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# The *Fresno* **VOTER**



## You Can Be a Winner



### happy new year From Your Board

Tuesday, January 20  
Regular Board Meeting  
5 p.m., League Office

Saturday, January 31  
Program Planning  
9 a.m., League Office

Tuesday, February 24  
Regular Board Meeting  
5 p.m., League Office



◆ Come to Program Planning on January 31

◆ Share Ideas for Local and State Priorities \*\*\*



◆ Enjoy a complementary sumptuous breakfast



◆ Put your name in our drawing to win a great prize

Saturday, January 31 \* 9 a.m.—noon

League Office at Stone Soup

1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno

More info? 472-3018

\*\*\*Want to Prepare? Review the 6-page position insert pages 7-12 and think about options!



# President's Message



**A**fter celebrating the holiday season, it is appropriate to look at some of the League's 2014 activities and also to look ahead to what we expect in 2015.

**Our 2014 Priorities were addressed in a variety of ways:**

Mental Health: The League hosted two informative Mental Health Lunch & Learn activities. Francine Farber sits on the Mental Health Board and has kept us well-informed on issues that come before that group both via board reports and Voter articles.

Regional Water Education and Advocacy: League Members have attended several water workshops, seminars and forums throughout the year and reported the information to the board and in the Voter.

Monitor Fresno Co. General Plan Revision: A few League members met with county officials through the year to voice concerns about the failure to address the General Plan requirements over the years. Consequently, the county has agreed to do a new EIR and we are hoping they will add to that. Hooray for the success of League efforts and those of partner groups.

City General Plan Update: League members together with coalition partners lobbied city officials successfully to include important issues in the General Plan. The League used some of its California Endowment grant to fund radio spots urging citizen's participation and educating the public on the issues. We celebrate our partnership with several community groups.

Friant Ranch Lawsuit: We can celebrate the Appellate Court decision stating that the air quality portion of their EIR was insufficient. However, our opponents' petition to the CA Supreme Court was accepted and so the battle continues. We applaud the good work of our legal team.

**2015 will feature our participation in the State League Higher Education Study and possibly some involvement in the proposed National League study and review of specific structures of American democracy. Another busy year!**

*Nyla*

## Member News

Please note changes in your roster

**We deeply regret to note the death of Elizabeth Wood Richardson on November 27. Beth was 87 and a member since 1997. She was the wife of member Lowell Barnett.**

**Beth was a retired mental health social worker for Fresno County. She was also a member of the Fresno Audubon Society, the Central Valley Regional Center, and the Mental Health Association of Fresno.**



This month we thank the following for their generous donations:

**Francine and Murray Farber  
Lynn Rodriguez**

We are now a 501 (c) (3) so all dues and donations are tax deductible and also much appreciated. Make checks out to LWVF and send to

**Treasurer, LWVF  
1345 Bulldog Lane  
Fresno, CA 93710**

**THE JANUARY VOTER WILL BE DISTRIBUTED ELECTRONICALLY ONLY. WE WILL RETURN TO OUR USUAL MAIL DISTRIBUTION FOR FEBRUARY.**

**PAST ISSUES MAY BE READ ON OUR WEBSITE AT ANY TIME.**

**The VOTER is a monthly publication of the League of Women Voters of Fresno**

**Mailing Address: 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710**

**Volume 74, No. 1 Editor: Francine Farber**

# Health Care Reform

by Richard Bertken, M.D.

Hidden beneath the big news articles about the ACA's successes and problems lurks a small story that uniquely exposes the ambivalence of our country's social consciousness. It now seems an established principle that unauthorized immigrants will not be granted access to federal health care benefits. The principle was enshrined in the ACA itself as a political necessity for passage in Congress. Most states and counties do not offer health insurance to unauthorized immigrants beyond those required by the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act of 1986.

## Services for the unauthorized

Services for Fresno County itself provides evidence that this restriction of our social safety net is *not* uniformly applied or accepted. Our county has continuously provided full medical care services to unauthorized immigrants for at least 50 years. Several other counties and states have done the same thing.

