



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF EAST NASSAU

voter

www.lwvofeastnassau.org

info@lwvofeastnassau.org

*At local, state and national levels
the League works to influence public policy
through education and advocacy.*

October 2015

Candidate Forums

The following candidates have been invited to attend:

Thursday October 8, 7 - 9 pm

Co-sponsors: LWV of East Nassau & North Merrick Public Library

Candidates for Nassau County Legislative District 13:

Norma L. Gonsalves (R, C, I) and Eileen M. Napolitano (D, WFP)

Candidates for Nassau County Legislative District 19:

Steven P. Rhoads (R,C,I) and Claudia Borecky (D, WFP)

Candidates for Town of Hempstead Council District 5:

Erin King Sweeney (R,C,I) and Michael F. Reid (D, WFP)

Tuesday October 13, 7 - 9 pm

Co-sponsors: LWV of East Nassau & Plainview-Old Bethpage Public Library

Candidates for Nassau Legislative District 16:

Judith A. Jacobs (D, WFP, I) and Angel Cepeda (R, C)

Candidates for Nassau County Legislative District 17

Rose Marie Walker (R, C, I) and Daniel P.Devine (D)

Candidates for Town of Oyster Bay Council - elected at large (select 3)

Joseph D. Muscarella, (R,C,I), Anthony D. Macagnone (R,C,I),

Robert K. Freire (D,WFP), Joseph A. Stufano (D,WFP),

Rebecca Alesia, (R,C,I),

Marc J. Kadushin (D, WFP)



Wednesday, October 28, 7:30 – 9:00 pm –

Co-sponsors: LWV of Nassau County, Hofstra Political Science Department, Hofstra Law School

Candidates for Nassau County District Attorney:

Madeline Singas (D, WF) and Kate Murray (R, C, I)

Please join us on Wednesday, November 18th, at 7:30, at the Levittown Library, to discuss:

Juvenile Justice Issues in New York State

After a brief presentation, we will have a discussion and decide whether to come to concurrence with the following important sections of the current LWV of Ohio Juvenile Justice Position.

1. Children under the age of 18 are not adults and their treatment within the juvenile justice and criminal court system should relate to their stage of development.
2. Children should not be held in adult jails.
3. Rehabilitation is the purpose of the juvenile justice system.
4. The legal rights of children should be protected.

If the concurrence is adopted on a state level, these principles will form the LWVNYS position on Juvenile Justice. See page 2 for additional information on this issue; then come to the meeting on November 18th to help with this decision.

Proposed Concurrence with LWV of Ohio's Juvenile Justice Position

LWVNYS convention delegates approved a state board recommended program item to conduct a post-convention concurrence with portions of LWV of Ohio's Juvenile Justice position.

Concurrence is defined as agreement by League members with a position on an issue reached by a small group of members or by another League. Based on LWVUS precedent, it is not necessary that the "decision statement" or "pre-stated position" follow verbatim the position upon which it is based.

Brief Overview:

Typically the criminal law treats children differently than it treats adults. New York is the only state other than North Carolina that prosecutes ALL youth 16 years of age and older as adults. New York is one of only two states in the country that have not adopted laws which reflect brain development research and science which has found that the human brain is not fully formed until the age of 26. Further, New York allows children as young as 7 years old to be arrested and charged with acts of juvenile delinquency.

Research has shown:

- As the cognitive skills of adolescents are developing, adolescents' behavior is often impulsive and adolescents lack the ability to focus on the consequences of their behavior.
- Because the adolescent brain is still developing, the character, personality traits and behavior of adolescents are highly receptive to change; adolescents respond well to interventions, learn to make responsible choices, and are likely to grow out of negative or delinquent behavior. In January 2014, a Commission on Youth, Public Safety and Justice was appointed by Governor Cuomo to make recommendations on how New York could raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction. The commission issued a Final Report in January 2015, with 38 concrete recommendations for reforming the youth justice system.

These recommendations are based on the acceptance of the basic premise that **the age of criminal responsibility should be raised**, and that **young persons accused of criminal behavior should be treated differently than adult offenders**. Based on these findings, the Governor pushed for a comprehensive legislative package in the 2015 legislative session designed to re-frame the way young people are treated by our criminal justice system. The legislature approved the allocation of funds to implement the principles of the proposals, but adjourned without passage. Because LWVNYS lacked an applicable position, we could not advocate for or against these proposals.

In New York, the LWV has positions that address treatment of those who are taken into the criminal justice system but these positions do not address concerns about the impact of the justice system on children directly. For example, the position on Pre-Trial Procedures provides that the rights of defendants should be protected at every stage of a criminal proceeding, including the pre-arraignment period. This principle has particular resonance in the juvenile justice system since for historical reasons juveniles actually possess fewer rights than adults accused of crimes. The two positions that most closely touch upon the issues of juvenile justice are Bail and Alternatives to Incarceration.

