



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

SC Voter

Post Office Box 8453 • Columbia, SC 29202 • Phone & Fax: (803) 251-2726

Website: www.lwvsc.org

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STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION

EMPOWERED FOR ACTION:
Staying True to Our Mission for 60 Years

By Barbara Zia, LWVSC Co-President



Keller Barron (Columbia) presents a LWVSC gavel, with inscribed date June 1951, to Co-Presidents Barbara Zia and Peggy Brown.

The 2011-13 biennium for the League in South Carolina got off to a sensational start at our Convention. This biennial Convention held special significance as 2011 marks the 60th year since the League of Women Voters of South Carolina was officially recognized by the national League.

The weekend of May 14-15 saw League members from South Carolina gather in Sumter to accomplish League business (pass a budget, determine our program of study and action, and elect a new board), enjoy inspiring speakers, and take part in interesting workshops, dynamic caucuses and great discussions.

A 2011-2012 LWVSC budget was adopted as presented by Budget Committee member Rebecca Lambert. It has expenses of \$19,375 and maintains the current Per-Member-Payment rate. Treasurer Dianne Haselton reported that the state of our state League's finances is strong, owing to generous donations from

members, in-kind contributions by the state leadership team, and energetic pursuit of grant funds to underwrite projects such as the Judicial Initiative and publication of a report on South Carolina's water supply.

The 2011 Convention passed several bylaws amendments as presented by Vice President Janie Shipley. One amendment permits having co-presidents or a management team to lead the state League. Alternative leadership structures will allow greater flexibility in League governance. Other amendments reduced the required advance time for notifying local Leagues about state convention and council related activities. Another amendment that impacts local Leagues clarifies the process for requesting concurrence at state convention. The new state bylaws are posted at <http://lwvsc.org/forleaguemembers.html>.

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President's Perspectives:

This is my first column as LWVSC co-president, and I am honored to serve with Barbara Zia. Over the past four years she has been a great mentor and moved the LWV's of South Carolina to a new level of visibility in the highest regard. At convention we pledged to lead to the best of our ability, and with Barbara's knowledge and professionalism and my steadfastness I'm confident we will achieve our goals set at convention.

In June I attended LWVUS Council in our nation's capital, a great learning experience. A presentation entitled "*The Value of Story Telling and How Do We Tell Ours?*" is my way of explaining how an environmentalist becomes LWVSC co-president. I will use it twofold: as my first SC VOTER column as co-president, and as a LWV Storybank submission.

The LWV Storybank was developed to collect and share stories of personal growth, achievement, leadership and friendship from League members across the country. These stories reflect the value of being a member of the League; they tell what the LWV means to you, how your experience impacted your life, and what it has meant to your community.

Being an environmentalist wasn't part of any plan, it came by realizing that what we need to survive is compromised daily and knowing that our resources are not infinite--water, breathable air, fertile land, fossil fuels etc.--and that extinction is not stewardship.

I grew up in a suburb north of Chicago, with a large family in a small house. We spent lots of time outdoors because there was more room outside. Our family vacations were always camping trips filled with hiking, swimming, fishing, campfires and sometimes horseback riding if the money held out. These childhood years made a lifetime impression on me, in how I enjoy America's beauty and nature's landscape. I loved swimming in clean clear water, breathing fresh crisp air, mindful to leave no trace behind, leaving places visited as clean or cleaner than when we arrived.

My Story

The year was 2003 and I'd just learned that a big box megastore was planning to build adjacent to my neighborhood and worse, on a two-lane ingress and egress road across the street from a high school. It was hard for me to comprehend how a city would allow this massive type of development next to a neighborhood and across the street from a school. After only a few days a small community organization formed to oppose the big box, and it was at the first meetings I learned a few women from the LWV were among the crowd. After months of attending planning commission and city council meetings, armed with our Comprehensive Plan, traffic studies, and storm water run off reports, DHEC's 303(d) List of *Impaired Waters* & TMDL Program reports, smart growth information and quality of life articles, it became apparent that the only option left was to challenge the permitting. And we did. During the organization's meetings, the public meetings and DHEC appeals, the support from these LWV members was constant. With each meeting that passed I realized the strength and stamina of these few women.

Sometime in 2004 a colleague in the community organization suggested that I needed to attend a LWV meeting; after all, they were supporting our cause with donations, attending the meetings and even a few personal letters to editors. For some reason I had anxiety about attending the League meeting. I'd heard of LWV but had never gone to a meeting--I voted, so what more did I need to do? To my surprise I found the meetings informal but structured, and they offered a wide variety of subjects that were very much of interest to me, such as land use, city planning, wastewater and storm water management and so much more.

In our 3-year legal battle with the big box, we opposed on two fronts, land use and an environmental (storm water runoff). In 2006 we lost both cases, but not before taking one challenge to the state Supreme



Peggy Brown
Co-President, LWVSC

Court. Although we lost the battle it was a win for the community. I personally worked for new zoning signage and implementation of written notices to all adjoining property owners when zoning changes are proposed. This change in notification informs the public of the date, time and location of the meetings, allowing greater public input on proposed zoning changes that may ultimately change the quality of life in a neighborhood.

