

Voter

The League of Women Voters
Of Fremont, Newark and
Union City



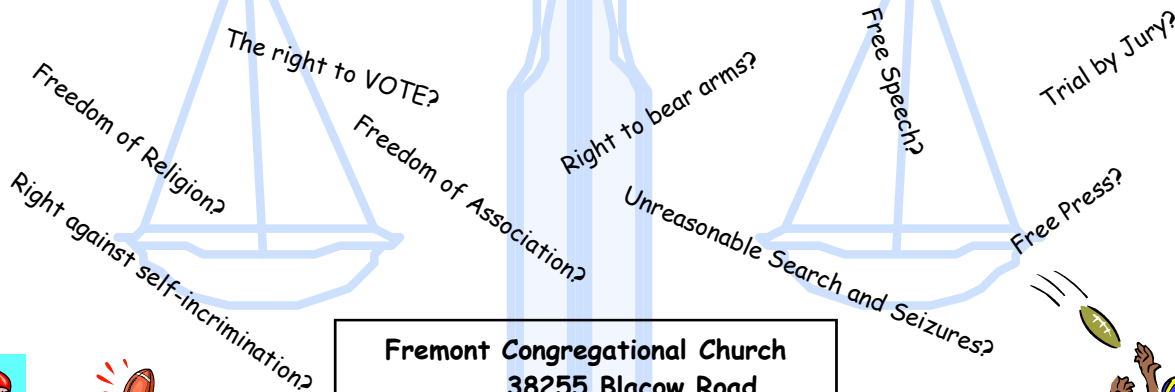
**BACK TO
SCHOOL**



ANNUAL KICKOFF MEETING

Civil Liberties: Balancing Liberty and Security

What Civil Liberties are you willing to trade for greater security?



Fremont Congregational Church
38255 Blacow Road
Monday, September 19
6:30, Coffee, Dessert and
Networking
7:00, Program
For more information, Call Marilyn
Singer, 657-1969



2005 LWVC REGIONAL WORKSHOP

Saturday, September 10, 2005

Hyatt Residence, 620 Sand Road, Palo Alto (opposite Stanford Shopping Center)

9:30 AM—3:00 PM

Fees: \$25 Registration received by September 7

\$30 On-site /Late Registration

Workshops:

Morning Session (Everyone)

1. Time Management 2. Voter Service

Afternoon Session: (Choose) 1. The Energy Study, 2. Membership, 3. League 101

Call Kay Emanuele (510-792-1645) for reservations and car-pooling LWVFNUC will pay \$10 registration fee.

KNOW YOUR BAY AREA DAY

Saturday, September 24, 2005

Fremont Main Library, Fukaya Room

REFORMING THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

ACT—How has it worked? Does it need to be changed?

9:30 AM Registration and refreshments

10:00 AM Program:

Overview of CEQA

Perspective on how CEQA has worked

Should CEQA be reformed?

1:00 PM: Adjourn

Call Kay Emanuele (510-792-1645) for reservations. LWVFNUC will pay the \$10 registration fee.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to all our new and continuing members. We will have an exciting and interesting array of educational general meetings this year. The meetings will have room for networking and building relationships, making friends. We hope you will put them on your calendar and try to come. We are also host to the LWVBA Know Your Bay Area Day on CEQA and will carpool to the LWVC Workshops in Palo Alto. (See front page articles.)

We also will continue our action activities and watchdogging local governments. Please see other articles in this Voter for specific items that we need help with: Voter Service, (registrations and one candidate forum), Action Committee, Education Committee, and observing one of the agencies in the Tri-Cities.

The LWVC Convention did not choose any new studies but three Issues for Education and Advocacy. The three are redistricting, healthcare, and state and local finances. However, the Convention of two years ago approved an update of the LWVC Energy position and we are just about to start that study. Our local Energy study committee will be meeting soon to prepare for our Energy consensus meetings in January. Please call or email Susan Gearhart if you are interested.

At our Annual meeting in June we approved a local Study of the governance of our community hospital, and its role in promoting a healthy community in Fremont, Newark, and Union City. Judy Zlatnik will be convening the study committee. To join, call or email Judy.

