

*HAPPY HOLIDAYS*



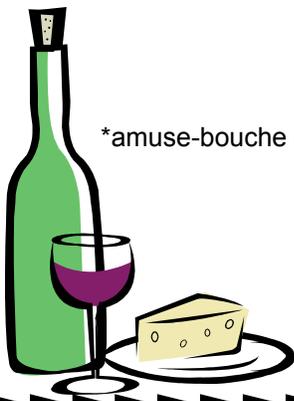
**WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY AND PROGRAM PLANNING**

At Marilyn Singer's home  
1123 Washoe Drive  
6:30 PM  
December 19

Please bring your favorite amuse bouche\*  
of the robust sort.

Be ready to voice your ideas about Program Planning.  
Program planning is our time to tell LWVUS what we think are the most important issues before us in the next year. So come, listen, advocate and VOTE for the programs you think we need to update, re-study, throw out, change, re-emphasize, or ignore.

\*amuse-bouche (uh-MYUZ-boosh) noun: Similar to but not to be confused with hors d'oeuvre.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our League recently sent this letter to the League of Women Voters of the Bay Area.

Dear Fellow Leaguers.

The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark and Union City requests that LWVBA remain neutral on the issue concerning SFPUC and regional water system improvement program revisions. We ask this for several reasons. First, it is very unleague-like to take a position on this very important issue without having each League representative consult with their board. The proposed revisions have not been thoroughly studied by the Leagues nor been universally agreed to by Bay Area Leagues.

Secondly, the SFPUC is supposed to take under consideration the comments of the BAWSCA (Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency). BAWSCA had their consultants follow the study conducted by Parsons Water and Infrastructure. BAWSCA's consultants had concerns about the PEIR (Program Environmental Impact Report.) Those concerns include:

- ▶ The SFPUC staff has insufficient resources, and lengthy required procedures that could prevent delivery of this large and aggressive program.
- ▶ BAWSCA's consultant estimates that the WSIP will cost between \$4.3 and \$5.2 billion. Not \$4.3 billion as SFPUC estimates.
- ▶ Since the San Francisco Planning Department, not the SFPUC has "ownership" of the effort, the PEIR is a huge source of risk.
- ▶ There is no provision in the schedule and the budget for almost-certain legal challenges during the environmental-review process.
- ▶ The SFPUC's own consultant said his report "does not include the depth of analysis necessary to perform a thorough validation" of the WSIP.

Thirdly, those of us who depend on the Hetch Hetchy for our water supply are most concerned that the seismic construction be completed first, before the SFPUC discusses environmental issues and the acquisition of watershed lands. We are most concerned that if we are paying 2/3 of the costs, we be given equal say in the governance of the water supply.

Sincerely,  
Miriam Keller  
President  
League of Women Voters  
Fremont, Newark, Union City

Please read the Papan report summary and subsequent actions (p. 4) to see what has taken place prior to the sending of this letter.

**BOARD BRIEFS**

At the Nov. 14 Board meeting, the Board

- decided to join the Alameda County Council project celebrating Sunshine Week, March 12-18, 2006. We will hold a separate forum in the Tri-Cities spotlighting the Brown Act.
- the news programs and ads on TV pre-election were so bad that we will begin a project to "grade the news" and complain to our area TV stations.
- heard our membership chair's report on a contest "Who can bring in the most new members."
- agreed that we will add a page to our Web site to publicize "Not in Fremont."
- set the date of the next Board meeting (12/12) - a potluck at Marilyn Singer's. All Leaguers are welcome. Also, Program Planning will be at Marilyn's. Bring an appetizer. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.
- Heard that we still need a meeter/greeter, a secretary, a State Action Chair and a National Action Chair.

**VOTER SERVICE**

With the November 8<sup>th</sup> special elections tucked away now, Voter Services would like to thank all members who responded to our calls for volunteers for our pre-election activities. Without your help we cannot provide the accelerated voter services we do at election time, including candidate forums, voter registrations, Easy Voter and Pro and Con distribution. We also put forward a Pro/Con discussion meeting where our volunteers studied a proposition and presented their analysis to the members at the October unit meeting. A special thanks to these volunteers who waded through the various propositions and we hope that the opportunity to fine tune their oratorical skills was a small measure of returns for the effort they put in to educate others on the less than simple propositions we had on the November ballot.

In addition, our President Miriam Keller earned much 'speaker mileage' with presentations on the propositions at various organizations. All in all, thanks to you the volunteers, we the LWVFNUC were able to do our bit to educate and inform the electorate.

—Ellen Culver and Letha Saldanha 2

**SAVE THE DATES JAN. 21  
AND 23****LWVC Energy Study Update - Scope  
of Issues to be Covered**

The League of Women Voters of California is in the process of updating its position on Energy.