The Social Security Act of 1938 included among its beneficiaries those "permanently residing under color of law (PRUCOL)." This quaint phrase emerged because of the vast numbers of undocumented immigrants in the depression era who were not facing deportation. They were *de facto* permanent residents scratching out a living like everyone else. For several decades, including

those after the passage of Medicare and Medicaid, PRUCOL immigrants were eligible for these safety net benefits. Not all jurisdictions encouraged their participation, and many PRUCOL immigrants were wary of signing the necessary documents lest their information would lead to deportation.

A series of court cases and federal legislation batted around the rights of PRUCOL immigrants from the 70's right up to now.

## Summary of court cases

**1979:** the US District Court (New York) finds that a PRUCOL mother of six is entitled to AFDC benefits and establishes the "PRUCOL doctrine." if you are living in America with the knowledge and acquiescence of US Citizenship and Immigration Service (then the INS), you are entitled to apply for social safety net services.

**1996:** the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) passes Congress during a period of budget balancing fervor, defining "qualified aliens" (for social benefit programs) so narrowly that PRUCOL immigrants were excluded.

**1997:** again the US District Court (New York) intervenes in favor of PRUCOL aliens, this time ruling that New York State's efforts to



deny Medicaid benefits to twelve applicants (on the basis of PRWORA) violated New York's constitution—a remarkable defense against federal intrusion into states' rights to administer aid programs.

**2010, 2014:** the ACA excludes all undocumented immigrants. Then President Obama effectively makes most undocumented immigrants PRUCOL by halting most deportations.

## Medically indigent population

The impact of this history is being seen now in Fresno County. Unauthorized immigrants who would have required medical treatment by the now defunct Medically Indigent Services Program are being signed up for MediCal under PRUCOL. This has been facilitated not by Obama's executive order, but by the California Department of Health Care's determination (2009) that the PRUCOL claims of immigrants do not require verification for the purposes of registering with MediCal. The result is a win-win for Fresno County and our medically indigent population. It is odd that it wasn't figured out sooner.



Fresno Area Express (FAX) is about to launch bus rapid transit service in a big dogleg through the city of Fresno. Clovis Transit (CT) is on the brink of building a combination senior-transit-instruction center near Clovis's lively downtown. Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) has launched a new Sanger-Reedley route to help connect unemployed residents to Reedley College's extensive trade-school offerings.

An audience of more than thirty at a Lunch & Learn on December 3 learned how the three agencies are busy upending the status quo to make transit more available, usable and attractive.

Moses Stites, general manager of FCRTA, explained that his agency oversees transit systems in thirteen county cities. FCRTA also operates four intercity routes that bring travelers into Fresno from as far away as Coalinga and Firebaugh; the intercity lines serve many tiny unincorporated communities along the way. Who rides the long-distance buses? Parolees reporting to their officers, patients reporting to methadone clinics, residents traveling to medical offices, courts, and shopping centers, people visiting relatives.

### **Clovis to coordinate individual trips with FAX**

Shauna Halderman, CT manager, explained that Clovis operates two standard bus routes, two school bus routes, and a dial-a-ride service for disabled residents. The bus service is called Stageline; the dial-a-ride is known as Roundup. In addition, CT contracts with Fresno to operate bus service along Shaw Avenue that extends through Clovis. Round-Up serves Clovis residents but can take them well outside the city's sphere of influence; forty percent of the trips are made into Fresno. Among other initiatives, CT has begun using new software to track useful data; is working with FAX on a shared farebox system that will allow the same kind of pass to be used on both FAX and CT; and is coordinating individual trip planning with FAX as well.

Brian Marshall, the new general manager of FAX, shared his enthusiasm for the bus rapid transit (BRT) line that will be installed in Fresno in 2015. In its most advanced form, BRT operates like light rail: passengers buy their tickets before boarding from platforms; the buses come frequently and have priority at intersections. Fresno's initial BRT will operate at a simpler level, but will still offer

frequent, fast service north-south on Blackstone Avenue, and east-west on Ventura Avenue; the two segments will meet in Downtown Fresno near the prospective high-speed-rail station.

Marshall has been spending his first months evaluating FAX: riding the routes, talking with the drivers, observing the passengers, planning changes. He noted that some routes are standing room only and need more buses to handle the demand.