LWVUS has just issued a new report - *Next Steps on Election Reform* - that explores issues central to reforming our election system and implementing the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). It calls for four key steps: Professionalization, A New focus on service, Research and development, and New federal resources and commitment. There is also a report - *Helping America Vote: Statewide Voter Registration Databases*. The two reports are available at <http://www.lwv.org/elibrary/pub/issue5.html>

—Miriam Keller

BOARD BRIEFS

At its August meeting the Board

- received the report of the Program committee on the fall general meetings
- discussed Election activities
- decided to make membership a priority item this year
- heard that we made \$2000 from the Democracy Dinner.

VOTING MATTERS

On Sept. 26, 1995 five Leaguers Noreen Hansen, Susan Ford, Emily Sawyer, Miriam Keller and Becky Sylvester) met to discuss producing a League cable program. They discussed guidelines for selecting a host, a title for the program, what the set should look like and how to research issues. Program titles considered were League in Action, The League Listens, League Spotlight, Window on the Tri-Cities and League Windows. We eventually decided that the emphasis needed to be on the Voter, not on the League and Voting Matters was eventually chosen.

After 12 hours of learning to use the equipment at the Newark Studio, we were ready. The first taping on Nov 8, 1995 was on Campaign Finance Reform, Proposition 208. Another early program featured guest Carol O'Hare, editor of *Jailed for Freedom: American Women Win the Vote*, a book originally published in 1920, the year the suffrage amendment was ratified. Other early programs were the California Constitution Revision Commission's recommendations, Proposition 198, Elections and an Open Primary, The Road to Citizenship and an interview with Bradley Clark, Alameda County Registrar of Voters.

We have survived the cable being TCI or ATT or Comcast. We have survived moving to the Fremont Studios. Our present crew includes Vesta Wilson, Alex Starr, Ursel Bloxson, Miriam Keller and John Smith. Emily Sawyer served as producer until just recently. We tape on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2:30 pm. The program airs once a week for a month in Fremont, Newark, Union City and Hayward. It is on a different day and time in each city. We are always looking for more crew so if you are interested, contact Miriam Keller.

We are going to celebrate our ten years of Voting Matters at the Program Planning Meeting in December.

—Miriam Keller





We need many hands!

YOUR NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President:	Miriam Keller
Executive Assistant:	Kay Emanuele*
Executive Assistant:	Joanne Landers*
Co-Administrative Vice Presidents:	
Board:	Carolyn Hedgecock
Fundraising	Syeda Yunus
Communications:	Jean Holmes*
Secretary:	Kirsten Hu
Treasurer	Bunny Robinson
Historian:	Mary Miller
Membership:	Sr. Marjorie Wakelin
Membership Directory:	Sam Neeman*
Meeter and Greeter:	Tina Bonaccorsi*
Voter Editor:	Vesta Wilson
Voter Mailing:	Carolyn Hedgecock*
Action:	Marilyn Singer
Environment:	Susan Gearhart
Public Relations :	John Smith*
Facilities and Special Events:	Ann Crosbie*
Management Trainer:	Alex Starr
Nominating Committee:	Muriel Nolan*
	Alice Johnson*
	Jean Holmes*
Continuing Directors:	
Co-Voter Service Vice Presidents	Ellen Culver
	Letha Saldana
Co-Program Vice Presidents	Ken Ballard
	Ursel Bloxson
Web Page	Peter Starr*
Cable Programs	Emily Sawyer*

*Designates off board

OBSERVERS ARE THE EYES AND EARS OF THE LEAGUE

If you sign on to be a League Observer, you will learn first-hand how well our public officials are acting on our behalf. League Observers attend meeting of public bodies and monitor how laws and policies are being carried out. League Observers do not speak at meetings, but officials know that they are being actively watched and that their actions are being reported to the League. We watch them and they watch us!

Mary Roulet watches the Fremont City Council, Betty Foster observes the Union City Council, Vesta Wilson watches FUSD. Joanne Landers observes the Ohlone Board, Susan Gearhart observes the Washington Hospital Board, Syeda Yunus observes the Fremont Human Relations Commission, and Julice Winter observes East Bay Regional Park District.