The process will involve reviewing the current position to see where it fails to address changes in the California energy structure that have occurred since its adoption. It will also study issues having to do with reliable electricity service, environmental protection, conservation and energy efficiency, use of renewable resources, equitable rate structure, accountability and transparency in governance, environmental justice and responsibility for public participation. The study will consider to what extent the public interest is best served by regulation and in what areas and how innovation and new financial investment can be assured.

To do all this, much background information will be provided to members. This will include the current structure of the decision-making authorities at the state and Federal levels and their roles and jurisdictions, energy resource planning including efficiency and conservation measures, the role of transmission in planning and cost considerations, distributed generation, the need for integrating energy planning with consideration of land use impacts and the impact of market forces on energy supply and consumer rates.

There will be two member consensus meetings on January 21st from 9-2 and January 23rd in the evening. While specifically designed for League members, interested members of the public are invited to attend and engage in the discussions. If you would like to learn more about the study or the process, contact study committee chair Susan Gearhart, 656-7703 or grassland-ladyvm@aol.com. If you are not yet a member and wish to join the League, go to [www.lwvfnc.org](http://www.lwvfnc.org) or call 794-

5783 and leave a message for the membership chair.

**CELEBRATE FREMONT**

Plans are well under way for the 50th celebration of Fremont's incorporation. An independent volunteer organization of nearly 200 community members is working with the City, School District and Chamber of Commerce to plan activities for the entire year. But the signature event will be Celebrate Fremont @ the Park on Sept. 9th and 10th, 2006.

The purpose of the celebration is to unite all members of our community.

All the events will be supported by private donations.

All of Central Park will be used including three stages. The League is represented on the Education Team which is promoting three projects to involve students.

There is a fall art project, a winter writing project, and spring oral histories and interviews. Teacher grants of \$100 have been made available.

There will be sporting exhibitions, fine arts performances, art displays, food booths and much much more. It is expected that tens of thousands will participate, so issues like parking, security, logistics, etc. etc. must all be considered. Many local businesses have been generous in donations, but a fundraising Gala is planned for the evening of Jan. 23rd at Central Park. Anyone interested in getting

involved as a volunteer or going to the Gala can find details at: [www.celebratefremont.org](http://www.celebratefremont.org)

—Kay Emanuele

**MEMBERSHIP****Win a Prize**

Our membership stands at 126 now, but we need new members. So, we are having a contest to see who will bring in the most new members. There will be a prize for that person.

So ask your neighbors, friends, aunts, uncles, and children old enough to vote to join up.

Explain to them that joining the League does not commit new members to lots of work or even a little, and that the League is a wonderful way to learn. Alex Starr and Miriam have offered to mentor new members.

Your membership chairperson has brochures that tell about the League. She will send you as many as you need. Just e-mail [mar-gorie@holymfamilysisters.Org](mailto:mar-gorie@holymfamilysisters.Org).

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The Education Committee continues to monitor developments in education in California. We met for lunch in November and decided we would turn our attention to the pros and cons of early childhood education and to the hows and whys of high school teaching.

New members are always welcome. If you are interested, please call Vesta Wilson at 656-9306 or e-mail [jojovest@aol.com](mailto:jojovest@aol.com)



—Vesta Wilson

**WATER: GOVERNING A VITAL REGIONAL RESOURCE: —THE PAPAN REPORT**

Susan R. Gearhart, LWVFNUC, Environmental Director provides this summary of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee and the UCLA Resolution to the governance issues, written in 1999.

**History:**

In 1913 The United States Congress passed the Raker Act. This law authorized the use of federal lands in the Sierra Nevada and its foothills for a water collection and delivery system designed to supply water to the City and County of San Francisco and the growing nearby metropolitan area. Since 1934 the system has been delivering water to the Bay Area, approximately 2.4 million residents of San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Alameda Counties, as well as thousands of businesses and institutions such as schools and hospitals.

While less than one-third of the residents served by this system live in San Francisco, only they have a voice in the Water System decisions. The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), all of whose members are San Francisco residents appointed by the Mayor of San Francisco, manages the regional system.

Residents and representatives of the three-county service area have neither voice on the SFPUC nor any voice in the financing of necessary repairs to the system. The "outside" customers use about two-thirds of the water delivered by the SFPUC and pay more money to the SFPUC in water rates than do customers residing in San Francisco. This has led to independent audit of the SFPUC. The Joint Legislative Audit Committee (composed of representatives from both the State Senate and Assembly) agreed that an outside examination was warranted and directed the California State Auditor to investigate the SFPUC's ability to manage the capital improvement program.

