



League Lines

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF UMPQUA VALLEY

www.lwvuv.org

FEBRUARY 2006

February Action Alert!

USA PATRIOT ACT REAUTHORIZATION

Your voice was heard! Late last year, just before the holiday recess, passage of the conference report to reauthorize the USA PATRIOT Act was blocked in the Senate. Instead, the House and Senate agreed to an extension of the expiring portions of the Patriot Act to allow for more time to consider the impact of the law on civil liberties. This is a victory for the League and other concerned organizations that have worked tirelessly to bring attention to concerns about civil liberties since the enactment of the Patriot Act.

Action is still needed!

Urgent action is still needed to oppose the conference report on H.R. 3199, the reauthorization of the Patriot Act! The Act is now set to expire on February 3 and a vote is expected to take place very soon. The conference report on the bill must be defeated as it provides for more government secrecy in the name of homeland security and

Continued on page 3

LEAGUE PLANNING

Program Planning 2006 - 2007

At our general meeting on January 24th, program planning for 2006-2007 was the key subject. Following a short skit performed by Robin Wisdom and Kathy Vejtasa, the planning session went smoothly even though our Program Chair was missed due to illness.

After reviewing the possible national subjects for study, consensus was reached. Our league will recommend the redistricting study to LWVUS. There was some discussion about the difference between an election process study and a redistricting study. The issues overlap, so a debate ensued about which would achieve our goals. It was generally felt that election systems con-

cerns are the most important issues for the league to be concerned with now.

Even though increased PMP cost associated with new national study or concurrence was acknowledged and understood, it was not the deciding factor.

Regarding local study, it was decided and agreed upon to not take on any new studies for next year as we are currently involved with two state studies, homeless youth and Oregon judiciary, that will continue on in 06-07.

* Robin Wisdom, President

League General Meeting Feb. 28th, Tuesday, 2006

at Jasmine's Event Center
in Roseburg, Lane & Main

Learn about the *New & Improved* ~

- Centralized voter registration system & requirements
- Douglas County Ballot scanner
- Election Year 06

**6 PM for Dinner
7 PM Meeting**



The public is invited free of charge to the meeting at 7 PM. Dinner may be purchased for \$18 including gratuity. Please call 672-6982 to reserve.

MISSION

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a grassroots, nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government in order to build better communities statewide.

OFFICERS

President: Robin Wisdom 672-6982
1st Vice President: Betty Mack . . . 672-1706
2nd Vice President: Lois Allen 673-3074
Secretary: Jean Oswald 673-3001
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Nominating Committee Chair:
Beverly Paulson 672-5011
Program & State Judiciary Study:
Betty Mack 672-1706
Public Relations: Kathy Vejtasa 672-7195
State Homeless Youth Study, State Chair:
Linda Clary 464-8883
Voters Guides: Beverly Paulson 672-5011

Join the League of Women Voters Today!

We've adopted new membership guidelines to make it easier for you to be a member! Ask us about scholarship opportunities for those who participate on a regular basis.

Please send us your name, mailing address, phone number, email address and a check for:

- \$60 for Annual membership for an individual
\$90 for a Annual household membership
\$30 Full-time Student membership

To: LWV of Umpqua Valley
PO Box 2434
Roseburg OR 97470

Visit http://www.lwvuv.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

February 2006

Dear League Members and Friends,

With the program plan for 2006-07 achieved at our general meeting on January 24th, we proceed with more development in our state studies here on a local level. By not taking on any new local studies we will continue to focus on previous commitments, the Homeless Youth Study and the study of the Oregon Judiciary. This week letters were sent to Presiding Judge Millikan and Trial Court Administrator Jesse Larner in preparation for interviews about our judicial system.

By now many of you have received calls from me. Thank you for taking the time to answer my New Year Survey questions. How are we doing? How would you like to participate with your league this year? Please think about your answers and let us know. We absolutely need your help! Involvement with the league is fun, satisfying and educational! It's a great way to meet your legislators and other people with your same concerns.

We are now also recruiting for Voter's Guide Committee members, as we find ourselves in an election year. This is a great way to serve on a meaningful and very valuable project. The Voter's Guide is published twice in an election year. Funding is always an issue, but we have great support here in Douglas County. But we must also continue to nurture this process. Fortunately, volunteer-wise, it is not a constant project and can be done quite easily when there are those who will share the responsibility. Think about what it would be like without our Voter's Guides! Not good!

Please come to our next general meeting on Feb. 28th when County Clerk, Barbara Nielsen addresses the new election year, the new ballot scanner, and the new centralized voter registration system now in place in Oregon.

Thank you, All!