The Action Committee hears from these observers and takes action when appropriate. You can see that there are many other boards and commissions where observers could be working. If you would like to sign up for a quiet job that needs to be done, contact Marilyn 656-1969 or singer765@sbcglobal.net

ACTION COMMITTEE

Your Action Committee is working on the following issues: the Intermodal Station proposal in Union City, the Fremont General Plan Update (League member and former mayor Gus Morrison will chair.), preparing you through the Voter for the Health Care Unit coming up, preparing for State Legislative interviews, working through a sub committee on Patterson Ranch proposals, cooperating with other groups and agencies on issues relating to Hetch Hetchy, monitoring Measure A, getting questions up on Smart Voter for the November election, and producing monthly cable programs for "Voting Matters".

Action Committee is busy, and we would welcome more members. We meet the fourth Wednesday of each month at 9:30 AM. You can become a "League Specialist". Call Marilyn Singer at 657-1969 or singer756@sbcglobal.net if you want to join us.

—Marilyn Singer

FREMONT'S 50TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Plans are underway in many committees around town to make the city's 50th Birthday Celebration really special. The big event days will be Sept. 9th and 10th, 2006. The theme is Past, Present, Future.

Our League is involved in the Education Team. To inform parents and seek their support and participation, the team would like to pass out flyers at the various Back to School nights. If you would like to help distribute, please let Kay Emanuele know. The nights range from August 20th to Sept. 27th. If you have a particular school in mind, email ke45@comcast.net to learn the date and time. We are collecting ideas for projects and activities for students K-12. If you have an idea, please share it.

—Kay Emanuele



Love to bake but don't love having those extra calories in your cupboard tempting you? How about sharing your favorite dessert at a monthly unit meeting? Contact Ann Crosbie to sign up for a future meeting: crosbieclan@comcast.net or 657-3422

SIKH ELECTION

The Sikh Gurdwara in Fremont had a mail in ballot election this Spring with seven proposed changes to their by-laws. Our League was hired to handle the election. As a League fundraiser it was fine. As a step towards the temple members handling their own elections it was not successful.

The only proposed bylaws change mandated by the recent court decision was one on length of service on the Supreme Council. Their bylaws committee proposed a two year term. None of the 7 proposed amendments passed. There remains much distrust among various elements within their membership. So our unbiased handling of the election was again critical.

Problems included a membership data base that was woefully out of date (They are going to update that this Fall), threatened law suits that delayed the mailing of ballots, inconsistent postal regulations that caused much delay in members receiving both sample ballots and voting ballots, and much misunderstanding among temple members about what the election was really about even though all directions were in both English and Panjabi. To remain in compliance with California law, the Gurdwara must hold another election for Supreme Council seats in January 2006.

I want to thank each League member who helped us pull this off. I also want to thank Mike Sellers of Alonzo Printing in Hayward, who was essential in getting out the ballots, meeting postal regulations, and generally holding my hand as we ventured into new territory for this election.

—Alex Starr



**VOTER SERVICE
VOLUNTEERS ARE
NEEDED FOR VOTER
REGISTRATION IN
NEWARK!**

October 1, 11AM—3 PM at the Newark Library

October 16, 9 AM—3 PM at Newark Safeway

Don't be put off by those hours. The task is divided into two hour shifts with two people in each shift.

In addition, a forum will be scheduled with the candidates for Newark City Council. We need helpers for that, too.

We are always in need of interested speakers for our Speakers Bureau. Sound out friends and well-informed acquaintances to help us meet our needs.

Call Ellen Culver—656-7973

RETHINKING CEQA

In early April, the Association of Bay Area Governments' Regional Planning Committee hosted a workshop on improving the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The workshop was one of a series held around the state by the California Center for Regional Leadership to discuss proposed changes in CEQA. The changes have been under discussion by the CEQA Improvement Advisory Group, convened by California Secretary of Resources, Mike Chrisman.

Workshop participants were presented with an analysis of the background and current situation regarding CEQA by Elisa Barbour of the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC). Barbour and Michael Teats have co-authored a PPIC report on CEQA reform. Sandra Ikuta, from the California Department of Resources, addressed the need for reform. There is particular interest in CEQA exemptions which would apply to infill development, as well as the concept of "front loading" the planning process by allowing a Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) to be done for a large-

scale project such as a General Plan which would then apply to smaller projects consistent with the MEIR project.

