



VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Educating and Advocating for Democracy

LEAGUE SUPPORTS COUNTING OF OUT-OF-PRECINCT PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

Mary Klenz, Co-Chair

IN A LETTER DATED 1-25-05 FROM LWVUS President Kay Maxwell to Gracie Hillman, Chair of the Election Assistance Commission on Election Reform, Maxwell addressed provisional ballots as the first of five concerns of the LWV. The day before she had attended a meeting with members of the EAC and other civil and voting rights organizations and summarized the concerns of the LWV in her letter.

“Provisional balloting. The League supports: 1) uniform standards for issuing, processing and counting provisional ballots, clearly stated and uniformly applied; and 2) the counting of all provisional ballots for all races for which each voter is

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SAY YES TO FAIRNESS, INDEPENDENCE AND EQUAL JUSTICE

Peg Chapin, Co-Chair

BY SAYING YES, YOU WILL:

- Designate \$3 of the taxes you have already paid to support a fair and equal justice system.
- Get a nonpartisan voter guide that helps you cast an informed vote.
- Give all candidates, regardless of their personal wealth, a chance to run an effective campaign.
- Help keep special-interest money out of our court system.

Find this box on your 2004 NC Income Tax Form:

NC PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FUND	
This Fund pays for a nonpartisan voter guide and helps fund judicial candidates who accept strict fundraising and spending limits. Do you agree that \$3 should go to this Fund? <u>Filling in a circle below will not increase your tax or reduce your refund.</u>	
<u>You</u>	<u>Your Spouse</u>
Yes 0	Yes 0
No 0	No 0

And if you file electronically, similar information appears on your NC Income Tax software.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2005 STATE CONVENTION

On Saturday and Sunday, May 21 and 22, 2005, Sheraton Raleigh Capital Center, Raleigh, NC. Voting delegates will be selected by each local board and ALL LWV members welcome. Registration \$75. Details will be sent to all Presidents soon. For more information and registration details you may also contact Mary Klenz, 704-542-9858; email at klenzm@bellsouth.net.

Chief Justice I. Beverly Lake, Jr. will be the keynote speaker.

NC LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Say Yes To Fairness, Independence and Equal Justice

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PUBLIC FUNDING FOR CANDIDATES

- Number of Appellate Court candidates who successfully qualified for the public financing program: 12 of 16
- Number of candidates who sought to qualify but did not meet minimum thresholds: 2
- Number of winning candidates who received public funds: 4 of 5
- Amount of public funds provided to 12 qualified candidates: \$1,497,725
- Just over \$1, 000,000 was collected from 7% of taxpayers.
- Donations of \$50.00 from attorney's privilege license \$75,000 over 2 years.
- Funds allocated from 2004 General Assembly: \$725,000 restricted for "rescue funds" only.
(Rescue funds were not needed in the 2004 election)

VOTER GUIDE FOR 2004

- Total cost of printing and mailing million Judicial Voter Guides \$497,800
- Judicial Voter Guides were delivered to each residential address in North Carolina.
- Sources of funds to cover Voter Guide expenses:
 - \$200,000 from the NC Public Campaign Fund
 - \$100,000 from Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation
 - \$148,000 from HAVA Funds for information on voting rights and procedures
 - \$25,000 from Capital Broadcasting Raleigh c/join Goodman
 - \$5,000 from NC Bar Association

(The above Information provided by the North Carolina State Board of Elections and Democracy North Carolina.)

DIANA PHILLIPS - CORRECTION TO FALL VOTER

Diana Phillips served from July, 2003 to July, 2004 as an appointed State Board member under Section 1, Article V of the Bylaws, which allows for an appointed term of one year. She finished her term and did not resign, as was stated in the last Voter. Diana is continuing to work for the Endowment. The Voter regrets the misstatement.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2004—2005

OFFICERS

Co-President	Peg Chapin
Co-President	Mary Klenz
Secretary & Endowment Chair	Lee Mahan Evans
Treasurer	Betty Ellerbee

DIRECTORS

Maxine Evans	
Carole Ellis	
Beverly Hanly	Voter Editor
Nelda Holder	Environment
June Kimmel	
Doris Naumann	
Jonah Person	Election Reform
Fran Syptak	Judicial Issues
Dianne Wilkins	Special Projects

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR:

Bev Kawalec

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ELECTRONIC OR PAPER?