Ironically it was at the state Supreme Court hearing that the environmental lawyer asked if I knew about the coal plant proposed in Florence County. Mentally wasted I shook my head yes, and then he asked, are you going to work on it? I looked at him blindly and he said, "You don't have to decide right now; it will be a couple of months before the first public meeting." By this time, I was hooked on the LWV and learning so much from the programs and candidate debates to hear whose platform had an environmental tone. I enjoyed the fellowship with members who were informed and cared about the community, education, taxation and so much more.

By the time for the first public meeting on the proposed coal plant, the exhaustion of the challenge against the big box had passed. I scanned the crowd at the meeting and was not surprised to see those extraordinary LWV members waiting to hear the coal plant proposal.

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

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Not long after I was asked to run as LWVSC Natural Resource Director and accepted that position. To this day the LWV of the Florence Area and LWVSC have fully supported my efforts to protect the environment and through that support real changes for the betterment of South Carolinians have occurred.

In August 2009 the 2-year opposition to the coal fired power plant ended with the coal plant board of directors voting unanimously to suspend permitting. Although the coal plant management team claimed the suspension was due to the economy there was no denying that the strength of the environmental coalitions that formed across the state made an impact on their decision while laying the ground work for the introductions of new energy efficiency programs, and promoting clean energy alternatives.

In the early summer of 2009 a battery recycling facility announced plans to

build in SC. It was the first lead smelting facility to be permitted built in the U.S. in 20 years and the original mercury emissions were two times more than the coal plant we had opposed. The mercury emissions were reduced by a more updated model to less than 4 lbs. annually.

In 2010 the LWVSC Board voted unanimously to support the partnering with the Coastal Conservation League to request that the DHEC Board review the air quality permit for the facility. The DHEC Board upheld the permitting with stipulations for the facility to look at the air quality-monitoring model. After lengthy negotiations in early 2011 the company developed a more protective air-monitoring model that exceeds EPA requirements. The agreement reached will safeguard community residents and the environment. It was the support of state and local Leagues that allowed work on these important issues. I've learned with the League that doing the "right" thing isn't always easy, and people won't always agree with you, but you will earn

their respect. Who knows? You may soon find yourself working with them on the same side of another issue.

In community service today, I represent my local League on a Unified Development Committee charged with developing a zoning ordinance that is aimed to protect community character and improve our watershed quality. My short years with the League have shown again and again opportunities to make a difference in public health while protecting the environment. When the LWVSC Nominating Committee called on me to serve as co-president I was quite shocked, but after careful consideration my only answer could be yes, to return the support the League has showed to me over the years. Now it's time to learn more of the League's issues and priorities, but I will need your help!



ARE YOU A WIZ AT WHIPPING UP AN EVENT? *If So We Need You...*

Do you have organizing skills that you can put to use for the state League? We are looking for an Event Planner to assist with LWVSC functions (biennial convention and council meeting, and other events such as League Leaders Day and Advocacy Day). Like all South Carolina League opportunities, **salary is no problem as it is a VOLUNTEER position** (on- or off-board). If you are interested in a rewarding challenge and an opportunity to work with great people, please contact Peggy Brown, pegjobrown@yahoo.com or Barbara Zia, ziab1@comcast.net, LWVSC Co-Presidents.

LWVSC Study: *Evaluating and Retaining Effective Teachers in Our Public Schools*

By Jon Butzon and Peggy Huchet, LWVSC Study Co-Chairs

Should teacher performance be evaluated based on student results? Should teacher performance be a factor in teacher pay? Is it possible to determine how much variation in a student's achievement can be attributed to a particular teacher?

These are few of the issues that are causing upheaval in public education today and that prompted the 2-year study that members approved at the LWVSC convention in May. Study goals are: 1) to propose one or more positions for consensus and action; 2) to raise public interest and knowledge about the issues

surrounding teacher effectiveness and evaluation; and 3) to stimulate a dialog across the state among the public and members of the education community. A study committee whose members represent local leagues will kick off the study this summer with a literature search and interviews.

The time factor is a challenge for this study. As you read this, the state Department of Education is working on a new teacher evaluation process. Your local school district probably is doing the same. If the LWVSC is to be able to comment, or even shape the process we

need to have a position. The study committee will expedite its research as much as is reasonable without compromising the study itself. We will work toward the goal of holding local league consensus meetings and adopting a position next spring.

Look for periodic reports on our findings and our progress in subsequent issues of the *SC VOTER*. Please contact us with questions or comments (Jon, cen@charlestonednet.com; Peggy, mhuchet@comcast.net).



STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION

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State League Leaders Elected at Convention

The following slate was presented by Nominating Committee Chair Frances Elmore and elected to the 2011-13 Board of Directors:

Co-Presidents – Peggy Brown, Florence Area; Barbara Zia, Charleston Area

Vice Presidents – Issues and Action, JoAnne Day, Columbia Area; Community Relations, Susan Richards, Charleston Area; Member Services, Janie Shipley, Clemson Area; Voters Service/Citizen Education, Laurel Suggs, Columbia Area

Treasurer – Dianne Haselton, Clemson Area

Secretary – Della Baker, Clemson Area

Directors – Carole Cato, Columbia Area; Jon Butzon, Charleston Area; Rita Paul, Columbia Area; Eleanor Hare, Clemson Area; Robin Kimbrough-Melton, Clemson Area; Jan Hammett, Spartanburg County; Paula Egelson, Charleston Area

Elected to the *Nominating Committee* were Chair Agnes Edwards, Georgetown County; Members Jeanette Roveri, Sumter County, and Joan Kinne-Shulman, Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area. At its first meeting on July 23, the Board can appoint up to four additional directors to help implement the program of study and action adopted by delegates at Convention.