Discussion by RPC members and input from members of the public focused on the need for better statewide land-use policies and financial assistance to planning bodies such as cities and counties, rather than CEQA changes. Using MEIR for significant environmental review at the General Plan level was criticized because General Plans are too broad to allow adequate understanding of project-level impacts, and the time between General Plan approval and development proposals means that the analysis often becomes outdated before the specific projects are considered. Several speakers urged more extensive use of specific plans and community-based planning. While participants expressed strong support for adding housing, specifically affordable housing, there was concern that changing CEQA requirements would decrease public participation in the planning process and increase the likelihood of legal challenges to the CEQA process if communities feel excluded. It was noted that an exemption recently added to CEQA for infill housing is rarely used except in Berkeley.

Although there was agreement that better standards are needed for assessing cumulative impacts, other reasons for changing CEQA, such as the tendency to downsize proposed projects for community acceptance rather than valid environmental concerns, were not fully discussed.

The consensus that seemed to emerge at the end of the workshop was that while changes in the planning process may need to be made, the proposed changes in CEQA do not really address the needs. Reports from the other four workshops around the state indicate that this was a typical response to the proposals.

—Leslie Stewart, Bay Area Monitor, June/July, 2005

TAKING A STAND ON INITIATIVES FOR THE SPECIAL ELECTION

Months of uncertainty came to an end on June 13 when Governor Schwarzenegger called a special election to take place on November 8, 2005. Eight initiatives have qualified for that ballot. .

The LWVC board has already decided to oppose two initiatives which will be on the November ballot. In March the board decided to oppose the Parental Notification initiative (Termination of Minor's Pregnancy, Waiting Period and Parental Notification), and at its May meeting the board voted to oppose the "Live Within Our Means" initiative. Details on each of these measures appear below.

The official titles given to those measures by the Attorney General are:

- Public School Teachers. Waiting Period for Permanent Status. Dismissal.
- Public Employee Union Dues. Required Employee Consent for Political Contributions.
- Reapportionment. (The LWVC has not yet taken a position on this initiative. We have urged the legislature and governor to negotiate to place an alternative measure on the ballot.)
- Prescription Drug Discounts. State-Negotiated Rebates. (This is the first of two competing measures.)
- Electric Service Providers. Regulation.
- Prescription Drugs. Discounts.
- Termination of Minor's Pregnancy
- School Funding, State Spending—State Negotiated

Three of the measures—the Parental Notification, Live Within Our Means, and redistricting (reapportionment) initiatives—are proposed constitutional amendments; the other five are statutes. Information about all these initiatives is available on the Secretary of State's Web site at www.ss.ca.gov/election/elections_j.htm. The identifying numbers provided there can be used to find the texts of the measures at the Attorney General's site, www.ag.ca.gov/initiatives/activeindex.htm, and the Legislative Analyst's fiscal analy-

ses at lao.ca.gov/ballot_source/Initiatives.aspx.

The LWVC will provide an Action Guide before the election, analyzing in depth the measures on which we have taken a position and informing local Leagues how they can advocate for the League's positions.

"Live Within Our Means" Act—Oppose

The LWVC strongly opposes the initiative known as the "California Live Within Our Means Act" which has been proposed by the Governor. The official title on petitions for the measure was School Funding, State Spending. This complex measure is a constitutional amendment that imposes a new state spending cap, gives the governor broad power to make budget cuts unilaterally, and changes the formulas for state support of education. Its provisions are contrary to some of the League's most important positions in State and Local Finances, Constitution, and Education. Our analysis of the measure indicates that it would

- effectively exclude the possibility of increasing revenue in the near term to meet current needs
- make an extraordinary shift of power from the Legislature to the Executive Branch of state government
- increase "autopilot" spending
- reduce the adequacy and reliability of education funding.

