



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

THE VOTER

The Monthly Publication of the League of Women Voters of Toledo Lucas County

founded 1921

www.lwvtoledo.org

September 2011

2011-12 Calendar

September

15 5-8:00 pm General Meeting
topic: *Human Trafficking. UT Law School Auditorium, see article pg. 6.*

October

Candidates Forums
24 6:15 pm Board Meeting
Smedlaps Smithy, Waterville

November

17 General Meeting
topic: *LWVUS Education Consensus*

December

Happy Holidays !!

January

19 General Meeting
topic: *Program Planning, National Issues*

23 6:15 pm Board Meeting
Hungry I (meeting 7-8 pm)

February

16 General Meeting
topic: *Program on Issues of Child Obesity. Report on weekly children's program.*

27 6:15 pm Board Meeting
Hungry I (meeting 7-8 pm)

League Supports Petition Drive to Repeal HB 194

On August 22nd the LWV Ohio board voted to support the effort to repeal HB 194 -- passed by the legislature in June, 2011 -- through a referendum petition drive. HB 194 includes a number of provisions which we believe are likely to make it more difficult for Ohioans to exercise their right to vote and which will result in long lines and other problems on Election Day.

Among the concerns are provisions reducing the number of days for mail-in and early in-person absentee voting, prohibitions against the mailing of absentee ballot applications unless they are requested, and eliminating the requirement that poll workers direct voters to the correct precinct so that their vote will be counted. LWV Ohio supports the referendum based on national League positions to protect the right of all citizens to vote; to encourage all citizens to vote; and to facilitate citizens' participation in government decision-making.

The petition effort was undertaken by Fair Elections Ohio and is backed by a coalition of state legislators, voting rights advocates, progressive groups and citizens. The petitioners have until **September 29th** to gather the requisite petitions - over 231,000. If the petition effort is successful, the law will be stayed until after the election in November of 2012.

Although the League typically makes a decision about whether to support a statewide referendum only after it gets on the ballot, in this instance the board concluded that because the issue of voters' rights is so crucial to the League's mission, the League should support the petition drive.

Longtime league member Karen Krause is LWVTLC's source for petitions. Members Bonnie Bishop, Peg Hull Smith, Diane Hamilton, Kathy Chamberlain have Lucas County petitions, Nicole Messman has both Wood and Lucas County petitions and Carol Ragan has a Fulton County petition. You will be able to sign the petition at the upcoming forum Sept. 15 but can contact any of the above leaguers before than to sign if you wish. Contact Karen at 419 475 8380 or kkrause@accesstoledo.com if you are willing to circulate a petition.

President's Letter

Dear Leaguers:

Once again, our League is called to action to raise public awareness about the negative effects that an Ohio legislative bill will have on elections in Ohio. As you can see in this issue of our *Voter*, the effects of HB 194 as it stands will be disenfranchisement, uncertainty and confusion on an overburdened election system. This Bill includes important provisions that will effectively suppress the vote.

Six years ago, when our League and the LWVO filed its lawsuit against the office of the Secretary of State and Governor of the State of Ohio, we did so to ensure that every Ohio resident, especially those living in Lucas County, eligible to vote, could do so. And, we did so to ensure that every vote would be fairly and equitably counted. That lawsuit has been settled, and more citizens vote because they can now vote early or vote using an absentee ballot or even vote provisionally. Please help support this petition effort to repeal this onerous attempt to disenfranchise voters. Email me, (phullsmith@bex.net), or Bonnie (bonnieb@accesstoledo.com), or call if you can circulate a petition or sign a petition.

Peg Smith (419-841-6988)