Left to right: Bob Zia, Barbara Zia (Co President, Charleston), The Honorable Ruth V. McGregor, Arizona Supreme Court Justice, Dr. McGregor, Rebecca Lambert (Greenville), Peggy Appler (Charleston), JoAnne Day (Columbia), Rita Paul (Columbia), Robin Kimbrough-Melton (Clemson).

State League Positions Adopted at Convention

Convention delegates voted to retain our current public policy positions with the following changes:

- “High quality” was added to the **Education** summary. The position now reads that LWVSC supports “*public state-supported education at all levels which is high quality, effective, equitable and accountable.*”
- The underlined language was added to the **Natural Resources** support position: “*Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest by recognizing the interrelationships of air quality, energy, land use, habitat preservation, waste management and water resources.*”
- “*Promote land use and water resource policies that manage land, water and nature biota as finite resources and that incorporate principles of stewardship and other land use planning strategies at both the state and local level.*”
- Added was a support position on **School District Governance**, based on results from the 2009-11 study on the structure and authority of South

Carolina school districts:

“*Changes in the structures of the school board and/or consolidating, splitting, or redrawing school district lines should be subject to a referendum by the voters in the affected school district(s).*”

Convention delegates voted to concur with positions that were proposed by local Leagues:

- Growth management--proposed by LWV of the Clemson Area:



Transparency and Independence in the South Carolina Judicial Selection Process. Participants (left to right): The Honorable W. Jeffrey Young (Circuit Court Judge At large), Constance A. Anastopoulos (Charleston), Sarah Leverette (Columbia), Janet R. Lynam (Member, Pee Dee Citizens Committee on Judicial Selection), The Honorable J. David Weeks (S. C. House of Representatives, Dist. 51).

“*We support intentional and collaborative growth management on a county and regional basis in South Carolina. We encourage regular consultations among public agencies related to growth and development and local elected bodies—city councils, county councils, and school boards. We also encourage an open and frequent dialogue between those agencies and the general public on growth management. We support the concept of managing growth to preserve and enhance quality of life for all residents, old and new, through the effective and coordinated use of such land use management tools as conservation easements, purchase of development rights, development impact fees, and zoning where appropriate.*”

- Illegal drugs--proposed by LWV of the Charleston Area: “*Illegal drug use should be considered a public health issue, and drug addiction should be addressed by substance abuse treatment and education programs instead of incarceration.*”

Study of Evaluation and Retention of Effective Teachers

Delegates chose a new state study for member focus in 2011-2013. The study will concentrate on the recent and growing trend to evaluate and reward teachers based on results, i.e., the academic progress of the students in their classroom.

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Making Every Vote Count in South Carolina: Ensuring the Integrity of Our State's Voting System.
Participants (left to right): Duncan Buell (Columbia), The Honorable Joseph Neal (S. C. House of Representatives, Dist 70), Frank Heindel (Citizen Election Activist).

STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION

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Off-Shore Drilling Resolution

Delegates passed a resolution presented by LWV of Horry County calling on the state League to oppose drilling for oil and gas off the South Carolina coastline.

Action Agenda

Delegates prioritized the following agenda for state League action in the next two years: Education * Voter Access * Tax Reform * Criminal/Juvenile Justice * Transportation * Redistricting * Natural Resources * Judicial Independence and Diversity

Delegates Enjoyed a Wide Array of Convention Activities

- S.C. Treasurer Curtis M. Loftis, Jr., addressed delegates on the topic of the importance of transparency and openness in government. He told attendees that the League plays an important role in addressing critical issues facing South Carolina. He asked for the membership's support of his efforts to revamp the state's retirement system.
- A special convention focus was the League's initiative on Ensuring Independence and Increasing Diversity in South Carolina's Courts. Speaker at the Saturday banquet was the Hon. Ruth V. McGregor, retired Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court. Justice McGregor presented a national perspective on judicial independence and diversity. She told the audience that she was very pleased to be in South Carolina and that the League has shown it will fight for judicial independence. Justice McGregor said,

"The judicial process should be made as transparent as it can be. One of the most valuable evaluation processes is when the public is involved." Justice McGregor served on the Arizona Supreme Court from 1998 until 2009 and was the Court's Chief Justice from 2005 until retirement. Prior to appointment to the Arizona bench, she served as law clerk to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

- Discussants on the judicial selection process included Circuit Court Judge W. Jeffrey Young, Rep. J. David Weeks, Pee Dee Citizens Committee on Judicial Selection member Janet R. Lynam, S.C. Women Lawyers Association leader Sarah Leverette, and Charleston School of Law Professor Constance Anastopoulo.
- A session featured Eleanor Hare, Rep. Joe Neal, Duncan Buell, and Frank Heindel in a discussion of changes needed in our state's voting system to ensure that every vote is counted accurately.
- Dr. Jane Brailsford made a presentation on iCivics (www.icivics.org/) the new civics education program that is underway in many South Carolina public schools.
- Janie Shipley and Mary Klenz led a workshop entitled "The Leadership Ladder" that challenged delegates to think in new ways how to engage members and develop leaders.
- A roundtable of League leaders updated members on League study and action projects. Participants were JoAnne Day, Holley Ulbrich, Robin Kimbrough-Melton, Carole Cato, Peggy Huchet, and Peggy Brown.
- The Convention banquet featured the presentation of the 2011 LWVSC Spirit of Democracy award to retired South Carolina Supreme Court Chief Justice Ernest A. Finney, Jr. Justice Finney, the

state's first African-American Supreme Court Justice since Reconstruction, was honored for his commitment to a fair and impartial justice system.