Parental Notification Initiative—Oppose

The LWVC opposes the Parental Notification Initiative that has qualified for the ballot. This measure would amend the California Constitution to prohibit a minor from obtaining an abortion until 48 hours after the physician notifies the minor's parent or legal guardian, except in a medical emergency or with a parental waiver. The initiative permits a judicial waiver of notice based on clear and convincing evidence of the minor's maturity or the minor's best interests. To obtain a waiver the minor must file a petition and appear personally in juvenile court.

We believe that parental notification laws are unwise. Most parents want what is best for their children and for them to be safe. Most teens voluntarily involve their parents or another trusted adult in the intensely personal decision to terminate a pregnancy. But if for any reason a teen could not do so, most parents would want their daughters to get professional medical care and counseling in a timely way. The initiative could cause young women who feel they can't confide in a parent or face a court of law to prolong pregnancy until it is too late to obtain an abortion or their health is jeopardized. Alternatively, they may seek dangerous and illegal ways to terminate their pregnancies.

The judicial bypass option in the proposed initiative is unrealistic. Teenagers fear the court process, and navigating the judicial system requires significant financial and psychological resources. Furthermore, it is difficult, if not impossible, to guarantee teens' privacy, especially in rural areas.

Good family communications cannot be imposed by governmental action. We should be focusing on prevention through professional counseling, comprehensive sex education, and birth control.

Marion Taylor, Legislation Director,
legislation@lwvc.org



REDISTRICTING—Where WE Stand

In 1987 and 1988, the League of Women Voters conducted an extensive study of the redistricting process in California. We immediately applied our resulting position in support of Proposition 119, an unsuccessful attempt to establish an independent commission to draw district lines in California. The next two redistricting plans drawn by the state legislature (in 1991 and 2001) either were rejected by the courts or were widely criticized as being fundamentally flawed. Today we find ourselves in the middle of a sustained public debate on the future of redistricting in California, a debate that will continue for some time.

What does the League have to say about the way California should redistrict? In brief, we support a 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 of the process. And we support redistricting by a bipartisan commission rather than by the legislature.

The standards on which a redistricting plan should be based, regardless of who has responsibility for redistricting, should include (1) substantially equal population, (2) geographic contiguity and (3) protection of the voting strength of a racial or linguistic minority from dilution.

To the extent possible, these standards should also include respect for legal boundaries of cities and counties, and preservation and protection of "communities of interest." On the other hand, the standards should not consider the protection of incumbents or the preferential treatment of any political party.

The League places a good deal of emphasis on the importance of the structure of the redistricting process. It is clear that members feel that how redistricting is done is even more important than who does it. League positions on opportunities for citizen participation in government decision making, the need for adequate notice of proposed actions and the need

for open meetings are all crucial to member understanding of what constitutes a fair redistricting process.

The League believes that the redistricting process should include (1) specific time lines for the steps leading to adoption of the redistricting plan, (2) public hearings on the proposed plan, (3) an automatic nonjudicial backup procedure in the event of deadlock and (4) a requirement that any redistricting plan drawn by the legislature be adopted by more than a simple majority vote.



Members prefer redistricting by a commission over redistricting by the legislature. Balance, however, is considered important and commission members should reflect California's diversity of population and varied geography, as well as a balance of economic, social and partisan interests. Members conclude that a redistricting commission would make fair and effective representation a more likely outcome than the decisions of legislators, whose self-interests seem to dominate over their concern for fairness and the common good. Given only two

practical choices—legislature or commission—the choice of a commission reflected members dissatisfaction with the legislature's previous redistricting performance as much as enthusiasm for a commission per se.

The questions of who should redistrict California and how such redistricting lines should be drawn are complex. All the criteria involve difficult and controversial definitions and decisions. The League position does not promise panaceas or quick fixes. Rather, it represents a thoughtful reflection on a complex political process and offers balanced suggestions for a road map to navigate the difficult journey.

Mental Health Care: Implementing Proposition 63

The passage of [Proposition 63](#), the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), in November 2004 means that county mental health services will expand to serve all segments of the population, from children to older adults and members of groups who need "culturally competent" services. Counties, as the primary providers of mental health care in California, are the center of what may well be a positive restructuring of mental health services.

