



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SOUTH CAROLINA 'DIVERSE AND INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY' CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES

League of Women Voters of South Carolina: Project Will Help America Fulfill Its Promise To Provide Equal Justice For All

[Columbia] – The League of Women Voters of South Carolina (LWVSC) will launch **Safeguarding U.S. Democracy: Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary**—a statewide campaign focusing on the importance of diversity and independence in ensuring fair and impartial courts. The campaign will get underway at an October 8 public conference at the Charleston Museum from 12:30 PM to 5:45 PM in Charleston, followed by a reception at Alluette's Jazz Café.

The conference will feature Elisabeth MacNamara, national President of the League of Women Voters; the Honorable Rebecca Love Kourlis, former Justice on the Colorado Supreme Court and head of the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System; the Honorable Donald W. Beatty (invited), Justice on the South Carolina Supreme Court; the Honorable David Weeks, Chair of the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus.

Together, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina and 11 local Leagues across the state, will tackle the question: "Does the South Carolina Judiciary reflect the diversity of our state? If not, why not?" According to the 2010 report from The Brennan Center, *Improving Judicial Diversity*, most judiciaries do not reflect the diversity in their states—and South Carolina is no exception.

"As of June 2010, 56 out of 186 judges in the state of South Carolina were women, and women represented only 6 out of 46 judges at the Circuit Court level," said Barbara Zia, President of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina. "Additionally, there are only 17 African-American, and no Latino or Asian judges out of 186 throughout the state. We can do better."

"The League of Women Voters has worked to promote a fair and impartial judiciary for more than ten years," Zia concluded. "After the successes of this project in Kansas, we are excited to launch the campaign in South Carolina, and help America fulfill its promise to provide equal justice for all."

RSVP to 803.447.1141 or angelwarren@msn.com by October 5. The conference is free to all and approved for 4.25 free CLE credits. For more information, go to www.lwv.org/faircourts or www.lwvsc.org/JudicialInitiative.html.

**South Carolina Kick-Off of Judicial Diversity Campaign
A Conference on: Ensuring an Independent and Diverse State Judiciary
October 8, 2010, 1:00-5:45 PM
Charleston Museum, 360 Meeting St., Charleston, SC
Reception follows: Alluette's Jazz Café, 137 Calhoun St.**

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.