Accompanied by Frances, his wife of 57 years and a League member, the Justice commended the League for its efforts to ensure judicial independence and diversity. "I want you to know you are on the right side of this issue," he stated.

- Spirit of Democracy Awards were also presented to two outstanding League leaders: Sarah Leverette, LWVSC leader, one of South Carolina's first women lawyers and a tireless fighter for transparent, effective government; and Mary Ann Deku, LWV of Spartanburg County President, whose name has been synonymous with voter outreach in Spartanburg County since the 1970s.

Special thanks go to...

- Peggy Appler, Convention Coordinator, who never missed a detail, yet made everything feel relaxed and enjoyable.
- Sumter County, our host League, who treated us to warm Pee Dee hospitality. From well-stocked take-away bags, to the Friday board dinner, to hospitality and plenary session floor volunteers, to a magnificent wine and hors d'oeuvres reception and banquet—We could not have had finer hosts. Marie Hill, Chuck Gibbs, Jeanette Roveri, Barbara Wiley, Evelyn Bradford and their entire team worked tirelessly to ensure a flawless and fun Convention.
- Our special guests from LWVUS: Mary Klenz, national League Board Director and Liaison to South Carolina; and Cynthia Padera, Specialist on the Judiciary and the Courts.
- Members of the entire state League leadership team and standing committees for their contributions to Convention and for their strong commitment to the League and its future in South Carolina.
- And to the members and guests from local Leagues across the state who devoted a lovely May weekend to League fellowship and leadership and to advancing democracy in our state.

Visit <http://lwvsc.org/convention2011.html> for more about convention, including decisions made, state Board and local League reports, biographies of Spirit of Democracy honorees, and a stunning photo gallery produced by Eleanor Hare.



League Supports Efforts To Ban Corporal Punishment In Schools

By Robin Kimbrough-Melton, JD, LWVSC Director, Criminal/Juvenile Justice

Joining with 20 other child advocacy groups, the LWVSC State Board signed-on to support the efforts of the South Carolina Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in the Schools (www.stophittingstudents.org). The move is consistent with a long-standing League policy in opposition to the use of corporal punishment in the schools. This article provides an overview of the state of research on corporal punishment. A more detailed presentation of the research can be found on the League's website, <http://lwvsc.org/childwelfare.html>.

Corporal Punishment Generally

Corporal punishment is a statutorily defined term in 48 states and the District of Columbia. In general, it refers to the use of "reasonable" or "appropriate" force with the intention of causing the child pain but not injury and for the purpose of correction or control of the child's behavior (Gershoff, 2002). Corporal punishment has been an integral part of how parents have disciplined their children throughout the history of the United States (Gershoff, 2002). In the U.S., research shows that 94 percent of toddlers have been spanked three or more times a week (Straus, 2010). One-third of U.S. children are spanked until age 13; 14 percent are spanked until age 17 (Straus, 2010). Corporal punishment is most likely to be an accepted practice where it is legal and normative. Cultural norms, level of education, age of parent, and religious beliefs all influence the extent to which corporal punishment is used.

The use of corporal punishment as a means of disciplining children has been a topic of fierce debate for decades. Lawmakers, courts and the scientific community have attempted to grapple with questions of whether corporal punishment is dangerous, effective or justified. Legislative and court remedies have tended to justify acts of corporal punishment based on a "reasonableness" standard, which includes considerations such as the age of the child at the time of the punishment, the frequency of physical punishment, and whether an object (e.g. belt, board, etc.) is used.

In the scientific community, more than six decades of research studies have examined the question of whether physical punishment of children is ever warranted by parents, or for that matter, in programs and schools serving children. Gershoff (2008) summarizes the state of research in her publication, *Report on physical punishment in the United States: What research tells us about its effects on children*. The report synthesizes 100 years of social science

research and published studies on physical punishment. Gershoff concludes:

- There is little research evidence to suggest that physical punishment improves children's behavior over the long-term.
- There is substantial research evidence that physical punishment makes it more, not less, likely that children will be defiant and aggressive in the future.
- There is clear research evidence that physical punishment puts children at risk for negative outcomes, including increased mental health problems.
- There is consistent evidence that children who are physically punished are at greater risk of serious injury and physical abuse.

The strength of the research evidence has led 29 nations, most since 2000, to ban all corporal punishment in all settings, including the home (for a list of the nations, see http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/pages/progress/prohib_states.html). As of 2007, 101 nations had banned corporal punishment in schools.

Corporal Punishment in the Schools

Corporal punishment also has been used as a disciplinary method by school professionals and in other settings such as day cares, foster care, and the juvenile justice system. Increasingly, victims of corporal punishment in institutional settings are challenging the disciplinary practice under various constitutional provisions including the Eighth Amendment, the procedural due process clause of the 14th Amendment, the substantive due process clause of the 14th Amendment and the Fourth Amendment.