Finally, there is the overarching League principle that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination. Both League and the NYS Commission report have identified ways in which many juvenile justice laws have discriminatory impacts on racial minorities.

Existing positions appear to be inadequate to a thorough, considered and knowledgeable undertaking of analysis of proposed reforms. No position addresses the core issue of the current proposals, which is to raise the age of criminal responsibility in New York State. If we reach concurrence with portions of the LWV Ohio's position on juvenile justice, we will be able to have a voice in the discussion of Raise the Age proposals.

LWV Ohio conducted a full study and several updates on Juvenile Justice and arrived at a broad and comprehensive Juvenile Justice position. Paramount is the principle that children under the age of 18 are not adults and "their treatment within the juvenile justice system should relate to their stage of development," that the purpose of juvenile justice should be rehabilitation, and that the legal rights of juveniles should be protected.

LWVNYS' positions are generally phrased more broadly than those of Ohio, to allow flexibility in responding to specific legislation as it is introduced. Thus, we are proposing a concurrence with only portions of the Ohio position. These portions will cover the specifics of the legislative packages proposed during the last legislative session, but are flexible enough to cover future legislative proposals. (See page 1.)

Money Still Floods Our Elections

By: Nancy Tate, former
Executive Director, LWVUS

[It is just over a] year since the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated limits on the total amount an individual can donate to candidates or political parties in *McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission* (FEC).

As LWVUS president Elisabeth MacNamara stated at the time, **in this decision the Court said that big money is worth more than the voices of individual citizens.**

The 2014 midterm elections were held just six months after this decision, but the results were dramatic:

- The 2014 midterm elections were the most expensive midterms in U.S. history
- Although the amount of money spent went up, the number of donors actually went down
- A mere 604 individual donors were able to pump \$31 million more into the election than if the limits stayed in place—that's \$51,234 more per donor

This isn't the way democracy is supposed to work. Coupled with the disastrous decision in *Citizens United*, which led to the rise of SuperPACs by allowing unlimited spending by outside groups, our election system is being taken over by an increasingly small number of wealthy donors and special interests who are trying to buy our politicians.

The League of Women Voters is fighting back against this rising tide, pushing for regulations to ensure our democracy is in the hands of the people—not the highest bidder.

[Share this information with others, if you agree that the McCutcheon decision is corrupting our democracy.]

Help Stop Big Money

By: Kelly Ceballos, LWVUS



The explosive growth of Super PACs is a major outgrowth of the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*, and it is undermining the integrity and effectiveness of our nation's anti-corruption campaign finance laws.

Super PACs raise and spend unlimited amounts and serve as vehicles for donors and candidates to bypass the contribution limits that apply to a candidate's campaign – limits enacted by Congress to prevent corruption.

It's time to close this loophole that is letting too much big money into our elections. **Tell your Representative to cosponsor and support H.R. 425, the "Stop Super PAC -- Candidate Coordination Act"** introduced by Representatives David Price and Chris Van Hollen.

Since coordinated expenditures are treated by law as in-kind contributions to the candidate, new and effective coordination rules would bring Super PACs back into the contribution limit system and help protect against corruption of public officials.

As a practical matter, Super PACs are sidestepping the law that is intended to block huge and corrupting campaign contributions. It's time to establish real-world, common-sense definitions of corruption and close this massive loophole.

Congress can fix this. Stand up today and urge your Representative to strengthen coordination rules and stop Super PACS from evading the law.

Critical Supreme Court Decisions

First, the Court upheld access to health care subsidies in the federally-operated health care exchanges provided by the Affordable Care Act, meaning that those **individuals who are accessing health care through those exchanges will continue to be able to receive subsidies to better afford their insurance coverage**. Had the Court rejected the subsidies, millions of Americans could have lost their insurance coverage.

And, the Court ruled that voters in Arizona had the right to set up an independent redistricting commission. **The decision reinforces a key principle in redistricting reform: that voters should choose their representatives rather than letting politicians choose their voters**. Over a dozen other states, including California, have used a similar independent commission process to prevent partisan gerrymandering.

The League of Women Voters of the United States filed *amicus* briefs in both of these cases. The League of Women Voters of Arizona has been a leader on redistricting reform in their state, supporting the original ballot initiative that led to the independent commission as well as fighting the legislature's challenge.

HOW TO JUDGE A CANDIDATE

DECIDE WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IN A CANDIDATE

What are their positions on the issues?

Are they issues you care about?

What are their leadership qualities and experience – Intelligence? Honesty? Communication skills?

FIND OUT ABOUT THE CANDIDATES

Call your local Board of Elections

Call your local political party headquarters

Check out candidates' websites and campaign literature

Pay attention to television and radio ads and reports

Read your local newspaper

Attend debates and forums

For incumbents, check their voting records on the issues you care about

LEARN ABOUT THEIR LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Look at their background and experience – are they prepared for the job?