**Findings: The Auditor's report was issued in February 2000 concluding:**

- SFPUC's slow pace for assessing weaknesses in its Water Delivery System and for completing capital projects increases the risk of service disruptions and water shortages.
- The SFPUC has no centralized automated system to tract its capital and maintenance projects.
- Long term water supply planning has been postponed until recently, although the need for additional sources of water to augment current supplies has been known at least since the drought of 1987.
- The reliability of the system, which crosses three major earthquakes faults, could be cut off to San Francisco and other communities in the SFPUC service area for up to 60 days. SFPUC's delay has jeopardized the safety and reliability of the system.
- The work necessary to restore the regional water system depends on the willingness of San Francisco voters to approve the bond issues to raise the necessary capital. The residents of "outside" communities will play no role in that process even though, if and when the bonds are issued, they will be expected to pay about two-thirds of the cost.
- Without a voice in the governance of the system, residents of neighboring communities will nevertheless be asked to shoulder the largest share of the cost burden.
- To date, the SFPUC has failed to properly manage the system and all ratepayers will suffer as a result.
- The fact that this municipal water department mainly sells water to customers to whom it is not directly accountable politically makes for several governance challenges and opportunities.
- In Oct. 2000, San Francisco supervisors voted against a plan to use surplus electricity sales from the Hetch-Hetchy system to finance the renovation of the water system, thus the benefits of power sales accrue only to San Francisco and not to the system as a whole.

Resolution was carried out under the direction of UCLA faculty entitled "Water Governance in the San Francisco Bay Area: Challenges and Opportunities."

**Solutions:**

The problems that beset the SFPUC's stewardship of the regional water system will not be solved without significant reform in how the system is governed. The study proposes two alternative governance structures:

- A Joint Powers Authority (JPA) comprised of San Francisco and all neighboring communities served by the regional water system. SFPUC could form a JPA, typically governed by a board of representatives of the participating organizations to form a new organization sharing specific elements of the authority.
- One potential advantage would be an improved funding structure for maintenance and expansion
- Another is that participating customers would have greater direct influence over the water system planning and operations in their service areas.
- A Special District governed by an elected board. Most retail water agencies in California are special districts. They tend to have tax and bonding authority and exclusive legal authority for their operations, as the state law authorizing their formation. An advantage for the SFPUC service area is that these elected directors would have direct control over operations, planning, and financing; that is; the authority of the citizens of San Francisco would be extended to citizens throughout the service area.

Note: The SFPUC and the City/County of San Francisco chose not to participate in any fashion, including personal interviews. Therefore, this report lacks any SFPUC advice on the merits of alternative reform strategies.

**Discussion of a consortium of water management agencies:** The Bay Area Water Users Association (BAWUA) is an important wholesale customer, representing 29 cities, water districts and other agencies in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Alameda Counties that buy all or some of their water wholesale from the City/County of San Francisco.

**In Summary:** The following conditions argue in favor of reform:

- System upgrades and repair are currently severely under funded.
- The SFPUC has many undesirable characteristics of an unregulated monopoly, lacking either political or regulatory oversight for its service to the great majority of its customers. These are not merely local issues.
- The State of California has a legitimate interest in ensuring that this major regional water system-distributor to about half of the state's second-largest metropolitan region is dependable, efficient, responsive, and accountable to users.
- Inadequate projection of future water demand.
- The persistent need for alternative sources of water given drought or disaster.
- The auditor was concerned specifically about the lack of a formally adopted plan for projects and their financing.

The need for peak demand capacity is and will continue to be driven by non-San Francisco-based customers who represent the majority of anticipated growth in the service population (presently, the San Francisco Customers pay about \$750,000; the BAWUA cost is \$1.7 million). There is no transparent incentive for the SFPUC to provide better or cheaper service to non-San Francisco based customers. Since these cities, water districts, and their residents have no direct representation in system governance, they cannot directly affect San Francisco electoral politics.

Governance reforms that better support long-term planning and finance are in the interest of all SFPUC customers, and to the state of California. There are enough severe water issues without stakeholders working against each other. All involve risks from the inadequately maintained and planned distribution network for an essential commodity. In addition, wholesale customers are frustrated with their dependence on an unregulated provider over which they have no direct political or economic influence. From their perspective, the system lacks political accountability and is unresponsive to routine, legitimate customer concerns. Each concern appears both reasonable and attributable, at least in part, to the current governance structure.

The above report was written in 1999. In 2002, the State Legislature passed three bills. AB 2058 created the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA) which is a special district representing the 25 agencies such as ACWD (Alameda County Water District) that buy water wholesale from the Hetch Hetchy system. AB 1823 in effect tells the County of San Francisco to "fix the system". AB 1870 created the Regional Financing Authority (RFA). All three laws state the "nothing in this Act changes the governance, control or ownership of the system.

BAWSCA (which represents us in the Tri-Cities) has serious concerns with the improvements that the SFPUC has proposed. But the SFPUC does not need to listen to those concerns. The Hetch Hetchy water users outside of San Francisco will be paying 2/3 of the bill for improvements, but don't get to help say what those improvements will be.

**The League of Women Voters of Los Altos-Mountain View presents:**  
A free public forum introducing the LWVC Energy Update Study

**Facing California's Energy Future:  
Grim or Glorious?**

California's economy depends upon reliable, environmentally sound supplies of electricity, natural gas and transportation fuels. California's way of life is increasingly threatened by its growing dependence on oil and natural gas, spiraling energy prices, potential supply shortages and an inadequate and aging energy infrastructure. —2005 *California Integrated Energy Policy Report*

An Expert panel will address the questions that confront California in the field of energy; panelists will also explain what they believe our priorities should be.