The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the use of corporal punishment in *Ingraham v. Wright* in 1977. Because *Ingraham* foreclosed the use of Eighth Amendment arguments and procedural due process arguments, more recent litigation has focused on substantive due process claims and Fourth Amendment claims using the "reasonableness" standard. The Fourth Amendment is not a perfect fit for excessive corporal punishment cases, but courts have suggested that they may entertain arguments under the Fourth. The Fifth Circuit has already concluded that the Fourth Amendment's prohibition against unreasonable seizures protects students from improper disciplinary actions (*Hassan v. Lubbock Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 55 F.3d 1075 (5th Cir. 1995)).

The potential for litigation of claims

combined with changing norms about the use of corporal punishment by the schools has dramatically reduced the prevalence of physical punishment in school settings. In 1977, when *Ingraham* was decided, only two states had banned corporal punishment in the schools. Today, all but 20 states have banned it in the public schools. The states that have not banned it are predominantly in the South. In addition, American attitudes about the use of corporal punishment in school settings have shifted dramatically. In a 2005 poll, 77 percent of Americans disapproved of the use of physical punishment by the schools (Gershoff, 2008).

The majority of states (48) also ban the use of corporal punishment in state-regulated center-based child care and 49 states prohibit corporal punishment in foster care settings. South Carolina has not banned the use of physical punishment in child care settings and schools. South Carolina has prohibited the use of physical punishment in foster care, group homes and institutions and juvenile detention facilities.

Several school districts in South Carolina have stopped paddling even if they do not have a policy banning the practice. For more information on South Carolina districts or to see the districts that are still paddling, go to: <http://www.stophittingstudents.org/index.html>.

Legislation to Watch

- At the federal level, the Ending Corporal Punishment in Schools Act, HR 5628, was introduced late in the session in 2010.
- In South Carolina, school districts are authorized to use corporal punishment for any pupil that it "deems just and proper" under Section 59-63-260 of the South Carolina Code. Introduced December 15, 2010, Senate Bill 298 and House Bill 3201 appear to authorize the use of corporal punishment in child care settings.

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Suppressing the Vote in South Carolina

By Carole Cato, LWVSC Advocacy Director

For the past three years, the LWVSC has strongly opposed passage of voter photo ID as it is needless and costly legislation. Under the guise of election reform, H.3003 was signed into law by the governor in late May of this year. The law mandates that every South Carolina voter must show a valid and current government-issued picture ID as a requisite for exercising the right to vote in person.

On June 29, after several weeks in the state Attorney General's office, the law was submitted for preclearance to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Voting Rights Division. No doubt, this delay was used to make sure the law could be defended under the statues in Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. Given South Carolina's historic and egregious record of intimidating and creating barriers to the polls for black voters, building a defense for this voter ID law must have presented quite a challenge for the Attorney General.

DOJ must find that the law's purpose and effect in no way denies or abridges the right to vote on account of race, color or minority language. DOJ has 60 days

for its **administrative review** or to ask for more information, which restarts the 60-day period. If DOJ issues preclearance for the changes and removes the prohibition on implementation of the law, its decision cannot be challenged in court. However, the change remains subject to a challenge on any other grounds. Private individuals with standing may challenge parts of the law under any applicable provision of state or federal law.

The state could have requested a **declaratory judgment action** by filing in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. This would make DOJ the defendant in the case. This route is the most expensive and time consuming but is considered the safest following court approval of the Georgia voter ID law. The state would have to provide the same proofs for the court as required by Section 5 of the Voting Rights. Unlike DOJ, the court requires testimony under oath and careful examination of evidence, and expert witnesses are a key element for both sides. Any challenge to the District Court's decision would go directly to the U.S.

Supreme Court for the final ruling. Given the courts current activist make-up, mounting a successful challenge would seem futile. For this reason, opponents of the Georgia law chose not to pursue a challenge.

LWVSC will submit a letter to DOJ objecting to the law and showing how it discriminates against the black voters in South Carolina and that preclearance should not be granted. Other organizations and individuals plan to do the same in the coming weeks.

Now is a "wait and see" period for South Carolina, not only for the decision on the law, but the funding to the State Election Commission for cross-referencing their files with the DMV to get the names and addresses of the 178,000 legally registered voters with no state-issued picture ID. Many organizations, including the LWVSC, will help as many of these active voters as possible to obtain the valid and current state-issued picture ID that they will need to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

Spartanburg's Judicial Diversity Project:

Laws and Courts Are Our Friends

By Linda Bilanckone, LWV of Spartanburg County

When the opportunity to do a Judicial Diversity project came along, I wanted to use the grant money available to achieve both a short-term and a long-term goal with a target population for whom the topic might be a new one. My idea was to create a program in which children (especially girls and minorities) would be introduced to the possibility of a career leading to service as a judge. That was the long-term goal; the short-term goal was to see that each participating child introduced at least three adults to the idea that judicial diversity is important to the functioning of our democracy.

In the effort that we, in Spartanburg, finally developed, the League collaborated with the Spartanburg County Historical Association which provides programming for the Boys and Girls Clubs. A 25-page

workbook was created--an abundance of information about our government, in general, and our courts, in particular. Three lessons were taught. The 3rd lesson was a moot court session involving role-playing. This session also involved local judges and attorneys visiting to tell the children about their work.