Observe their campaigns – do they accept speaking engagements to debate?

Do they avoid serious questions?

LEARN WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK ABOUT THE CANDIDATES

Talk to your neighbors, friends, relatives, political volunteers

LEARN ABOUT ENDORSEMENTS

LOOK INTO CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

FOLLOW OPINION POLLS

SEE THROUGH DISTORTION TECHNIQUES

Name calling? Rumor mongering? Catchwords?

Passing the blame? Promising the impossible? Evading Issues?

SORT IT ALL OUT

Which candidates' views on the issues do you agree with?

Who ran the fairest campaign?

Which candidates showed the most knowledge of the issues?

Which candidates have the leadership qualities you are looking for?

VOTE!

The days are getting shorter and the trees are beginning to turn color, a sure sign that Election Day is not far away. Soon we will be receiving mailings from our local candidates, telling us why we should vote for them. We hope you learn as much about them as you can, so that you can make informed choices when you go to the polls.

The East Nassau League will be doing its part to help you make informed choices. See page 1 to learn where and when you will be able to hear from your local candidates at one of our Candidate Forums.

Once again League will publish an online Voters Guide (www.vote411.org) Here you will find information on the status of your registration, your polling location, and your personal ballot with information on the candidates you will choose on November 3rd.

We cannot do this without members' help. Please consider helping us with these activities. Contact Barbara Epstein, 221-1948, to help with getting the needed information for Vote411.org, or Norma Schaeffer, 489-3133, to help with the Candidate Forums.

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

 <p>THOMAS McKEVITT MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY 17TH DISTRICT</p> <p>1975 HEMPSTEAD TURNPIKE, SUITE 202 EAST MEADOW, NEW YORK 11554 516-228-4960 FAX: 516-228-4963</p> <p>546 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BLDG. ALBANY, NEW YORK 12248 518-455-5341 FAX: 518-455-4346</p> <p>E-mail: mckevitt@assembly.state.ny.us</p>	 <p>MICHAEL A. MONTESANO ASSEMBLYMAN 15TH DISTRICT</p>  <p>ROOM 437 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING ALBANY, NEW YORK 12248 TELEPHONE: 518-455-4684 FAX: 518-455-5477</p> <p>111 LEVITTOWN PARKWAY HICKSVILLE, NY 11801 TELEPHONE: 516-937-3571 FAX: 516-937-3632</p> <p>E-mail: montesanom@assembly.state.ny.us</p>
 <p>NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY</p> <p>CHARLES D. LAVINE MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY 13TH DISTRICT</p> <p>70 GLEN STREET, SUITE 249 GLEN COVE, NEW YORK 11542 (516) 676-0050 FAX: (516) 676-0071</p> <p>ROOM 441 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING ALBANY, NEW YORK 12248 (518) 455-5456 FAX: (518) 455-5467</p> <p>E-MAIL: LAVINEC@ASSEMBLY.STATE.NY.US</p>	
<p>NEW YORK STATE SENATE</p>  <p>SENATOR CARL L. MARCELLINO FIFTH SENATE DISTRICT</p> <p>LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING ALBANY, NY 12247 (518) 455 2390 email: marcelli@senate.state.ny.us</p> <p>250 TOWNSEND SQUARE OYSTER BAY, NY 11771 (516) 922-1811 FAX (516) 922-1154</p>	 <p>DAVID G. McDONOUGH MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY 14TH DISTRICT</p> <p>443 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BLDG. ALBANY, NEW YORK 12248 518-455-4633 FAX: 518-455-5559 E-mail: mcdonoughd@assembly.state.ny.us</p> <p>404 BEDFORD AVENUE BELLMORE, NEW YORK 11710 516-409-2070 FAX: 516-409-2073</p>

We greatly appreciate the understanding of those who are running for office this year that we are unable to include their ads in this issue, due to the proximity of the election and our need to remain non-partisan regarding parties and candidates.

KEEPING CONNECTED		
<p>LWVUS & LWVUS Education Foundation 1730 M St. NW, Ste. 1000 Washington DC 20036 202-429-1965 lw@lw.org www.lw.org</p>	<p>LWVNY & LWVNY Education Foundation 62 Grand Street, Albany NY 12207 518-465-4162 lwny@lwvny.org www.lwvny.org www.lwvny-bulletins.org</p>	<p>LWV of Nassau County PO Box 221 Port Washington, NY 11050 516-431-1628 info@lwvofnassaucounty.org www.lwvofnassaucounty.org</p>

REGISTRATION FORM

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NYS EDUCATION FOUNDATION, INC.
in association with United Nations Department of Public Information
INVITE YOU TO ATTEND