2011-12 OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Co-Presidents: **Bonnie Bishop** 2676 Algonquin Toledo, OH 43606 419-474-5030 bonnie@accesstoledo.com
Peg Hull Smith 4430 Nantucket, Toledo, OH 43623 419-841-6988 phullsmith@buckeye-express.com
Vice President: **Yvette Thompson** 1141 Northville, Toledo, OH 43612 419-215-9326 ythomp1141@aol.com
Secretary: **Mary Karazim** 3307 Bentley, Toledo, OH 43606 419-536-8234 marykarazim@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer: **Kathy Chamberlain** 10308 Obee Rd. Whitehouse OH 43571 419-877-0028 princess@tbbs.net
Tammy Degner 7340 Nightingale Dr. Apt. 13, Holland OH 43528 419-865-3983 tammydegner@rocketmail.com
Sue Nichols 6913 Milrose Ln. Toledo, OH 43617 419-843-4121 suenichols@accesstoledo.com
Kim Penn 626 Chatam Ct. Toledo, OH 43620 419-242-3979 redturtle61@yahoo.com
Carol Ragan 2510 County Rd. F. Swanton, OH 43558 419-826-8645 crf2510@aol.com
Uta Schaub 1907 Mount Vernon 43607 419-536-9751 ulschaub@bex.net
Ashley Stevens 1141 Northville, Toledo OH 43612 419 779-6545 adstevens83@yahoo.com
Jonnie Taylor 2017 Circle Drive, Toledo, OH 43607 567-277-4794 deidrabri@aol.com
Andre' Washington 1910 Indian Wood Circle. #201, Maumee, OH 43537 419-392-8128 andre0810@hotmail.com
Membership Chair: **Darcy Yates** 7632 Shadywood Lane, Sylvania, OH 43560 419-885-1257. darcyjyates@bex.net

A Brief History of LWVO's Opposition to HB 194

On June 16 and again on June 21 Peg Rosenfield, LWVO Elections Specialist, testified before the Senate Committee on Government Oversight and Reform and the Senate State and Local Government and Veteran's Affairs Committee regarding HB 194 and HB 159 (concerning the establishment of photo identification for voter eligibility).

Her testimony for LWVO was focused in opposition to three major aspects of HB 194 that "unnecessarily limit Ohioans' right to vote and have that vote counted."

1. Right Church, Wrong Pew

With consolidation of polling places into fewer voting locations, the likelihood of voters getting to the right location and the wrong precinct is much increased. The law does not require the poll worker to redirect the voter to the correct precinct even though it is in the same polling location and a provisional ballot cast in the wrong precinct will not be counted. "The number of voters who will be disenfranchised if their vote is not counted is substantial." Rosenfield referred to a chart prepared by Norman Robbins citing these figures. She pointed out to the committee that most people do not "live and breathe elections... and it is hardly reasonable to expect someone to know s/he is in precinct 16B not 16C... Nor do we believe that any voter will deliberately choose to vote in the wrong precinct." She cited the reason "a voter votes in the wrong precinct (a)s an error on the part of the polling place officials. Cast (ing) out such votes deprives legitimate voters of their right to vote. We strongly believe such votes should be counted for all races and issues for which the voter was eligible to vote."

2. Absentee Voting

The increase of absentee voting after the long lines and hardships voters experienced during the 2004 election has increased convenience for voters and the innovations initiated by boards of elections have been successful in reducing some of the stress on poll workers. In some counties early voting has created cost savings for election boards. The 2009 League lawsuit against the Secretary of State and the settlement were aimed at insuring "a fair and even playing field protective of voters' rights....to prevent voters from being disenfranchised or unduly burdened by individual counties that were interpreting and applying the law in varying ways that took away the right to vote... The League urges:

that all counties provide in person absentee voting for more than the effective 5 1/2 days currently allowed in the bill;

that all counties be allowed to choose whether to prepay postage for the return of voted ballots;

that all counties be allowed to choose whether to open one or more alternative sites for in-person absentee voting, both for voters' convenience and so that the election board may use its board office space to prepare for election day; and

that all counties be allowed to choose whether to be open for in-person absentee voting all day on Saturdays and hours of their choice on Sundays, and on the weekend before election day."

The consequences of reducing absentee voting days and sites and the prohibition against mailing absentee ballots will in a number of counties result in long waiting times on election day.

3. Voter Intent

"Ohio has always used "intent of voter" to determine whether a ballot could be counted." This refers to inadvertent error by the voter who wants to be absolutely sure that his vote counts for a candidate and marks the name and also writes it in. Technically this is a double vote but it is clear what was the intent of the voter. "Not counting that vote seems to smack of punishing the voter for not paying attention in class. We urge that "double bubble" votes should be counted whenever the intent is clear.

The league also urged the continued use of 4-digit SS# rather than the 9-digit. This was amended by a second election bill HB 224 and is no longer an issue.