### **Spending Measure C money**

- ◆ FCRTA allows seniors and disabled travelers to ride free of charge, hires local police to ensure safety aboard the buses, and purchases and maintains all-natural gas buses.
- ◆ CT provides free travel to seniors and disabled residents, meets its "farebox match" (a required minimal farebox income), and expands service.
- ◆ FAX gets people to work, arranges for safety aboard vehicles, leverages additional funding, and maintains its buses.

At annual public meetings called by the Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG) to assess unmet transit needs, the public can question and influence the practices of the three agencies. The FCRTA has a board that riders can contact. Concerned riders can contact the management of each agency.

Asked about riders with mental health problems, FCRTA and CT replied that their drivers receive extensive instruction about how to work with such riders. The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council is a resource for those concerned about travel for the mentally fragile.

***The Student Unit conducted a toy drive to supplement the toys given at the LWV holiday party. The combined gifts were delivered to Children's Hospital Central California. Over 70 items were donated! The Student Unit also participated in Take Back the Night on Fresno State's campus.***



# Education News

by Kay Bertken



The newly elected and re-elected Fresno Unified Board members were sworn in this month—Cal Johnson and Valerie Davis resumed their positions on the Board. Chris DeLa Cerda was elected to fill the seat that he had been occupying as an appointee since the resignation of Tony Vang, and Brook Ashjian took Michelle Asadorian's seat. The Board elected Cal Johnson to serve as Board President and Chris DeLa Cerda as Board Clerk.

In their new seats at the dais, the Board members heard that the District had just passed its recent audit and was in a good financial position. The audit report prompted a discussion of the future uncertainty associated with the massive state unfunded liability of teacher pensions. The governor has proposed significant increases in district level contributions to the pension funds—a prospect that would seriously impact Fresno's and other district's financial positions.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING: January 7**  
*Watch live on Comcast Ch 98 or streaming*



Another budget concern is raised by the state-level proposal that district's cap their reserve funds at a level below Fresno Unified's reserve policy—a policy thboard adopted to keep the District's finances stable in the face of unstable state budgets. And that had helped them successfully weather massive State cuts in education funding. Administration assured the board members that any move by the State to enforce lower reserve levels is unlikely for several years, time for the district to adapt to any requirements and avoid confiscation of funds.

A number of representatives from Barrios Unidos encouraged the Board to adopt comprehensive sex education in Fresno Unified. The group sends trainers into the schools to provide sex education, but have met with varied reception from school administrations. They pointed out the high rate of teen pregnancies in Fresno and the relative ignorance of many of their client students. One of the speakers spoke directly to Trustee Ashjian who had said in his campaign that he did not support sex education in the schools, saying it was a family responsibility. The speakers proposed that many of the parents they worked with felt ill equipped to educate their children and supported sex education in the schools.

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## **BE PROUD ! LEAGUE PLAYS INFLUENTIAL ROLE IN CITY'S GENERAL PLAN PROCESS**

If you haven't been hiding under the proverbial rock, you know by now that the Fresno City Council approved the massive General Plan update on December 18. It will serve the residents of Fresno until 2035. The gory details, name-calling, shifty strategies and other political exigencies employed by proponents and opponents of the plan have all been recorded in the Fresno Bee. But did you know the extensive role that League members played in this long-term extravaganza?

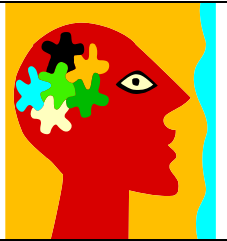
Letters to the Council about various aspects of the plan were written by Nyla Zender, Mary Savala and Stephanie Frederick. They and Diane and Bob Merrill also spoke to the Council publicly on several occasions about the timing and merits of the plan. Mary Savala had an influential op-ed piece in the Bee prior to the Council's General Plan workshop, and Patience Milrod had a slam-dunk "tell it like it is" article immediately after the Council's workshop in which she berated Council president Brandau for some of his inappropriate remarks. Apparently he took her words to heart because he quoted from her article the next day and apologized for his gaffes.

Francine Farber was co-chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee for the General Plan for several years as it came to fruition. Of course, member Keith Bergthold, who at that time was the city's Assistant Planning Director, was the knowledgeable and passionate guiding light for both the committee and staff throughout the process.