Robin

Robin Wisdom, League of Women voters of Umpqua Valley, President
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Six Benchmarks for Lobbying Reform

During the coming months, the House and Senate will consider reforms to respond to the lobbying scandals in Washington that deeply concern the American people.

A CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll (January 10, 2006), for example, found that "corruption ranked among the concerns most often cited by those polled, with 43 percent telling pollsters it would be an 'extremely important' issue in 2006," just 2 percent below the 45 percent response for the war in Iraq and terrorism.

Our organizations are releasing today six benchmark lobbying reforms that should be used to judge the proposals being considered by Congress in the next few months. The organizations include the Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, **the League of Women Voters**, Public Campaign, Public Citizen and

U.S. PIRG. We will work to enact these important reforms.

While we are focusing primarily on lobbying reforms today, we want to make clear that campaign contributions are at the heart of the lobbying and corruption scandals now engulfing Congress. In addition to the immediate battle for lobbying reforms, it is essential in the end to achieve fundamental campaign finance reforms, most importantly public financing of elections, if we are to restore the integrity and health of our democracy.

Our organizations will work to fix the presidential public financing system in time for the 2008 presidential election and to extend public financing to congressional races. We will also work for other essential campaign finance reforms, including replacing the Federal Election Commission with a real campaign finance enforcement agency, closing the loophole for 527 groups and abolishing leadership PACs. We also recognize that structural reforms of Congress must be enacted to address the lobbying scandals, including reforms to address the misuse of "earmarks," and that other procedural reforms are necessary to ensure a fair and democratic legislative process.

In terms of lobbying reform, we are proposing six essential benchmark reforms. They include proposals that have overwhelming public support. A Washington Post/ABC News poll (January 10, 2006), for example, reported that 90 percent of the American people believe that it should be illegal for lobbyists to



Continued on Page 4

Action Alert: Oppose the Patriot Act

Continued from Page 1

anti-terrorism without the checks and balances needed to protect civil liberties. Medical, banking or library records of Americans can still be obtained by law enforcement without necessary safeguards.

While the Senate version of the bill to reauthorize the Patriot Act does not make all the changes that are needed, it does more to protect civil liberties and restore checks and balances than the conference report. The Senate bill provides for more legislative and judicial oversight, retaining shorter sunsets for two of the more controversial provisions (Sec. 206 and Sec. 215). It also places some limits on "sneak and peek" warrants (Sec. 213) and requires more relevance to counterterrorism when requesting personal records in investigations.

Please contact your Members of Congress now!

ACTION NEEDED

1. Contact your Members of Congress now, by phone and by email. Urge them to guard our civil liberties by rejecting the conference report on H.R. 3199, the reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act. Tell them that the provisions of the Senate

Continued on Page 4

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Leslee Sherman
672-9614**

Action Alert: Oppose the Patriot Act

Continued from Page 3

reauthorization bill, passed by unanimous consent, should be retained and that the provisions of the conference report go too far, expanding the reach of law enforcement at the expense of civil liberties. Phone calls can be made through the Capitol Hill switchboard at 202-224-3121 or 202-225-3121.

2. Let your U.S. Senators know how you feel about their vote to end the much-needed debate on the reauthorization of the Patriot Act. If your Senator voted “no” on ending the debate, thank him or her! You may go to the Roll Call to see how your Senator voted. A “nay” was in opposition to ending the much-needed debate and in favor of further consideration of civil liberties.

3. Alert other concerned citizens—your grassroots network, your friends and coworkers. Encourage them to contact their Senators today!

* LWVUS Action Alert, 1-26-06

LWVUS ACTION

Six Benchmarks for Lobbying Reform *Continued from Page 3*

give members of Congress gifts, trips or other things of value. Two-thirds of the American people, according to the poll, believe it should be illegal for lobbyists to make contributions to Members and other federal candidates. Our organizations support the following benchmark reforms.

1. Break the nexus between lobbyists, money and lawmakers.

Cap contributions from lobbyists and lobbying firm PACs to federal candidates at \$200 per election and to national parties and leadership PACs at \$500 per election cycle.

Prohibit lobbyists and lobbying firms from soliciting, arranging or delivering contributions and from serving as officials on candidate campaign committees and leadership PACs.

Prohibit lobbyists, lobbying firms and lobbying organizations from paying or arranging payments for events “honoring” members of Congress and political parties, such as parties at national conventions, and from contributing or arranging contributions to entities established or controlled by members of Congress, such as

foundations.

2. Prevent private interests from financing trips and from subsidizing travel for members of Congress and staff, and executive branch officials and federal judges.

Corporations and others should be prohibited from making privately owned planes available for Members to travel at the cost of a first class air ticket rather than the cost of a chartered plane.