**Saturday, December 3**  
**9:30 AM, Registration 10—noon, Forum**  
**Eagle Theater, Los Altos High School**  
**201 Almond Ave., Los Altos**  
**(Cross street, San Antonio Road)**  
**For more information, call Jane Turnbull, 656-559-1766**



**MEASURE A UPDATE**

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors appointed its Citizen Oversight Committee (COC) which includes LWVACCouncil Health Committee members, Ken Ballard (LWVFNU) and Sal Tedesco LWV member from Castro Valley. Ballard is a retired hospital pharmacist with bond oversight committee experience. Tedesco has city government manager experience. At the Health Committee's last meeting, we agreed to have a series of areas of necessary data input from the County to the COC for it to meet its Measure A mandate that it "shall report to the Board of Supervisors on the conformity of such expenditures to the purposes set forth in Paragraph 2.08.241". Ken wrote a draft memo suggesting data inputs needed. LWV is pressing for the COC to schedule a meeting soon.

—Ken Ballard 5

**THANKS AND PRAISE FOR SMART VOTER**

Another election season has been successfully completed! Thank you and congratulations on your fine work! Your civic contribution of providing voters with non-partisan information on candidates and ballot issues is greatly appreciated by voters and candidates alike.

The site logged over 2 1/2 million page views during the election; evidence that many voters return because of your work to consistently produce a rich site, chock-full of valuable election information!

Read on for a sampling of thanks from this election.

Extremely useful and well done. Keep up the good work!!!

I found exactly what I needed and then some.

I always recommend your site.

A welcome change from the awful "shout politics."

Thanks for your wonderful civic contributions LWV!

Exactly what I was looking for.

Once again I turn to you for factual information online. What a great site. Well done!

I am very proud, and have always been, of the LWV.

League is an outstanding civic organization.

Love the site! Thanks for taking the time.

I would like to thank you for providing Smart Voter as a service to the community. I believe it has developed into a much relied upon and trusted source of voter information.

A most excellent public service! Thank you and all the volunteers and donors.

Thanks for providing such a valuable community service.

The League of Women Voters Smart Voter site is superb -- a fabulous public service, as were the scores of professionally conducted candidate forums.

For the complete and more comments, see:

[http://www.smartvoter.org/sv/team/reports/2005/11/comments\\_all.html](http://www.smartvoter.org/sv/team/reports/2005/11/comments_all.html)

Again, congratulations!

Trudell Een

Smart Voter Project Director  
League of Women Voters of California  
Education Fund

[director@smartvoter.org](mailto:director@smartvoter.org)

408-323-9611

<http://smartvoter.org>

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Smart Voter -- Your own personal ballot with polling place and map. Nonpartisan election information on candidates and ballot issues.

Smart Voter is supported by tax-deductible contributions from donors who value Nonpartisan Voter Education.

For an easy way to donate to Smart Voter, please visit

<http://www.smartvoter.org/voter/fund.html>

**LWVC Council 2006**

Plans for the Leadership Council, to be held in Sacramento on May 6 and 7, 2006, are underway. League presidents, or their alternates, are the official delegates to the Council. However, for the 2004 Council we encouraged other League leaders to attend to take advantage of the opportunity to network and to learn at a variety of training workshops.

Regional workshops have just been held at various locations throughout the state and they provided training in basic areas of League activity. The LWVC board will begin planning for Council workshops at its November meeting and will make final plans at the January meeting. Before that discussion occurs, we want to hear from you.

Please send your suggestions to me by November 1 so they can be included in the state board kit for discussion.

—Donna Chipps, *Executive Vice President*, [evp@lwvc.org](mailto:evp@lwvc.org)

**A SMALL QUIZ ON WOMENS' SUFFERAGE**

1. In what state was the national women's' rights movement born?
2. Women could not sit on Illinois' \_\_\_\_\_ until 1939?
3. By November, 1874 ten women were elected as what?
4. When the state legislature passed a bill that entitled women to vote at any election held to what?
5. On April 6, 1891 the first \_\_\_\_\_ in Illinois were tabulated.

(Answers below)

1. New York or Seneca Falls! 2. Juries 3. County superintendents of schools 4. Elect school officials. 5. 15 female votes.

October 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# School Finance Highlights 2005-06

**F**or the 2005-06 California state budget, the education funding decision was particularly contentious, revolving around Proposition 98, the minimum-funding guarantee for schools and community colleges.

### State allocation rests on an interpretation of 2004-05 policy actions

Total Proposition 98 funding for K-12 schools and community colleges is about \$50 billion. That total is about \$3 billion *more* than was allocated in 2004-05, but it is also about \$3 billion *less* than education advocates believed it should be under state law. At the heart of the issue is what level of funding the state was obligated to provide in 2004-05.