- F. Farber

# Mental Health

by Francine Farber



Representatives from Corizon Health spoke at the December Mental Health board meeting about the contracted services they have been providing since June to the Fresno County Jail and the Juvenile Justice Campus. They described a full range of medical and psychiatric services, with mental health support being available 24/7. They said that mental health patients were their top priority, while making sure these patients received appropriate medication was another priority. When a convicted individual with a psychiatric history of medication arrives at the jail they make sure that individual is seen by a psychiatrist within seven days.

They described collaborative work with many other agencies and services including screening, psychiatric evaluation, counseling, consultation re housing, and general medical services. Corizon is developing a program called Foundations for Character which involves group mental health sessions. In addition they are initiating a suicide prevention program at both the jail

and the Juvenile Justice Campus and also providing staff training.

It sounds like the transition between county-provided services and the outside contractor has been successful, but of course we only know what we have been told at this point. It may very well be as good as they describe. Corizon is the largest provider of correctional health services in the United States but if you Google them you can find complaints aplenty. That may be par for the course, however.

The Board also learned that this week the Board of Supervisors approved the consolidation of the Mental Health Board and the Alcohol and Tobacco Board into one Behavioral Health Board. This will require consolidating visions, missions, and by-laws. An ad hoc committee was appointed to explore these issues. Another ad hoc committee was appointed to review results of a community survey about the activities of the Mental Health Board. In addition, new officers were elected for the coming year, including Joanne Cox, Chair, Suzanne Kotkin-Jaszi, Vice Chair, and Francine Farber, Secretary. It is possible that with the consolidation of the two boards as described above, another election will be necessary in the near future.

# Voter Services

by Liz Shields

According to the San Francisco Chronicle we should be prepared for an avalanche of initiatives in 2016. The number of signatures required to qualify a voter initiative depends on the total votes cast for governor in the previous election. This year's gubernatorial election had a very low voter turnout (7.3 million versus 10.1 million in 2010) with the result that only about 360,000 signa-

tures instead of the current 504,760 will be required for initiatives, and 586,000 instead of 807,615 signatures will be required for constitutional amendments. This will be a significant savings for groups wishing to place an initiative on the 2016 ballot. In addition, turnout in 2016 is expected to include many younger voters and independent



voters who are more likely to support social change such as legalization of recreational use of marijuana.

# SPECIAL EDITION

This is a special edition of **The VOTER**.

It is all-electronic (e-mail) and includes a 5-page insert on pages 8 through 12 . The insert is a summary of LWVC positions and their recent use on issues related to :

- ◆ **Government**
- ◆ **Natural Resources**
- ◆ **Social Policy**

We hope you will take the opportunity to review the insert in preparation for our Program Planning meeting on January 31.

*Whether you have the time to study it deeply, or use it as a quick guide, you may want to print it and bring it to the meeting.*

**Note:** Although you may believe that some positions require a fresh look, just because they have been in place for a long time does not indicate that they necessarily need to be replaced or updated.

**\*\*\*We value your opinions and ideas:  
please bring them with you to our meeting on January 31.\*\*\***

## GOVERNMENT

### **CAMPAIGN FINANCING** adopted in 1973, updated in 1976

**Position in brief:** Support state campaign finance practices for candidates and advocates of ballot measure positions that will ensure full disclosure of campaign contributions and expenditures and enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office.

**Recent uses:**

- Opposed Proposition 32 in November 2012
- Successfully supported SB 27 to require disclosure of the source of campaign funds in 2014
- Supported the California Disclose Act
- Local Leagues use to support campaign finance ordinances at local level

### **CONSTITUTION** adopted in 1957, updated in 1965-67

**Position in brief:** Support measures to secure an orderly and simplified state constitution; provisions that enable the legislature to deal with state problems efficiently, flexibly and with responsibility clearly fixed, and constitutional guarantee of equal representation of all citizens in the state.

**Recent uses:**

- Frequently cited in opposition to putting details into constitution (tax rates, tax sources, exemptions, earmarks)

### **ELECTION SYSTEMS** adopted in 2001, amended in 2003 and 2011

**Position in brief:** Support election systems for executive offices and other single-seat offices, both at the state and local levels, that require the winner to receive a majority of the votes, as long as the majority is achieved using a voting method such as Instant Runoff Voting, rather than a second, separate runoff election.