Your Board has formed a committee to review the NC Voter's purpose, content and distribution. Among the distribution options is electronic (email) distribution of the Voter. If you would be willing to receive the Voter by email rather than get a paper copy, please advise Betty Ellerbee at ellerbetty@aol.com.

IMPORTANT DATES:

February 14, 1920 - The LWV is founded. This year, the League celebrated its 85th anniversary.

March - Women's History Month

May 21, 22, 2005 - NC LWV State Convention.

NC LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS



TAX REFORM IN THIS SESSION?

Mary Klenz, Co-Chair

The League of Women Voters believes that modernization of the NC tax code is an issue which needs to be addressed by the General Assembly during this session. In a letter dated January 10 to Governor Easley and the NC Representatives and Senators, Mary Klenz, Co-Chair of the League, outlined her concerns and listed factors to be considered as shown in the following.

The League urges lawmakers to postpone scheduled tax cuts such as the repeal of the estate tax and the rollback of the 8.5% income tax rate. These along with other changes can then be evaluated to determine the long term impact on the financial well being of the state given the recent projections.

Some factors to be considered when updating tax policy should include:

- An evaluation of revenue sources. The tax burden should be in proportion to the ability to pay.
- An expansion of the tax base to provide adequate revenues. Services, such as landscaping, hair styling and internet purchases and phone services are a growing segment of North Carolina's economy and are largely untaxed. That unfairly keeps the burden of raising adequate revenues to run the state's business on necessities like clothing, shoes and school supplies.
- A review of loopholes. Tax preferences in the form of exemptions and credits need ongoing evaluation to insure desirable goals are met.
- An analysis of the federal tax code for its impact on state revenues. In light of continuing pressure to reduce the federal income tax it is realistic to expect that NC tax revenues will decline if the state tax code is coupled with federal taxes. State revenues will decrease at the exact time the need to invest in important programs like education and job training increases.

The League's position for an equitable and efficient tax system is based on a study and consensus of its statewide membership. The League organized a statewide grassroots campaign to repeal the state food tax during the 1990's and will continue to support efforts to modernize our tax code based on fairness and efficiency.

Contact your state legislators to let them know that you support the points made in Mary Klenz's letter to them.

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From the LWV Position on civil liberties:

“There are fundamental principles that guard our liberty - from independent judicial review of law enforcement actions to prohibitions on indiscriminate searches - that must be preserved. Basic civil liberties must be protected as the nation seeks to guard against terrorism and other threats to national security.”

And from a study recently released by the Knight Foundation reporting: “indifference and/or lack of understanding of the First Amendment of the US Constitution of today’s students.”

Almost half of the students surveyed said that they believed the government had a right to censor the internet. When the First Amendment was read to them one third felt it went too far in granting free speech. Fifty percent thought the government should have the right to approve news stories. Read the full report at www.knightfdn.org

League Supports Counting Of Out-Of-Precinct Provisional Ballots *Continued from page 1*

eligible (Including those cast from provisional ballots, clearly stated and uniformly applied; and 2) the counting of all provisional ballots for all races for which each voter is eligible (Including those cast from outside the voter’s “home” precinct)”

The recent NC Supreme Court decision to disallow 11,310 provisional ballots cast by voters in the wrong precincts (but within the correct county) on Nov. 2 is both disappointing and troublesome to the LWVNC and other civic groups. A *Brief of Amici Curiae in Support of Defendants* was filed with the Court stating that North Carolina’s provisional ballot law is constitutional and that the intent of the rules governing the administration of provisional ballots on Election Day demonstrates the intent to create a way for voters who are in the wrong precinct but who are registered to vote in the county to vote.

The brief states that the LWV along with Democracy NC, North Carolina Fair Share, Southeastern Church Action for Safe and Just Communities and Winston-Salem Voting Rights Coalitions (all nonpartisan organizations with the common purpose of expanding democracy by participation in the political process) gave their support to upholding the NC law on provisional balloting so ballots are counted to the fullest extent possible.

The Supreme Court did not support that idea and voted 5-0 to not count the provisional ballots

This is an unfortunate turn of events for the voters and elections in North Carolina. The State Board of Elections ruled in favor of counting the out-of-precinct provisional ballots to comply with provisions in the Help America Vote Act that concern the counting of provisional ballots. NC House Speaker Jim Black (as reported in *The Charlotte Observer*; 2-6-05) stated that he believes the Courts misread the intent of the legislature when the NC law was passed in the 2003 session. As President Maxwell clearly stated in her letter to the EAC the League supports the counting of out-of-precinct provisional ballots in all possible cases. The LWVNC thinks that the counting of the 11,000+ ballots is one of those cases.