**Briefings at the United Nations on Two Topics:
Global Healthcare Issues (10:00-11:00 am)
And
Educating the Youth of the World (11:00 am-12 noon)
Thursday, December 3, 2015
United Nations Headquarters in NYC -- First Avenue at 46th Street, NYC**

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Day Phone: () _____ E-Mail: _____

COST/PAYMENT INFORMATION

- 10:00 am - 12:00 noon - Briefings Program** \$ _____
 - \$50 *League Members or Members of Sponsoring Organizations*
 - \$60 *Non-Member* \$40 *Students*
- Optional Lunch in the Delegates' Dining Room** \$ 50
 - Include Lunch, Dessert Bar and Coffee/Tea only*
 - UN requires proper attire: jeans, shorts, sneakers will NOT be permitted*
- Optional Tour of the UN (Space limited and afternoon exact time TBD)** \$ 15
- Discounted fee to members of sponsoring organization for all three activities:
Tour, Lunch, & Briefing** \$ 105

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

My Check for \$ _____ is enclosed (make payable to LWVNYS EF) OR Please charge my credit card:

Card Holder's Name: _____ Signature: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN TO:

United Nations Briefings/LWVNYS**62 Grand Street** Albany, New York 12207
Fax: 518-465-0812 (Credit Card Registrations ONLY); E-Mail: lwnvy@lwnvy.org
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL OR TO MAKE RESERVATION BY PHONE: 518-465-4162
SPACE IS LIMITED, SO RESERVE EARLY; \$25 administrative fee for any cancellations
REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 20, 2015

Fair Districts Equal Fair Elections: LWV Ohio Shows how Gerrymandering Took the “Swing” Out of Swing State

EDITORIAL NOTE: *This guest blog post was written by Carrie Davis, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Ohio. (From LWVUS Blog by: Stephanie Drahan 09/03/2015)*

(Additional Editorial Note: Reading this blog reminded me of all that we have gone through trying to get fair districts in Nassau County. NY does not have Initiative and Referendum, as Ohio does, which is one reason why we could not get this type of issue on the ballot, while LWV Ohio can. Also note that a former member of the LWVEN Board, Terry Mills, is currently a member of the Ohio League.)

Ohio is widely considered to be the ultimate swing state. Ohio voters have picked the winning U.S. Presidential candidate every year since 1964, routinely switching parties. So how can a state that is evenly split between supporting Democrats and Republicans have an elected legislature made up overwhelmingly by one party? The answer: gerrymandering.

...Gerrymandering is not a new concept. American politicians have been manipulating district lines since the early 1800s to make sure their party won, often creating oddly shaped districts in the process. The term “gerrymander” was coined when then-Governor of Massachusetts Elbridge Gerry created a district shaped like a salamander. No offense to Governor Gerry, but Ohio has raised the practice to an art form, one that involves “packing and cracking”...

Predictable Results: A Report from the League of Women Voters of Ohio Comparing 2011 Gerrymandering to the 2012 and 2014 Election Results concluded that Ohio’s legislative districts are rigged to yield completely predictable results. Voters can predict with 97 percent to 100 percent accuracy which party will win every single legislative race in the state, because the *districts are that rigged*. In fact, the party that drew the maps received 57 percent of the total votes statewide for Congress but managed to win 75 percent of the Congressional seats by packing the opposing party into as few seats as possible.

Ohio may be a swing state in picking a president, but the maps guarantee no swing in the legislature. So this is illegal, right? Wrong. When the disfavored political party sued, claiming that the maps and process violated the rules in the state constitution, the Ohio Supreme Court declared that the rules are discretionary. The result is that Ohio has become a Wild, Wild West for unchecked gerrymandering.

Fret not, fair reader, for there is a solution to this manipulation of voter intent. The Ohio League and a diverse group of supporters hope to pass a ballot issue this fall to amend the state constitution to change how Ohio draws legislative districts. Supporters of reform have a very simple way of explaining the goal: Fair Districts = Fair Elections.

We’re working to ensure election integrity by preventing politicians from manipulating our elections system for their benefit. We believe our elections should be fair, free and accessible to all voters and that entails voters picking their representatives, not the other way around.

If approved by voters this fall, the state constitution will be amended to make sure we have clear rules for redistricting that are binding and reflect voting patterns; require a transparent process with public input; and establish a bipartisan commission that can only approve maps with votes from both parties. If fair districts supporters win on the ballot this fall, the new legislative districts drawn after the next census should more accurately reflect the “swing” in swing state.

The League of Women Voters of East Nassau

www.lwvofeastnassau.org, info@lwvofeastnassau.org

Leadership Team: Barbara Epstein, Barbara Josepher, Norma Schaeffer, Peggy Stein

Editor: Paula Blum, paulablum@hotmail.com • **Circulation:** Mary Price • **Advertising:** Lesley Pollak