**Recent uses:**

- Used by Leagues to support Instant Runoff Voting (IRV), including speeding up implementation
- Not able to take a position on Prop 14 (“Top Two Primary”) in June 2010 because no position on primary election and role of political parties

### **INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM PROCESS** adopted in 1984, updated in 1999 and 2013

**Position in brief:** Support citizens’ right of direct legislation through the initiative and referendum process.

**Recent uses:**

- Cosponsored SB 1253, providing some of the advantages of the indirect initiative, in 2013-2014
- Supported bills to increase filing fee paid by initiative proponents, increase disclosure during petition circulation period, require official check of wording printed on petitions, and establish an indirect initiative

### **INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS** adopted in 1981

**Position in brief:** Support an efficient, effective and equitable balance of responsibility and authority among the levels of government with accountability to the public.

**Recent uses:**

- Frequently cited in support of open government decision making, with opportunities for public participation

### **PUBLIC LIBRARIES** adopted in 1998

**Position in brief:** Support a public library system as a basic community service with a long-term, assured, stable and adequate funding source. Support access by all persons to public library services as a major source of knowledge and information necessary for informed, active participation in a democratic society.

**Recent uses:**

- Supported a bill which would have provided a needs assessment of libraries in California but was vetoed



- Local Leagues have used position to support existing and new library facilities and services

### **REDISTRICTING adopted in 1988; amended in 2007**

**Position in brief:** Support a state redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation in the state legislature and in the House of Representatives with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny. Support an independent commission as the preferred redistricting body.

#### **Recent uses:**

- Supported Yes on Proposition 40, the November 2012 referendum that affirmed the Senate district maps drawn by the Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC)
- Closely monitored the redistricting process, including testifying about process and voting rights issues
- Supported Prop 11, California Voters FIRST initiative, November 2008, which established the CRC
- Opposed Prop 20 and Prop 27, November 2010

### **STATE AND LOCAL FINANCES adopted in 1969, updated in 1975; new positions in 1976, 1977, 1981, and 1995**

**Position in brief:** Support measures to ensure revenues both sufficient and flexible enough to meet changing needs for state and local government services; that contribute to a system of public finance that emphasizes equity and fair sharing of the tax burden as well as adequacy; that include long range finance methods that meet current and future needs while taking into account the cumulative impact of public debt. Support a process that maintains statutory authority over tax sources, rates and tax expenditures; that makes limited use of direct voting by the public on revenue measures; and that allows adoption of revenue and finance measures by a simple majority vote. Support the distribution of revenue sources between state and local governments in a manner to ensure adequate, equitable and flexible funding of public programs based on the responsibilities and requirements of each and that encourages accountability. Support an equitable, broad-based local property tax, easy and economical to administer, producing adequate revenue, with limitations on the types of services it funds. Support assessment practices and policies that are equitable, accurate, easy to understand and well publicized, with like properties treated uniformly.

#### **Recent uses:**

- A key LWVC position; used very frequently
- November 2014: supported Prop 2 which builds state reserves and pays down debts when revenues are strong
- Supported Proposition 30, November 2012
- November 2010: supported Props 24 and 25, opposed Prop 26

### **VOTING RIGHTS adopted in 1972, reviewed in 1986**

**Position in brief:** Support measures that will protect every citizen's right to vote and that will ensure government's responsibility to protect this right through regulations and procedures that encourage an informed and active electorate.

#### **Recent uses:**

- Supported legislation to allow online voter registration, permit early registration by 16-year-olds, and allow Election Day registration.
- In 2013-2014 supported successful legislation to make voter registration easier, allow vote-by-mail ballots to be counted if postmarked by election day, and improve bilingual services at polling places

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **AGRICULTURE adopted in 1983**

**Position in brief:** Support policies that recognize agricultural land as a limited resource that must be preserved for the economic and physical well-being of California and the nation. Appropriate agricultural land should be identified and its long term protection should be based on regulatory and incentive programs that include comprehensive planning, zoning measures and other preservation techniques. State policy that affects agriculture should ensure the conservation of soil and water resources through incentives coupled with penalties for noncompliance.