In April the state Department of Mental Health (DMH) announced the first release of the Prop. 63 Mental Health Services Act funds which will come from an additional one percent tax on taxable income over \$1 million. The initial funds are earmarked for local Community Program Planning efforts in which counties will invite the public to help determine the mental health needs of their communities, identify the types of individuals to be served by MHSA funds, and suggest specific MHSA service and support strategies.

A key component of the planning is training the stakeholders, so that all groups can effectively compete in the planning process. That is what is happening currently in most counties. There is a grant to assist four counties (Los Angeles, San Diego, Fresno and Alameda) in getting all parties involved.

The LWVC did not support Prop. 63 because it earmarked a specific revenue source. The League does support the work the funds will provide.

If your local League wants to get involved, be sure that you have done your "homework" first.

Background information about California MH services

If you are new to California's system of mental health services, prepare yourself with background reading. If your local League has studied your county's mental health services, you have a good start! But be warned—if you don't have a lot of background, be cautious in what you say until you get "up to speed."

- Read the LWVC [Mental Health Care position statement](#) adopted in 1998 for guidance. Although it is not up to date with the current "jargon," you should be familiar with the Position in Brief.
- Learn all you can about the Act and the planning process at the state Department of Mental Health Web site, <http://www.dmh.ca.gov/MHSA/default.asp>. Visit www.dmh.ca.gov to see "What's New."
- Check with your county Mental Health Director to see what the process is in your county.
- Participate in any training offered.
- Become familiar with the views of those participating in the process. Remember that emotions can run very high among the stakeholders: clients, parents of school-aged children, parents who have fought for years to get services for their loved ones, service providers, etc.

Know the players in the mental health system: California Mental Health Planning Council; county mental health boards; California Mental Health Directors Association; mental health professional groups such as the Medical Association, psychiatrists, social workers, and psychologists; the Mental Health Association of California and its county chapters; National Alliance for Mental Health of California and its county chapters; California Clients Network; local clients groups; law enforcement agencies; county courts, public defenders, and public guardians; private provider groups; and health care organizations.

Know what these terms and acronyms stand for: Short-Doyle programs; Lanterman-Petris-Short Act (see the California Welfare and Institutions Code); Realignment; Children's Systems of Care; Adult Systems of Care; Social Rehabilitation Model; wrap-around services, integrated services

model; AB 34 and AB 2034 programs; AB 3632; parity legislation (state and federal); Mentally Ill Offenders Crime Reduction Program; Dual Diagnosis Treatment programs; Prop. 36 diversion programs; Institute for Mental Disease facilities; and Laura's Law (AB 1421, Thomson).

Find out whether your county has a Drug Court, a Mental Health Court, a Homeless Court.

Further background about the MHSA

According to the tentative timeline, counties can begin submitting their 3-year Systems of Care plans to the DMH by July. An estimated \$420 million statewide is projected to be available in fall 2005 for implementation. By fall 2006 a statewide sum of about \$800 million—the full amount—is anticipated.

The revenue, added monthly to a Mental Health Services Fund in the state treasury, is to be used to expand, not to supplant, any existing mental health services. Monies are not to be loaned to any state or county general fund or to other funds at either level for any purpose other than those authorized by the MHSA. Each county must place its monies in a local Mental Health Services fund.

A provision of the MHSA is the establishment of a Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission of 16 voting members, with the majority appointed by the Governor from categories such as mental health professionals, law enforcement, business and labor organizations and insurers. An important function of this commission is to review and comment on county 3-year plans before they go to the state DMH for funding approval.

A particularly important part of the MHSA is its provision for an Early Intervention and Prevention program to be established by the DMH, a new focus for mental health care delivery. The importance of such programs has long been recognized, but there has been a lack of funding. The revenue that will be generated by the MHSA makes such programs feasible, and, in addition to their obvious benefits for (Continued on next page)

(Cont.)

clients and society, these programs should prove cost-effective.

Another important component of the program is Early Intervention and Prevention outreach to families, employers, primary health care providers and others for recognition of early signs of potentially severe and disabling mental illnesses. Reduction in stigma and discrimination against people with mental illness and reduction in the negative outcomes of untreated mental illness, such as suicide, are also elements of Early Intervention and Prevention.

Remember, this is a long and thorough process. Counties are just now getting money for planning. It will take some time before money is available for new programs. Be patient!