A total of 233 students at four schools participated in the "Laws and Courts Are Our Friends" project. Another 40 or so were able to participate partially, but school schedules changed at the last minute and caused some disruption. About 352 adults looked at the workbooks (each child was encouraged to show it to three adults and ask for the adult's signature). And some students interviewed adults about whether they had ever served on a jury--about 100 adults participated in

those interviews.

The workbook called "Laws and Courts Are Our Friends" is available on the Spartanburg League website, www.midnet.sc.edu/sclwv/home.html. The exercises and information in the workbook are based on the state education standards for 2nd-5th grade social studies with various sections of the workbook appropriate for different grade levels. The project has been so successful that the Spartanburg County Historical Association may add a second and third workbook covering the other two branches of government. In addition, they intend to repeat "Laws and Courts Are Our Friends" for another group of students this summer or fall.

For more information, email me at PowersL@wofford.edu.

Tax Credits and Tax Deductions

– *First in a series of 4 articles on tax reform*

By *Holley Ulbrich, PhD, LWVSC Off-Board Specialist, Taxation*

If we are going to make any headway on the goal of a state revenue system that is fair and efficient and raises adequate revenue, we have to get into the details, because not only the devil but also the revenue (and revenue loss) is in the details. This tax primer is the first in a series that will help you talk intelligently to your legislators about changes that we think should be made in the state's taxes.

The state income tax lists at total of 53 credits that individuals and firms can take on their state income tax. A credit is very different from a deduction. If you take a deduction for \$100 charitable contribution, it saves you at most \$7 in state income tax. But if you take a \$50 credit for the venison for charity program, it saves you \$50.

Want a drip irrigation system for your lawn or home garden? Good news, you can take a credit of 25% of the cost up to \$2,500. That's a possible tax saving to you and revenue loss to the state of \$625. Or perhaps you own a small business and would like to participate in the South Carolina Quality Forum. Good news again! You can get a full credit for your annual registration fee, plus 50% of the cost of any fees charged for participation in programs. So it costs you nothing, but it costs the state quite a bit of revenue.

Or perhaps you would like to donate an easement on your property along a scenic river. Whether or not the state is interested in that particular property, you get to claim a tax credit for the value of the

easement. Or maybe you are getting married and decide to invest in pre-marital counseling. The state will encourage that decision with a \$50 tax credit.

Many of the 53 credits are dollar for dollar reductions in your tax liability and therefore in state revenue. Others are a percentage of the expenditure. Converting credits to deductions, or limiting more of them to a percentage of the expenditure for which you are taking a credit, would reduce the revenue loss and provide more money for our schools, our children, our prisons and our crumbling infrastructure.

Both tax credits and tax deductions belong to a class of programs called tax expenditures. When the state uses the tax system to subsidize particular choices, like marriage counseling, drip irrigation, or quality assurance programs, it's equivalent to spending money. But when the state actually spends money through the budget, hard choices have to be made among competing programs. Tax expenditures, including tax credits and tax deductions, don't come up for that kind of annual review. So another way to get at this revenue leakage is to ask our legislators to schedule regular review of exemptions, deductions, and credits—maybe even have a sunset provision for some of them so that they automatically expire unless they are renewed. The state needs more money to fund basic services, and taking a hard look at tax expenditures in the form of credits and deductions is a good place to start.

"Point of Sale" Compromise Passed--

The point of sale issue for the property tax was resolved by a compromise in the regular legislative session. Point of sale lifts the 15% cap on five-year increases in property assessments if property is sold, and the property is then revalued at the actual selling price. Realtors and commercial property owners particularly objected to this sharp rise in tax liability (really a deferred increase) at the time of sale.

The compromise only affects property taxed at 6% (commercial and rental property) and was agreed to by the county and Municipal Associations and the Realtors. It is a fairly complex agreement that uses the fair market value as determined by the assessor (what it would have been without the cap) even if the actual sale price is higher at the time of sale. Local governments also got some compromises on millage increase (they can "bank" millage increases for up to three years rather than "use it or lose it"). From a League perspective, this was a reasonable resolution of a complex problem that partly corrects the effect of Act 388 in shifting more of the property tax burden to commercial, second home and rental property.

Invitation

You are cordially invited to celebrate the Presentation of the Oral History of the Presidents

of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina 1976-2010

to the University of South Carolina's S.C. Political Collections

and The Sixtieth Birthday of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina

7:00 p.m. – Friday, September 30, 2011 at the The Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library

Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina Columbia - Greene Street at Sumter Street



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Website: www.lwvsc.org

Join the League today!

THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT:

Our 2010-2011 Member Contributors

Thanks to all who make the League's work possible through their generous donations in 2010-2011. We

depend on the gifts of those people who support the League beyond their membership dues. Gifts of all sizes are

very much appreciated. We will spend your money wisely.