The League hopes that this question and issues related to it can somehow be revisited and that legislators figure out a way to do the right thing. In most cases voting in North Carolina went smoothly and glitches and missteps that occurred were corrected in a timely fashion. It is our hope that voters will not be further discouraged from voting in the future and that legislators will take the steps necessary to see that all votes are counted.

EDITOR’S NOTE: *As the Voter goes to the printer, this question is unresolved. Contact your state legislators to acquaint them with the League’s position and urge them to take action.*

NC LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

STATE NEWS

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS-AT-LARGE (MAL) UNIT IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY

A GROUP OF DYNAMIC WOMEN got together in Fayetteville after they were perturbed by the lack of good information in the last elections. They decided they wanted to do something about that and, at the urging of the local newspaper, they formed a League of Women Voters. Not letting any grass grow under their feet they held a town meeting to introduce (or I should say reintroduce) the LWV to the community and signed up 50 members on the spot.

At its meeting on February 19th, the state board recognized Cumberland County LWV as a MAL Unit and paperwork for official recognition as a full fledged LWV will be submitted to the national board for approval at its April meeting. We are pleased to have them as part of the LWV in North Carolina. Congratulations to Carin Savel, Pres., Esperanza Martin, VP, Meredith Stiehl, Sec., Patti Carlin Moore, Treasurer, and Lauren Cook Wike, Voter Service Chair. Welcome to all!

JUDICIAL CIVICS 101

THERE IS GRANT MONEY AVAILABLE to any North Carolina League that wishes to sponsor a Judicial Program similar to the Civics 101 program which took place in New Hanover County last year. Carole Ellis has a packet with step by step instructions as to how to do this. If you would like a packet, please email her at Cellis3@bellsouth.net.

LOBBY CORPS FOR NC LEGISLATURE

THE LWVNC IS FORMING A VOLUNTEER LOBBY CORPS and interested members are encouraged to join. Members will be briefed on the issues, observe committee meetings, talk to legislators about important issues like campaign, election and tax reform. For information contact Mary Klenz, klenzm@bellsouth.net; 704-542-9858.

FUND RAISING REPORT

AN ENTHUSIASTIC THANK YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSE TO OUR Annual Fund appeal - really, a tribute to all the remarkable things that have been and will be accomplished by the Leagues on a local and state level. We have had a great year programmatically, getting out the VOTE and disseminating important information to educate voters. Our fund raising total exceeded \$4,000. Gifts were designated by responders among three funds. The Endowment Fund was clearly the winner. Your generosity was heart warming!

Operating money always continues to be an ongoing need that we will address throughout the year. Know that you are welcome to add your name to the 651 who have already made financial contributions! The Voter tells of new initiatives and opportunities to strengthen our effectiveness on all levels. We look forward to our cooperative efforts! Names of contributors will be listed in the spring issue of the Voter with a detailed report of Endowment activities. Gratefully, Lee Mahan Evans, Fund Raising Chair.

NEWS FROM NATIONAL

For those of our members who don't access the League E-Voice Newsletter, here's some information from the February Newsletter:

On February 14, the LWVUS launched the *Democracy Agenda*, an advocacy and public education effort to strengthen and renew the basic tenets of American democracy.

On February 23, LWVUS President Kay J. Maxwell testified at the U.S. Election Assistance Commission hearing about the use of provisional voting in the 2004 election cycle, held in Columbus, Ohio.

The League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) launched "*Local Voices: Citizen Conversations on Civil Liberties and Secure Communities*," an eight-month project to foster public dialogue about the balance between civil liberties and homeland security.

President Kay J. Maxwell sent a letter opposing the privatization of Social Security to the U.S. Congress this month. The LWVUS Lobby Corps also is carrying that message to the Hill, beginning the dialogue with Senators on this important issue.

NC LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

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www.lwvnc.org



The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation of citizens in their government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Membership is open to all women and men who are age 18 years or older and are U.S citizens. Check out the membership information at www.lwvnc.org or email lwvnc@mindspring.com; call 800 851 VOTE or 919 783 5995.

Activities are funded through membership fees and donations. If you would like to help fund this important work, please send a donation to: LWVNC, 3801 Barrett Dr., Suite 104, Raleigh, NC 27609-7224. Checks should be made out to LWVNC. Donations to our Education Fund are tax exempt and checks for the Fund should be made out to LWVNC CEF.