Proposition 98 sets a minimum guarantee for state education funding each year. The exact amount is based on specific formulas. Under Proposition 98, education spending in a given year largely hinges on what was spent the year before. The unprecedented suspension of Proposition 98 last year with the express purpose to decrease the 2004-05 allocation to schools created both ambiguity and dissension.

To legally provide less than the Proposition 98 guarantee, two-thirds of the Legislature has to agree to a suspension. In previous years, the education coalition fought that action vociferously. In 2004-05, however, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the education coalition agreed to a suspension, based in part on education's understanding that Proposition 98 funding would be reduced by the specific amount of \$2 billion. If state revenues exceeded projections, schools would get more; and if revenues were less than projected, schools would get less.

In January 2004 that agreement meant that schools would get \$46.9 billion in 2004-05, a reduction of \$2 billion from the estimated minimum guarantee of \$48.9 billion. The Legislature ratified the deal in Senate Bill (SB) 1101 (enacted as Chapter 213, Statutes of 2004).

After the budget was signed, it became clear that state revenues were going to exceed estimates. Under normal circumstances that

would have been good news for schools because it would increase the Proposition 98 minimum guarantee. However, that increase in funding for education did not occur. Instead, the governor and Legislature left the funding level for 2004-05 at its original amount, as if state revenues had not risen. *State officials then used that lower number as the base from which the minimum guarantee for 2005-06 would be calculated.* Legislators based their action on an interpretation of the suspension of Proposition 98 as a suspension of all related obligations.

Figure I illustrates how this series of actions ended up affecting K-12 schools and community colleges this year and also shows the relationship of the minimum guarantee to actual funding over time.

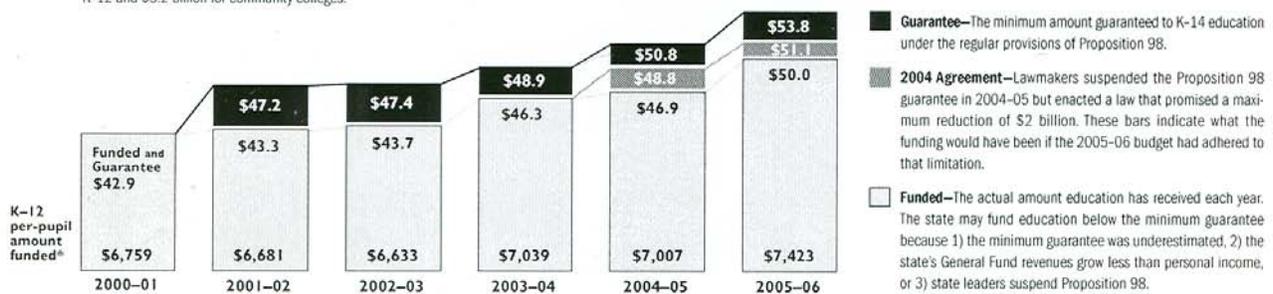
### CTA and State Superintendent O'Connell are suing the state

The decision to leave the 2004-05 funding level at its original amount is consistent with a fiscal analysis published by the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) in November 2004. The LAO cautioned that if the Legislature adjusted Proposition 98 funding for 2004-05 to the Chapter 213 target level (\$2 billion below the calculated Proposition 98 guarantee for 2004-05), almost the entire increase in state revenues would go to education, leaving the state with a deficit of \$6.7 billion. The LAO estimated that by simply not taking action to increase the 2004-05 appropriation, and then calculating the 2005-06 guarantee on that lowered base, the state could reduce its expenditures by \$2.8 billion and bring the year-end deficit down to \$3.9 billion, protecting other programs from cuts and alleviating the need for the state to borrow money or raise taxes.

On the other hand, education advocates say that schools were due more funds because the language in Chapter 213 specifically sets out the \$2 billion as the agreed-upon reduction. In August 2005 the California Teachers Association (CTA) and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell filed suit against the governor and other state officials, charging that the state's education allocations for

**figure 1 | K-14 education has been funded below the Proposition 98 guarantee since 2001-02 (all dollar amounts are in billions)**

These totals are for K-12 education and community colleges combined. In 2005-06, the \$50 billion total includes \$44.8 billion for K-12 and \$5.2 billion for community colleges.



\*Based on Proposition 98 K-12 average daily attendance (ADA) provided by the California Department of Education (CDE).

both 2004–05 and 2005–06 violate the funding obligation under Proposition 98 and state statutes under Chapter 213.