3. Ban gifts to members of Congress and staff.

The gift ban should close the existing loophole in the gift rules that allow lobbyists and others to pay for parties held to “honor” or “recognize” specific Members, such as the lavish parties held at the national party conventions.

4. Oversee and enforce ethics rules and lobbying laws through an independent congressional Office of Public Integrity and increase penalties for violations.

Establish an independent Office of Public Integrity in Congress and provide sufficient resources for the Office to effectively carry out its responsibilities.

The Office should monitor and oversee financial disclosure and lobbying reports; advise Members, staff and lobbyists on compliance with the rules; conduct investigations of non-frivolous allegations of ethics viola-



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Continued on Page 5

LEAGUE INFO

Lobbying Reform

continued from Page 4

tions, including complaints filed by Members and outside individuals and groups; present cases involving potential ethics violations to the congressional Ethics Committees for consideration and action; and refer potential lobbying law violations to the Justice Department for civil enforcement.

5. Slow the revolving door.

Prohibit members of Congress and senior executive branch officials from making lobbying contacts or conducting lobbying activities for compensation in either branch for two years after leaving their positions.

Prohibit senior congressional staff from making lobbying contacts for compensation with their former offices or committees for two years after leaving their positions.

6. Place sunshine on lobbying activities and financial disclosure reports.

Require lobbying reports and Members' financial disclosure reports to be filed in an electronic format and made fully searchable on the Internet; lobbying reports to be filed on a quarterly basis; lobbyists and lobbying firms to disclose grassroots lobbying activities; lobbyists to file a list of the Members' offices and congressional committees they lobbied during the quarter; and reports to be filed disclosing the financial backers of stealth lobbying coalitions.

▲ from LWVUS web site

Women's Coalition Progress

The Douglas County Women's Coalition met on Dec. 7th for lunch at Karen's Coffee Cup. Robin Wisdom represented the league at the meeting and provided a list of our officers, portfolios and a membership form with our general meeting schedule on it.

After we updated member information, we discussed publicity and plans for developing a membership handbook.

A program called "Great Decisions" and possibilities for its 8-week location were also discussed. Each week a new topic will be discussed at these sessions. The subjects are: U.N. reforms, Brazil, human rights in the age of terrorism, U.S. and Iran, global health, pandemics & security, Turkey, energy resources, China and India — Partners or Competitors. For more information about the "Great Decisions" series, call Betty Schaefer at 957-5033.

The next Coalition meetings for the year will be on Mar. 15, Jun. 21, Sep. 13, and Dec. 6, 2006. All will be held at Karen's Coffee Cup on Diamond Lake Blvd at 11:30 AM. Representatives from all women's groups are invited to attend. For more information, please call Ernie Schnuelle at 672-0047.

● Robin Wisdom, President

Save This Date

Saturday, March 11th, is set for AAUW's annual Women's Event. This year AAUW is hosting a brunch for representatives from all the women's groups in Douglas County at Waldron's Hilltop House, starting at 10 a.m. Speaker: Susan Buttrille. Stay tuned for more details!

Diana Wales, PC Attorney at Law

673-0696

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Help!

Voter's Guide Committee Needs You!

You ask, "How can I assist?"

Help with database work & printing labels, mailing out prepared letters, contact businesses and friends, help with distribution, donate, etc.

Please call 672-6982 for more information.



League of Women Voters of Umpqua Valley
PO Box 2434
Roseburg OR 97470-2434

www.lwvuv.org

Your League February 2006 Calendar

Black History Month

- BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING FEB 9**
JASMINE'S RESTAURANT, 809 SE MAIN, ROSEBURG AT 5:15 PM
ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.
- STATE OF OREGON'S BIRTHDAY, BORN IN 1859 FEB 14**
- VISIT TO RVTV IN ASHLAND FEB 18**
UMPQUA COMMUNITY ACCESS TV WILL GO ON A FIELD TRIP TO LEARN ABOUT RVTV'S SETUP
CALL 672-6892 FOR MORE INFORMATION.
- PRESIDENTS' DAY FEB 20**
"WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY" OFFICIALLY
CELEBRATED ON THE 3RD MONDAY OF FEBRUARY
- GENERAL MEETING FEB 28**
BARBARA NIELSEN, COUNTY CLERK, WILL SPEAK "DOUGLAS COUNTY ELECTION YEAR 06"
JASMINE'S RESTAURANT, 809 SE MAIN, ROSEBURG
6 PM DINNER (PLEASE RESERVE IN ADVANCE — CALL 672-6982)
7 PM PRESENTATION — FREE TO PUBLIC