Grassroots Club (\$1 to \$49)

Linda Gremillion
Margaret Huchet
Thomas Kent
Carol Krebs
Catherine Malloy
Jane McGregor
Lucille Mould
Loise Parsons
Ellen Reneke
Susan Richards
Ann Robinson
Shan Rose
Regina Turetzky

Memorials

Anonymous in memory
of Harriet Keyserling
Lucille Mould in memory
of Bonnie Chandler
Barbara Zia in memory of Edna Carner,
Mother/Mother-in-law
of Frank & Peggy Brown

Voters Club (\$50 to \$149)

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Consensus Club (\$150 to \$249)

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Margaret Downward
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President's Club (\$500 plus)

Carole Cato
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Barbara Zia

LWV of South Carolina Leaders Day 2011

RAISING YOUR *LEAGUERSHIP* TO THE NEXT LEVEL

South Carolina LWV Members—New, Not-So-New, & Emerging Leaders...

You are cordially invited to this informative, fun event to launch another exciting League year.

WHAT: 2011 South Carolina League Leaders Day-- An opportunity for members to:

- **learn, develop & hone their skills** in areas such as League issue priorities, League basics, local advocacy tactics, membership strategies, communication, & more
- **network** with effective, committed Leaguers who are doing remarkable things around South Carolina

WHEN: Saturday, August 27, 2011, 9 a.m.— Gathering & light breakfast; 9:30-3:30 p.m.--Program

WHERE: St. Paul's Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 1715 Bull St., corner of Bull & Blanding Streets, Columbia**

COST: \$25 per person includes materials, continental breakfast, lunch & snacks.

**** Directions:** *St. Paul's Lutheran Church, in the heart of downtown Columbia, is easy to find.*

From Northeast, take I-20 West or I-77 South and follow I-277 into Columbia. I-277 becomes Bull St; keep driving south to Blanding, the seventh light.

From the Northwest, follow I-20 East to I-26 South and then follow I-126 into downtown (I-126 becomes Elmwood); continue east and turn right at the "T" intersection with Bull. Blanding is the third light.

From Southeast, go downtown on Forest/Taylor or Route 378/Gervais. Turn right on Bull St. and go a few blocks north.

Park in the small lot next to the gray stone church or on Bull St. (On-street metered parking is free on weekends.) Enter through the Bull St. doors.

JOIN LEAGUE MEMBERS FROM ALL ACROSS SOUTH CAROLINA FOR LEADERS DAY 2011

Final program with presenters and speakers will be emailed to members and posted at www.lwvsc.org.



Leaders Day 2011 - Preliminary Agenda

- 9:00 Gathering & Continental Breakfast**
- 9:30 Welcome & Introductions** —Peggy Brown & Barbara Zia, LWVSC Co-Presidents
- 9:35 Redistricting in South Carolina: A Status Update**
Facilitator: **Sheila Gallagher**, Former Exec. Dir., The SC Education Assoc.; LWV/Florence Area
Presenters: **Katie O'Connor**, ACLU Voting Rights Attorney, Atlanta—A state government perspective
Holley Ulbrich, Senior Scholar, Strom Thurmond Institute; LWVSC Off-Board Specialist;LWV/Clemson Area—
A local government perspective
- 10:15 Planning South Carolina's Transportation Future**
Facilitator: **Susan Richards**, Pres., SR Concepts; LWVSC Vice Pres.; LWV/Charleston Area
Presenters: **David Farren**, Senior Attorney, Southern Environmental Law Center
Art Guzzetti, Vice President of Policy for the American Public Transportation Association
Susan B. Nuckles, SCDOT Commissioner (5th Dist.)
- 11:00 Leading the League in South Carolina, Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow: A Conversation with Former State League Presidents**
Facilitator: **Keller Barron** (LWVSC President, 1967-71)
Panel: Former State League presidents since 1976 have been invited to participate.
- 11:45 Mission 2012: Electing More Women Than Ever in South Carolina**
Presenter: **Barbara Rackes**, Board Member, Southeastern Institute for Women in Politics
- 12:00 Break and Buffet Lunch: Time to Network – Eat & Meet!**
Take a break * Shop the wares tables * Connect with LWVSC Board leaders & Leaguers from across South Carolina
- 1:00 \$ & Sense of Recycling**
Facilitator: **Donna London**, Director, Self Center on the Future at the Strom Thurmond Institute at Clemson University;
LWV/Clemson Area
Presenters: **Nancy Ogburn**, Tomato Palms (small business recycler perspective)
Jane Hiller, Sonoco (large business recycler & recycling educator perspective)
Mary Pat Baldauf, Sustainability Coordinator, City of Columbia (local government perspective)
Chantal Fryar, Senior Manager, Recycling Market Development, S.C. Department of Commerce (representing the state
from a business development perspective)
- 1:45 Let's Rap: What's Happening in Leagues Around South Carolina...**
What issues are "Hot"? What makes you proud? What are some challenges?
Facilitators: **Peggy Brown & Barbara Zia**
- 2:15 Nuts and Bolts of Building and Leading Your League in 2012**
■ Planning strategically
■ Streamlining & organizing your team
■ Growing and engaging members as leaders
■ Taking action locally
■ Communicating with members and the public (websites; social media; newsletters)
Facilitators: **Barbara Zia, Peggy Brown, Susan Richards, Laurel Suggs, Eleanor Hare, Mary Klenz, and others**
- 3:30 Closing**

South Carolina League Leaders Day, August 27, 2011 – Registration Form

FEE: \$25 per attendee (includes light breakfast, lunch & materials)

Your name _____ Additional attendees _____

Local League or Member at Large Unit _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Reserve by August 24 to: LWVSC, c/o Dianne Haselton, 119 Tant St., Clemson, SC 29631. Or e-mail your registration to Barbara Zia at ziab1@comcast.net.