#### **Recent uses:**

- Used in conjunction with water and land use positions in taking a broad view of how best to provide stewardship for natural resources in California

- League has opposed proposals to eliminate state funding for the Williamson Act, protecting agricultural and open space land

### **AIR QUALITY adopted in 1971, updated in 1973**

**Position in brief:** Support measures to establish air quality standards that will protect the public health and welfare, and the development of effective enforcement and implementation procedures at each level of government to attain these standards.

**Recent uses:**

- Used in support of efforts to reduce emissions of air pollutants and toxic air contaminants
- Used in conjunction with other positions to support SB 375 to set regional carbon emission reduction targets for transportation sources
- League opposed Prop 23 on November 2010 ballot, which would have suspended AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act

### **ENERGY adopted in 1978, updated in 1980 and 2006; amended in 2007**

**Position in brief:** The League supports development of a state energy policy that will ensure reliability of energy resources and protection of the environment and public health and safety, at reasonable customer rates, giving primary consideration to conservation and energy efficiency. State government should provide an efficient, coordinated energy administrative structure with open transparent procedures.

**Recent uses:**

- Supported AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, including monitoring its implementation
- In June 2010, opposed Prop 16, a measure supported by a major utility company
- On November 2010 ballot, opposed Prop 23, which would have virtually killed AB 32

### **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS adopted in 1986 and 1987**

**Position in brief:** Support comprehensive measures to provide maximum protection to human health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous materials, including pesticides. An integrated approach should be taken to prevent harmful exposures through soil, surface and ground water contamination, bioaccumulation, air pollution and direct contact. Hazardous materials planning should promote pollution prevention. All levels of government share responsibility for preventing exposures.

**Recent uses:**

- Supported SB 4 in 2013 which regulates fracking; continue to give input and monitor its implementation. Successfully supported legislation in 2014 for more extensive disclosure of water use in oil/gas industry.
- Supported cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated sites (“brownfields”)
- In November 2010, opposed Prop 26, which requires two-thirds vote rather than majority to impose regulatory fees on activities that cause harm to environment or the public
- League representatives on several statewide committees

### **LAND USE adopted in 1975**

**Position in brief:** Support state land use planning that recognizes land as a resource as well as a commodity. The state should establish guidelines and standards for land areas of more than local concern. Decisions for these areas should be made at the lowest level of government feasible, but should be subject to state review. Citizens must have a meaningful participation in land use planning and regulation.

**Recent uses:**

- Supports effective planning and growth management; often used by local Leagues to address development proposals
- Used to oppose efforts to weaken the California Environmental Quality Act

### **SOLID WASTE adopted in 1973**

**Position in brief:** Support measures to ensure environmentally sound and efficient solid waste management, to reduce the generation of wastes, to encourage resource recovery, and to increase the demand for secondary materials.

**Recent uses:**

- Lobbying for recycling and regional solutions to waste disposal come under this position.

**TRANSPORTATION adopted in 1981, revised in 1985; new position in 1991**

**Position in brief:** Support a transportation system to move people and goods that includes a variety of transportation modes, with emphasis on increased public transportation services and other viable alternatives to reduce vehicle miles traveled; is efficient, convenient, and cost effective; is safe and secure; services all segments of the population and diverse geographic needs; minimizes harmful effects on the environment; is integrated with land use; and is supported by extensive public education.

**Recent uses:**

- Used to support proposals to improve transportation planning
- Used in conjunction with land use, housing, and state and local finance to support “smart growth” proposals

**WATER adopted in 1959, updated in 1961, 1967, 1971, and 1979**

**Position in brief:** Support measures that promote the management and development of water resources in ways that are beneficial to the environment with emphasis on conservation and high standards of water quality that are appropriate for the intended use.

**Recent uses:**

- Supported AB 685 of 2012, Human Right to Water that established state policy of right to safe, clean, affordable and accessible water
- Supported requiring water meters in areas that have never had them
- Actively planned to oppose water bond that was delayed from 2010 and 2012 to the 2014 ballot; remained neutral on Prop 1 measure that replaced it

**SOCIAL POLICY****CHILD CARE adopted in 1989**

**Position in brief:** Support state and local policies, legislation and programs that meet the need for accessible, affordable, and quality child care.