In addition, LWV Ohio noted its support of some of the administrative proposals in the bill – such as the provision that voters who change their names would again be able to vote a regular ballot instead of a provisional ballot, and that ballots not sealed in the secrecy envelope still be counted. There are other items in HB 194 on which we did not comment. In assessing the entire bill, LWV Ohio believes the provisions that are likely to disenfranchise voters or result in long lines on Election Day far outweigh the positive changes to election law made by HB 194.

Quotations are directly from Peg Rosenfield's testimony. To read it in its entirety go to <http://www.lwvohio.org/site.cfm/Advocacy/Lobbyist-Testimony.cfm>

Major Changes to Ohio Election Law (HB 194 & 224)*

Before You Vote:

Moves Presidential Primary from March to May

Establishes minimum precinct size

- Establishes a minimum precinct size of 500 electors for precincts located in a municipal corporation and can vary by 5% or less.
- Permits a board of elections to apply to the Secretary of State for a waiver from the minimum precinct size requirement, and requires a board that applies for a waiver to explain the reason for the waiver request.
- Requires a board of elections to rearrange and combine precincts as necessary to comply with the minimum precinct size requirements not later than December 31, 2011.

Eliminates poll-worker requirement to direct voters to the correct precinct

- Permits, instead of requires, an election official to direct a voter who is in the wrong precinct to the voter's correct precinct.
- Specifies that it is the duty of the individual casting the ballot to ensure that the individual is casting that ballot in the correct precinct.

Voter ID Requirements

Current ID for Election Day Voting:

current and valid:

- Photo identification,
- Military identification, or
- Copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document

Current ID for Early In-Person and Absentee Voting:

- The last four digits of voter's Social Security number; or driver's license number; or
- A copy of a current and valid photo identification, (i.e. Ohio driver's license, state ID card, government ID). Photo identification must show name and address; or
- A copy of a current utility bill (including cell phone bill), bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document that shows the voter's name and current address (including from a public college or university).

Updates to ID Law:*

- Adds use of passport to current list of acceptable voter identification.
- Specifies an in-person absentee voter must provide ID in the same manner as a person voting on Election Day.

During Voting:

Absentee Voting

<u>Was:</u>	<u>Now is:*</u>
<p>Mail-In</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballots available 35 days prior to the election • Boards of Elections may send unsolicited absentee applications to voters <p>Overseas/Military</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballots available 45 days prior to the election <p>In-Person (Early Voting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available 35 days prior to the election • May vote in person at a County Board of Elections office or satellite site during normal or posted hours up through the day before the election 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballots available 21 days prior to the election • Boards of Elections cannot send unsolicited absentee applications • Boards of Elections may not pay the return postage for absentee ballots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballots available 45 days prior to the election • Ballots may be requested and sent electronically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available 17 days before the election, ending the Friday before the election. Hours: 8am – 6pm M-F and 8am – Noon Sat. (Voters in line at the close of polling hours will be allowed to vote) • County Boards of Elections MAY open a satellite voting branch if: At least 3 members of the Board determine that the BoE office lacks sufficient capacity -AND- vote a satellite site is necessary <p>** The reduction of availability to 17 days has removed “Golden Week,” the time when a voter could both register and vote in person on at the same time.</p>

Provisional Ballots

You must vote by provisional ballot if:

- Your name is not in the poll book.
- You are challenged and do not provide required documentation.

- You requested an absentee ballot and either did not receive it or did not return it.
- You do not present appropriate ID.

<u>Was:</u>	<u>Now Is:*</u>
<p>Voters without acceptable ID need only supply the last 4 digits of their Social Security number and do not need to supply further information.</p> <p>Voters without either acceptable ID or a Social Security number can sign an affirmation, and still cast a successful provisional ballot.</p> <p>Voters who can't or won't supply ID, last 4 digits of Social Security number, or a signed affirmation must go personally to the Board of Elections within 10 days of the election and supply one of these missing items.</p>	<p>Requires the provisional voter to provide all of the following information on the affirmation for the provisional ballot to be eligible to be counted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The elector's printed name; (2) The elector's signature; (3) The elector's date of birth; (4) The elector's last four numbers of the voter's Social Security Number, Ohio driver's license number, or state identification card number, or an affirmative notation that the elector provided the required identification to the election officials; (5) The elector's residence address; (6) A statement that the individual is a registered voter in the jurisdiction in which the provisional ballot is being voted; and (7) A statement that the individual is eligible to vote in the election in which the provisional ballot is being voted. <p>Voters who can't or won't provide the required information may go to the Board of Elections by the close of the polls to supply the missing items. Additionally, the law requires an individual who is casting a ballot after the time for the closing of the polls pursuant to a court order extending the time for the closing of the polls to cast a provisional ballot.</p> <p>The new law also allows a voter who changes their name or address to use their provisional ballot to both vote and register the change with the County BoE.</p>

changes contd.