*The November election could have a long-term effect on funding*

Regardless of how the lawsuit is resolved, under current law the state is obligated to eventually restore \$3.8 billion to the minimum guarantee. Proposition 76—an initiative sponsored by the governor on the Nov. 8 ballot—will give voters a chance to decide, indirectly, whether they believe that restoration is appropriate. For more information, see the EdSource voter guide, *Proposition 76: State Spending and School Funding Limits*, at: [www.edsource.org](http://www.edsource.org)

**Total funds for K-12 and community colleges increased**

In 2005–06, K–12 schools will receive close to \$45 billion from Proposition 98 sources, plus about \$5.2 billion more from state and local property tax sources that are not part of Proposition 98 funding. Another \$12.3 billion comes from a combination of the federal government, the California State Lottery, and “local miscellaneous” sources. The amounts include:

- State funds: \$36.7 billion (58.9%);
- Local property taxes: \$13.3 billion (21.4%);
- Local miscellaneous revenues, such as community contributions, interest income, revenues from parcel tax elections, and developer fees: \$3.9 billion (6.2%);
- Federal government funds, which are earmarked for special purposes, most notably Child Nutrition, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Special Education, and childcare: \$7.6 billion (12.3%); and
- Lottery proceeds: \$0.8 billion (1.3%).

Projected California public school average daily attendance (ADA) for 2005–06 is 6.03 million K–12 students plus about 430,000 students in adult education and regional occupational programs.

*Community college funding is also governed by Proposition 98*

In 2005–06 community colleges will receive about 10.4% of the total Proposition 98 funding of almost \$50 billion. As is the case with K–12, the largest portion of that increase is for a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and enrollment growth, estimated at 3%.

**Established formulas and priorities determine allocations**

Nearly all California school districts receive revenue limit funding as the core of their general operating budgets. Approximately two-thirds of this year’s increase in Proposition 98 funds goes to school districts for revenue limit increases, including:

- \$189.7 million to cover the cost of 41,095 additional students statewide (an estimated growth rate of 0.7%);
- \$1.3 billion for a legally required cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of 4.23%; and
- \$406 million to address a deficit in revenue limit funding from previous budgets.

The budget also includes \$60.6 million to reimburse districts for extra costs they have incurred in order to meet specific state mandates.

*Policy actions on categorical programs are limited in 2005–06*

Another substantial portion of the funding increase covers enrollment growth and COLA for the majority of state categorical programs, which are earmarked for special purposes. Aside from these increases, changes to categorical programs were minimal.

The largest categorical program is Special Education, which this year receives an additional \$20.2 million for enrollment growth and a \$124 million increase for COLA, bringing state support to a total of almost \$2.9 billion. Federal funds add another \$1.1 billion. The budget also provides an extra augmentation for Special Education, with about \$48 million of it to be used for any one-time purpose. First priority is to provide intensive instruction for students with disabilities in the class of 2006 who have yet to pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).

**Several new initiatives get one-year funding**

Education will also receive funds on a one-time basis for a very limited number of new initiatives, such as:

- \$20 million to help students in the class of 2006 who have not yet passed CAHSEE.
- \$49.5 million to fund Low-performing School Enrichment Grants for schools in deciles 1–3—the bottom 30% statewide—to meet the special needs at these schools.
- \$18.2 million for the governor’s Fruits and Vegetables for Breakfast initiative so districts can augment school breakfast programs with healthier foods.
- \$196 million to the School Facilities Emergency Repair Account to reimburse districts for emergency repairs at low-performing schools.

**This school year will be as difficult for many districts as it was for state leaders**

In 2005–06 it appears that California maintained the status quo in terms of education funding. The year also lacked any major new programs.

This statewide perspective, however, obscures the variety of financial situations local districts face. Almost half of the school districts in the state are seeing their enrollment decline, which means a reduction in revenues that can lead to teacher layoffs and school closings in some districts. All districts also face pressure from rising health insurance premiums, escalating energy costs, and likely salary demands.

The balancing act between revenues and expenditures is difficult for school district leaders, just as it is for California’s governor and Legislature. In years like 2005–06, when budget decisions become the subject of heated controversy, the task becomes more challenging for everyone. ☐☐

*For a more detailed analysis of the 2005–06 education budget, see *School Finance 2005–06: Budget Sets Off Public Battle* at: [www.edsource.org](http://www.edsource.org)*



EdSource is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization established in California in 1977. Independent and impartial, EdSource strives to advance the common good by developing and widely distributing trustworthy, useful information that clarifies complex K-12 education issues and promotes thoughtful decisions about California’s public school system.

EdSource thanks the **William and Flora Hewlett Foundation** for its investment in our core work.

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## HIGH—TECH TRAVEL SOLUTIONS: INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Commuters throughout the region breathed a sigh of relief when the threat of a BART strike was averted in July; no one had looked forward to cramming more cars onto Bay Area roads. However, if the strike had occurred, it would have provided a showcase for ongoing improvements in transportation techniques that are already easing the flow on crowded roadways. For example, commuters could have called 511 to plan trips and for other services, such as reports on the time needed to drive from one freeway location to another.

