide employee coverage, with a projected benefit of over \$600 million annually for California's 638,000 small businesses with less than 20 employees. UCLA predicts a 25% increase in the current MediCal program while doubling MediCal managed care enrollment.

Of the 1.45 million residents in Alameda County, in 2006 well over 200,000 were uninsured, nearly 90 percent of them adults. After full implementation of reform in 2018, and assuming full enrollment, 95 percent of Alameda County residents will be insured. Alameda County has also already led the way in expanding medical services to uncovered groups, including undocumented residents.

"Alameda County's HealthPAC is a Low-Income Health Program (LIHP), California's effort to take advantage of the opportunity to expand MediCal eligibility before 2014, providing up to \$40 million in new federal money annually. Briscoe said there are currently

90,000 people in HealthPAC and that the County's LIHP has about 45,000 enrollees. "Alameda County far exceeds any other county in terms of percentage of LIHP enrollees compared to estimated ACA eligible populations," he said.

The LWVUS sees health care as a human right, reflected in our position supporting single-payer financing as the best solution for access to good, affordable, and portable healthcare for all. The LWVBAE is working with other Leagues around the state to champion continuing work in support of that position.

See more detail at www.lwvbae.org/league-news

"[The ACA] is the most sweeping legislation of our lifetime."

*Alex Briscoe, Director,
Alameda County Health Care Services Agency*

Surprise Action from the Floor at Fall Business Meeting

By Nancy Bickel

Following Alex Briscoe's inspiring talk, the Board proposed continuing two areas for emphasis for both public education and action—climate change and health care. Pat Kuhi rose to propose adding a third issue, education, arguing that the state League is emphasizing education and that this would be a key year for watching how the changes in education funding and the core curriculum were implemented at the local level. After discussion, the membership voted overwhelmingly to add education as a third issue for emphasis.

Donations to Our League

September-October 2013

Louetta Erlin, Donations Secretary

To the LWVBAE General Fund

Barbara Adair	Mary Friedman
Diane Akers	Elaine Grossberg
Elena Bennett	Ora and Kurt Huth
Arthur and Jane Bergen	Adeline Kahn
Marjorie Blackwell	Pat Kuhi
Abigail Bok	The Henry Levy Group
Books, Inc.	Therese Pipe
Linda Burden	Ginette Polak
George and Ann Crowe	Candace Simonen
Doris Fine	Ray Yep

To the LWVB Foundation

Barbara Adair	George and Ann Crowe
Arthur and Jane Bergen	Linda Polsby
William Craig	Diz Swift

Many thanks for remembering our League.

Membership Report

Mina Jenner, Dues Coordinator

In September-October we welcomed 4 new members.

Cynthia Chen	Kalen Meyer
Judith Dunham	Jay Nitschke

SAVE THE DATE

Conversations with the League

Tuesday, November 19, 12:00-2:00P

MONEY IN POLITICS!

Albany Public Library, Edith Stone Room

Money in politics is the highest priority effort of the League of Women Voters of California. Our own Money in Politics team and a panel of representatives from the cities of Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville will discuss how political campaign finance regulations are affecting our local elections.

Please join us!

November and December Environmental Concerns Meetings

Carol Stone and Gail Schickele, Environmental Concerns Team Co-chairs

Meetings are from 7:30-9:00 at 1174 Euclid, Berkeley (corner of Chrystal Way at the home of Mark Nyman and Jeanette Zernecke). For information or rides contact Carol Stone action@lwvbae.org or Gail Schickele gails@bayarea.net.

November 11: Sea Level and the Built Environment

Johanna Hoffman, UC Berkeley graduate student and winner of the latest Bansner award for Sustainable Communities will speak on redefining relationships between water and the built environment in Bay Area landscapes at risk from sea level rise.

With the rise of industrialization, humans have increasingly relied upon hard design interventions to manage surrounding water bodies. As events like Hurricane Sandy have shown, those approaches have left our coastal developments vulnerable to sea level rise. Johanna's research explores sea level rise as an chance to cultivate a cultural shift that positions landscape change as a foundation in planning and design.

December 9: Environmental Art

Note: Meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. (½ hour early) with an appetizer and dessert pot luck.

Our featured speaker is Andrée Singer Thompson, a long time Bay Area artist and teacher who has exhibited internationally, often collaborating with other artists on public art projects involving community participation. Her main focus since 2005 has been doing and teaching about environmental and social justice activist art.

She lives in Berkeley and teaches at Laney College where she developed and taught a summer Eco-Art Literacy program, and is on the Peralta District Sustainability Committee.

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Climate Change	Regina Beatus
Education Action	Cathy Lynch and Dianne McNenny
Env. Concerns	Gail Schickle, Carol Stone, and Vi Feinauer
Health Care	Li-hsia Wang
Money in Politics	Barb Singleton

2013-2014



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Current and past issues of the **VOTER** are posted on our website www.lwvbae.org

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

November

5	Tues	10:00-12:00p	LWVBAE Board Meeting	N. Bickel	526-4055
8	Fri	1:30-2:30p	Education Action Team	C. Lynch	527-2173
11	Mon	7:30-9:00p	Environmental Concerns 1174 Euclid Ave, Berkeley	C. Stone	549-0959
12	Tues	5:30-6:30p	Money in Politics Team	B. Singleton	415 902-5784
18	Mon	1:30-2:30p	Health Care Team	L. Wang	848-5765
19	Tues	12:00-2:00p	Conversation with League “ <i>Money in Politics</i> ” Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave	S. Smith	548-1769
25	Mon	6:00-7:00p	Action Team Meeting	C. Stone	549-0959
27	Weds	7:00-8:00p	Hot Topics	S. Smith	548-1769

December

3	Tues	10:00-12:00p	LWVBAE Board Meeting	N. Bickel	526-4055
4	Weds	2:30-3:00p	Climate Change Team	R. Beatus	524-6904
6	Fri	6:00p	Jan-Feb VOTER Deadline	D. Swift	548-4808
9	Mon	7:00-9:00p	Environmental Concerns 1174 Euclid Ave, Berkeley	C. Stone	549-0959
10	Tues	5:30-6:30p	Money in Politics Team	B. Singleton	415 902-5784
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