**Recent uses:**

- LWVC has active committee (Working Party for Children) that closely follows child care issues and protection of services for children and families

**COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM adopted in 2003**

**Position in brief:** Support a statewide community college system with sufficient resources to fulfill its overall goal: to offer all Californians access to a quality higher education. Resources should be stable, accommodate all enrolling students, be fairly distributed among the college districts, and provide opportunities for long-range planning. Governance should allow greater authority within the system itself with local districts making key decisions about mission priorities to meet community needs.

**Recent uses:**

- Supported legislation to establish early commitment to college and improved mechanism of transfer from the community colleges to the CSU system

**EDUCATION: PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 12 adopted in 1973, updated in 1985 and 2005**

**Position in brief:** Support a comprehensive pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade public education system that meets the needs of each individual student; challenges all students to reach their highest potential; develops patterns of lifelong learning and responsible citizenship. Support improvements in public education, based on access with both equitable and sufficient opportunities to learn for all students. Support a system of public education funding that is adequate, flexible, equitable, reliable and sustainable; derived from a combination of revenue sources; and distributed fairly to support access and equitable opportunities for all students. Support formulating broad general guidelines at the state level, with flexibility at the local level for developing and implementing program.

**Recent uses:**

- advocated legislatively for an improved statewide student data system
- advocated for including the ability to track and generate reports on chronic absences (not just truancies)
- In 2013-2014 supported Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) template advocating accountability and transparency in reporting.
- cofounded and continue to have representative on the board of EdSource

**HOUSING adopted in 1970, updated in 1973 and 1993**

**Position in brief:** Support of equal opportunity in housing. Support of measures to provide state programs to increase the supply of safe, decent, and adequate housing for all Californians. Support for action at all levels of government for the provision of affordable housing for all Californians.

**Recent uses:**

- Supported bills to create a permanent source of funding for affordable housing in 2011-12 and 2013-14
- LWVC and local Leagues have used this position to advocate for affordable housing and support bond measures to fund housing programs
- Used along with transportation and land use positions to support sustainable development

**JUVENILE JUSTICE/DEPENDENCY adopted in 1997 and 1999, amended in 2011**

**Position in brief:** Support a juvenile justice/dependency system that works to prevent child abuse and neglect and juvenile delinquency, that serves foster children and their families and status offenders, and that rehabilitates juvenile offenders, by promoting the safety and well-being of children and helping to prepare them for productive participation in society. Support early identification of at-risk children and families followed by appropriate referrals to services that work with children, youth, families and schools. Support community efforts to provide safe supportive environments for children and their families and institutions that respect them and promote non-violent solutions to problems. Support the rights and best interests of the child in preference to those of any other individual.

**Recent uses:**

- Supported bill to allow prisoners sentenced to life without possibility of parole as juveniles to apply for resentencing
- Supported bills related to services for foster children and their guardians
- Continue to monitor legislation on prevention, early intervention, community-based programs, and a juvenile justice system that balances rehabilitation, accountability, and protection of the community

**LEGAL AID adopted in 1971, revised in 1983**

**Position in brief:** Support measures that will enable the judicial system of the state to provide for all citizens adequate access to legal services.

**Recent uses:**

- While we have not used this position for action recently, as fewer legal services are offered in California, we will continue to monitor with this position in mind.

**MENTAL HEALTH CARE adopted in 1998**

**Position in brief:** Support for an adequately funded mental health care system that provides comprehensive services to the acutely, chronically and seriously mentally ill of all ages; maintains optimal mental health services for all clients places emphasis on meeting the needs of children; offers mental health services for the homeless; seeks additional funds for preventive services; implements a master plan to integrate services; raises awareness of critical unmet needs; and emphasizes case management.

**Recent uses:**

- Supported legislation requiring coverage of mental illnesses on the same level as other illnesses
- Promoted comprehensive programs for mentally ill persons who are homeless, recently incarcerated, or at risk for either of these conditions
- Supported legislation to establish a grant program for counties to develop mental health plans for children

We are grateful to our sponsors for their support in "Making Democracy Work."  
 League members who wish to be sponsors or to secure sponsorship for us, may contact Francine Farber at 226-5455

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