Many of these improvements are drawn from a collection of increasingly high-tech techniques known as Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) which build on the existing capacity of roads and transit to improve efficiency and to create smooth trips. Most of them are described in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan's System Efficiency Section, and are coordinated through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Regional Operations Program. If all the cutting-edge technology proposals in the 2030 Plan are funded and implemented, Bay Area riders will feel they are truly in a new century.



Some ITS programs are already familiar to the region's drivers; others are just beginning to be explored. Among the familiar programs are ridesharing information—now incorporated into the regional 511 transportation information services—and incident management programs such as the Freeway Service Patrol tow truck service and emergency call boxes. Transit riders on some systems have already been using a trial version of the TransLink ticket, a stored-value ticket

that can be recharged and reused, and is usable on multiple transit systems. Ramp metering has been expanding in the region; a recent Caltrans report on I580 in Pleasanton showed metering eliminated a bottleneck for eastbound traffic during the afternoon peak period while also decreasing traffic that formerly cut through city streets.

Newer programs include express bus corridors using traffic signal preemption, and real-time monitoring for speed and traffic flow on major freeways, with the information provided to drivers. At the suggestion of Caltrans, financial estimates for new freeway segments in the 2030 Plan now include the costs of systems management components such as loops embedded in the pavement for monitoring traffic flows. A program to provide more real-time data on the location and arrival times of transit vehicles was approved by MTC in July. Grants, funded by Regional Measure 2, were awarded to eight transit districts around the region to install or increase the use of automatic vehicle location technology, including signs and kiosks at transit hubs. This will address some recommendations of MTC's Transit Connectivity study, completed in January 2005 (see October/November 2004 issue).

Yet to come, but envisioned in the 2030 Plan, are advanced ITS projects to develop and implement integrated data collection and communication systems that would allow better communication between emergency responders to help clear traffic incidents and inform drivers of hazards. This effort would be aimed particularly at roadways, but recent security alerts on BART have also raised the issue of communications between BART and emergency responders, especially for incidents in BART tunnels.

Integrated data and communications systems could eventually provide real-time driving information for carpool

lanes and major streets as well as general freeway traffic. Driving information is already available for some heavily traveled freeway segments in the Bay Area, and more segments will be added this year, creating an extensive network by the time that MTC and other Bay Area groups host an international ITS conference in November (see box below). Real-time driving information, coupled with in-vehicle maps, can inform drivers about traffic conditions and roadway hazards and allow drivers to avoid bottlenecks by taking alternative routes, thereby easing traffic jams.

Tight government finances and limited opportunities for freeway expansion mean that existing roads will be more heavily traveled. Innovative technology can improve transit service to attract more riders and take drivers off the road, and technology can also provide tools to fit more drivers on the road at the same time without increasing congestion. While it may not always be as noticeable as new freeway lanes or transit stations, ITS can be a bargain for Bay Area travelers.

—Leslie Stewart

Bay Area Monitor, October/November, 2005.



**OUR THANKS TO** Pat Lewis who is the new Washington Hospital observer.

### **PUBLIC FUNDING OF ELECTIONS PROGRAM**

Saturday, Dec. 3  
Oakland City Hall Hearing Room 2  
10 AM—Noon  
Speakers will discuss the Clean Money campaign.

**HOW CALIFORNIA RANKS**

The failure of Proposition 76 promises to re-focus attention on the school finance debate. Is California appropriately funding its schools? How much is enough? How high are we aiming for student results? How well are schools using the funding they get?

EdSource's new eight-page annual update, "How California Ranks: A National Perspective," can help inform that debate. It updates where the state stands as compared with other states--in terms of student needs, level of funding, and student results. The picture that emerges is one of lower-than-average investment, high needs and costs, minimal staffing, and low student achievement.

Key facts at a glance show that the state ranks:

\* 1st in percentage of English learners;

\* 3rd in teacher salary levels;  
\* 10th in proportion of low-income students;  
\* 29th in per-pupil spending;  
\* 49th in teacher staffing ratios, and  
\* 44th or below in reading and math achievement on national assessments.

Particularly notable is the story told by staffing data. For example:

\* The average number of teachers per 1,000 students in school districts nationwide is 63. In Texas that average is 67; in New York, 75. In California, the same workload is handled by just 48 teachers.

\* The burden for principals and assistant principals is even greater. The work handled by 3.4 such administrators nationwide is done in California by just 2.1 people. —Edsource

**REGISTER NOW FOR ED  
SOURCE'S 2006 FORUM**

Don't miss this year's EdSource Fo-

rum: "School Accountability & Funding: Can California Get It Right?" The morning session on accountability features speaker Jack O'Connell, Superintendent of Public Instruction followed by a panel of influential superintendents. The afternoon session delves into funding issues, with speaker Ted Mitchell, chair, Governor's Advisory Committee on Education Excellence (invited), and a distinguished panel of researchers initiating new adequacy/efficiency studies.

The Forum will take place on Friday, March 17 in Fremont.

Go to <http://www.edsource.org/forum06info.cfm> to learn more, and to register online.