Payment may be made in advance or at the door. Checks should be made out to "LWVSC."

Total enclosed for all attendees: _____ X \$25.00 = \$ _____

Please indicate number of meatless lunches desired. _____ Got questions or League wares to sell? Contact ziab1@comcast.net



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Website: www.lwvsc.org

Join the League today!

LWV Leaders from 40 States Meet

By Peggy Brown, LWVSC Co-President, & Carole Cato, LWVSC Advocacy Director

“The Big Picture: Anticipating the Future--The Difference is Leadership,” was the theme of LWVUS Council at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, Virginia, on June 17-21. It started with a big bang and held momentum through the entire conference. There were over 100 attendees from 40 states. We covered workshops, sessions, and information. The theme was introduced on Saturday morning in an exercise that laid the foundation for a state campaign plan of your choice (a real or probable issue). We chose “Save All Voters” as our project, in response to the newly enacted voter ID law. The goal would be to help as many of the current legally and newly registered voters as possible obtain a state -issued picture ID in time for the 2012 elections. We felt this plan was timely and our state League would be likely to adopt the plan and put it into action.

Fundraising strategies played a role in the conference, and rightly so. It is impossible to run a successful action campaign without a plan for paying for it. Questions for consideration were: Who are your funders? What groups outside the League are the best groups to partner with

to help you have more impact on an issue? Donors typically give because they relate to an organization’s mission/project campaign and the people whom they believe will accomplish that mission. Effective fundraising is a conversation between funded and funder and is a result of telling your story.

Communication, in its newest forms, was another issue that was emphasized: Websites, Facebook and Twitter, learning to frame issues, using the fewest and the most powerful words in alerts and getting our message out in the most effective manner to the most diverse and widest range of audiences.

The message was clear: If the League is to thrive and continue to grow and educate influential leaders, we must be willing to make the necessary changes to meet the challenges facing us. We will need to: renew membership efforts to gain and retain members and learn to recognize and use our assets much more effectively; use modern tools of communication and enlarge our contact list; use fewer, more effective words in communications; use only the most memorable, easily remembered statistics. Using gatherings,

formal and informal, leadership can pass this knowledge throughout our membership and help build strong leadership at every level.

“Mentor” must have been used a thousand times by presenters. Sure, it has been around a long time, but it remains the most effective tool in the kit. Every member needs to learn to be a mentor, which means they will need to know the League history, processes and operations sufficiently well to share with others through personal relationships or conducting training sessions. Personal contact, face to face meetings and social times are crucial elements in the building and sustaining a strong League.

Elisabeth McNamara, LWVUS President, presided and did a wonderful job, as did members of the national Board. Board and staff members were available almost round the clock to meet with groups and individuals on every issue possible. The national staff richly deserves a very special word of gratitude for their superb work at Council. Once more, they demonstrated that their work at League headquarters is more than just a job.

IMPORTANT LEAGUE DATES:

July 2011

22nd-23rd Friday & Saturday, LWVSC Board Retreat. Peggy Appler’s house on N. Edisto River, Dorchester County*

August 2011

13th Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., *Committee Meeting: Evaluating and Retaining Effective Teachers Study*, Columbia, Location TBA

26th Friday, *Women’s Equality Day Event*, Columbia, TBA

27th Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., *League Leaders Day: Raising Your “Leaguership” To The Next Level*. St. Paul’s Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 1715 Bull St., Columbia. Brief LWVSC Board meeting follows.*

September 2011

Voter Registration Month

17th Saturday, *Constitution/Citizenship Day*

30th Friday, 7 p.m., *Presentation of LWVSC Presidents Oral History & Celebration of LWVSC’s 60th Anniversary*, Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library, Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina, Greene St. at Sumter St., Columbia

October 2011

Voter Education Month

1st Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., *LWVSC Board Meeting*, 1600 St. Julian Place, Columbia*

9th Sunday, *Last day to register to vote in the General Election in South Carolina*.

* All members of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina are welcome to attend LWVSC board meetings.



LWV SC Voter

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Columbia, SC 29202

The SC Voter

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Established in 1951, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina is a nonpartisan, political organization that encourages citizens to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Any citizen of voting age, male or female, may become a League member. All members receive the National Voter, the SC Voter, and a newsletter from their local League.

Co-Presidents: Barbara Zia
Peggy Brown

Editor: Laurel Suggs

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PO Box 8453
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Phone & Fax:
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League Leaders at LWVUS National Council Meeting



Left to Right: Mary Klenz - LWVUS Board and LWVSC Liaison, Elisabeth McNamara - LWVUS President, Carole Cato - LWVSC Legislative Director, Peggy Brown - LWVSC Co-President.

Spirit of Democracy Award Recipients at the State League Convention



The Spirit of Democracy Award recipients are the Honorable Ernest A. Finney, Jr., South Carolina Supreme Court Chief Justice, retired, Sarah Leverette and Mary Ann Washington Deku. From left to right: Mary Deku, Barbara Zia, Chief Justice McGregor, Chief Justice Finney, Sarah Leverette, Mrs. Finney.