After You Vote:

Overvotes*

- A ballot is considered overvoted if:

The voter marks more selections for a particular office, question, or issue than the number of selections that the voter is allowed by law to make, including if the voter marks the ballot for a candidate and also writes in the name of the candidate as a write-in vote.

- An overvoted ballot WILL NOT be counted unless all of the following apply:

- (1) The voter marks the ballot for a candidate and writes in the identical candidate's name;
- (2) The ballots are counted at a central location using automatic tabulating equipment; and
- (3) At least three members of the board of elections agree that the candidate's name, as it appears on the ballot, and the name of the candidate written in by the voter are identical.

- Requires a voter's ballot to be invalidated for the overvoted office, question, or issue, but specifies that the ballot shall not be invalidated for any other office, question, or issue for which the voter has not marked an excess number of selections.

**These changes will only be in effect if the referendum is unsuccessful in obtaining enough signatures by September 29, 2011*

Victimization of Women Forum Sept. 15 *UT Law School Auditorium*

The LWVTLC in conjunction with the UT Department of Criminal Justice and Social Work and the Toledo Women's Commission is sponsoring a public forum focusing on domestic violence, sex trafficking and prostitution; violent acts that victimize women and the interaction between the civil justice system and other factors that perpetuate them.

Forum Format

A panel of municipal court judges and those running for municipal court seats as well as experts in law enforcement, victim rescue and victims themselves will participate in the three phases of the forum. There will be three short videos one on each of the focus areas followed by responses from the panel and finally round table discussion with the audience aimed at answering questions and coming up with next steps. The goal is to educate ourselves and the public about what are sometimes considered victimless cultural crimes.

Toledo Connections

Northwest Ohio has been a major site for sex trafficking and prostitution rings with Toledo ranked number four in terms of arrests, investigations, and rescue of non foreign born minors pulled into the sex trade. The top three cities are Miami, Portland and Las Vegas. Comparing the population figures of the three cities ahead of Toledo to our area's population reveals a startling realization that this area "can be considered to lead the nation for the number of traffickers produced and the number of victims recruited into the sex trade per capita."

LWVO Human Trafficking Study

This forum is an effort by LWVTLC to assist LWVO in its work to develop the human trafficking study mandated at the recent convention. The forum starts at 5:00 pm. Free parking and refreshments will be provided.

quotes are taken from 2009 Report of Ohio Trafficking in Persons Study Commission, Research and Analysis Sub-Committee.



The Voter

The Voter is published several times a year by the League of Women Voters of Toledo-Lucas County PO Box 2506, Toledo, OH 43606 419-474-5030. www.lwvtoledo.org

September 2011

Bonnie Bishop and Peg Hull Smith,
Co-Presidents
Ann Fabiszak Payne, Editor

Contact editor at hosea.payne@utoledo.edu to submit information or articles for the Voter.



Join the League!

The League of Women Voters of Toledo-Lucas County is part of a nationwide group of women and men who care about democracy. Join us and become part of a group that since 1920 has worked to keep the power of democracy in the hands of the people.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Phone: _____
EMAIL: _____

Membership Levels

- ___ \$55 Olive Colton (Local, state and national memberships and all publications)
- ___ \$75 Carrie Chapman Catt (Memberships plus a \$20 contribution to general fund)
- ___ \$100 Susan B. Anthony (Memberships plus a \$45 contribution to general fund)
- ___ \$27.50 Additional household member (Local, state and national memberships)
- ___ \$30 Full-time Student (Local, state and national memberships and all publications)

Membership checks should be made payable to LWV-TLC. Any contribution above the basic \$55 membership fee will be gratefully accepted as a non tax-deductible donation to the LWV/TLC general fund for operating expenses.

Tax-deductible donations can be made with a separate check made out to LWVOH Education Fund Toledo Account.

League of Women Voters of
Toledo-Lucas County
P.O. Box 2506
Toledo, OH 43606