## CIVIL LIBERTIES AND HOMELAND SECURITY

How is Homeland Security working at home? This project is part of the League of Women Voters of the United States' engagement in civil liberty and security. It is based on our commitment to the notion that democratic government depends on the informed and active participation of its citizens at all levels of government, and the citizen's right to know about governmental actions. It is particularly timely given the chaos surrounding hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the apparent uncertainty about what we have been able to accomplish in dealing with disasters since 9/11.

Whether man-made or natural, disasters require the same attention: prevention, response, and recovery. The goal of this effort is to help local Leagues engage their communities in a conversation about how homeland security is working at home. It envisions a local League committee undertaking an initial survey of key officials who have responsibility for local security, and presenting their response to their communities through forums with security leaders that engage community members, and/or reports, articles in the VOTER, op-eds, letters to the editor, local talk shows, etc.

The project should also help local Leagues gain a better understanding of how government works, establish personal relationships with officials charged with security, and engage the diversity of the community in a subject that matters very much to all of us. Ideally, it would highlight areas of need, open communications between community leaders and residents on what is and can be done, and engage citizens in the planning and execution of security measures against both man-made and natural threats. It may also attract new members.

The project details and the questionnaire are now on the [LWVUS Web site](#). For further help, please contact our Civil Liberties coordinators, Carole Wagner Vallianos and Lois Chaney, or LWVUS board member Xandra Kayden.

Chris Carson, *Government Director*, [govt@lwvc.org](mailto:govt@lwvc.org)

It's easy to JOIN the **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

**Any person, man or woman, who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League may join. To be a voting member, one must be at least 18 years of age and a U.S. citizen**

Annual dues includes membership in Local, Bay Area, California and National Leagues.  
 Make your check payable to: LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS and mail it with this form to:

**LWVFNUC-MEMBERSHIP, P.O. Box 3218, Fremont, CA, 94539**



\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Membership - \$50    \_\_\_\_\_ Household - \$75  
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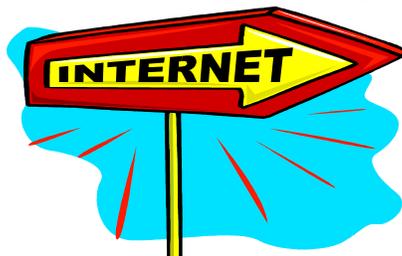
Dues and contributions to the League are not tax deductible. Contributions to L.W.V. Ed Fund are deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information, or for confidential financial dues assistance, please contact: Marjorie Wakelin: 510-624-4500, marjorie@holyfamilysisters.org

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**ELECTRONIC CORNER**

An interesting site for your perusal:

The Center for Governmental Studies (CGS) recently released an updated, comprehensive series of charts outlining public financing laws in cities and counties across the nation. These charts are a part of the CGS series, "Public Financing in American Elections," a multi-year comparative research project on the effectiveness of public financing laws adopted in local jurisdictions in the United States. Currently twelve cities and counties have public financing laws. Tucson, Arizona has the oldest such law, adopted in 1985. In May 2005, Portland, Oregon became the most recent city to enact a public financing law and



the first in the country to adopt a full public financing program, which means that the city government provides all of the financial resources necessary for qualified local candidates to run for public office. Find it at <http://www.cgs.org/>

**Mission Statement**

The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the 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.

**Diversity Policy**

LWVFNUC affirms its commitment to reflect the diversity of our communities in our membership and actions. We believe diverse views are important for responsible decision making and seek to work with all people and groups who reflect our community diversity.

**QUOTE:**

The strength of the United States is not in the gold at Fort Knox or the weapons of mass destruction that we have, but the sum total of the education and character of our people.

—Claiborne Pell



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN  
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### WATCH VOTING MATTERS

Tune in to see Anu Natorejian interview Dr. Bernard Stewart and Gaby Machuca. Topic: Celebrate Fremont 50th.

**Fremont**, Channel 29, every Wednesday at 7:30 PM

**Newark**, Channel 6, every Thursday at 7 PM

**Union City**, Channel 15, every Thursday at 9:30 PM

**Hayward**, Channel 28, every Monday at 9:30 PM

Visit our website:  
<http://www.lwvfnuc.org>  
and Smart Voter  
[www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org)

## CALENDAR

Wed., Nov. 30	Action Committee	9:30 AM	Marilyn Singer's home
Fri., Dec 2	Energy Committee Meeting	9:30 AM	Miriam Keller's home
Sat., Dec. 3	Facing California's Energy Future	10AM– Noon	Eagle Theater, Los Altos High School
Sat., Dec. 3	Public Funding of Elections Program	10 am—Noon	Oakland City Hall Hearing Room 2
Mon., Dec. 12	LWVFNUC Board Meeting: Potluck	6:30 PM	Marilyn Singer's home
Mon., Dec. 19	Holiday Party and Program Planning	6:30 PM	Marilyn Singer's home
Mon., Dec. 19	Voter Deadline		