Mary-Evelyn Bryden, Program Director for Mental Health Care, [Email](#)

Kathy Webb, Social Policy Director, so_cial_policy@lwvc.org

**This article drew upon some materials from the April 2005 LWV/LAC VOTER of the [Los Angeles County Inter-League Organization](#).

STATE SENATE BILL 840— California Health Insurance Reliability Act (CHIRA)

It has become clearly evident to many that our health care system in the United States, based heavily on health insurance, is not working. Forty-five million people, including eight million children, in the US do not have health insurance as they cannot afford it.¹ The grass roots non-profit organization, Health Care for All California, estimates that in California alone, there are seven million uninsured. (www.healthcareforall.org)

State Senate Bill 840: California Health Insurance Reliability Act (CHIRA) has been proposed as a solution to this problem of inadequate health care protection for all. This legislation spearheaded by State Senator Sheila Kuehl (District 23), was passed

in the State Senate by 24 to 14 in May, 2005. The legislation provides for a state sponsored and state monitored health care system that would replace existing health insurance plans. It has been compared to the current Medicare System.

Senator Kuehl spoke recently at the LWVC Convention to advocate for this universal health care system which would be overseen by an elected commissioner. LWVC has strongly supported this bill as it believed it would provide "fiscally sound, affordable health insurance to all Californians, provide Californians the right to choose their own physicians, and control health cost inflation".²

The bill proposes to reduce the current waste in the administration of the various health plans by consolidating the functions of many insurance companies into one state agency. In addition, there would be further cost benefits due to economies of scale in purchasing for pharmaceuticals and medical equipment. Thus, proponents of the bill believe it would save billions of dollars each year for the state and the consumers. A study by the Lewin Group states that this plan would save Californians over \$20 billions in reduced administrative costs in the first year alone.³

Although appealing in scope and the obvious need for a solution, many aspects of this plan have yet to be worked out.² For example, the plan requires a new state agency to govern it. Some have questioned if a state agency would really be more efficient than a corporation. LWVC, as well as Health Care for All California, the majority of the State Senate and many others clearly believe this is possible. We wait now to see if the State Assembly will agree.

You will be updated as we find out more.

1. www.house.gov/stark/issues/health_care.htm
2. www.healthcareforall.org/ap.html
3. www.ca.lwv.org/lwvc/action/call/sb840_2005-03.html

—Syeda Yunus

ACTION TAKEN

The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark and Union City joined with Tri-City Ecology and the proponents of Measures A and T (the hill area initiatives) to appeal the decision of the Planning Commission to allow the Sandhu house above Mission Blvd. In Niles. The main reason was that access to the house crossed a slope of 30% or greater. Other reasons were that Measure T bans structures built on hilltops, the house will be visible from much of Niles, and three water tanks would need a great deal of excavation, grading, and retaining walls.

The City Council granted the appeal so Dr. Sandhu will only be allowed a house of 10,000 sq. ft. and somewhere on his property where the road doesn't cross a slope of 30% or more.

The entire appeal is on the LWVFNUC Web site under Action.

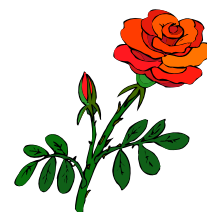
—Miriam Keller

IN MEMORIUM

We are sad to report that Charles Merrifield, husband of our Past President, Phyllis Merrifield passed away. A memorial will be announced later. Our condolences to Phyllis and her family.

We are sad to report the passing of Elizabeth Flegal, Past President of our League and past member of the LWVC Board of Directors.

Our condolences to Lulu and Al Levy and their family. Their son, Daniel, passed away recently.



LWVFNUC TAKES ACTION

Our local League of Women Voters was asked to help correct a severe problem in Alameda Creek, one of the largest non-polluted creeks emptying into the San Francisco Bay. Coyote Creek to our south and Napa Creek to our north are polluted with any number of agents from fertilizers and pesticides. Alameda Creek is home to many species of birds and fish along with aquatic life. With the help of volunteers, Jeff Miller started The Alameda Creek Alliance (ACA) to protect and promote the health of Alameda Creek. His creek restorations have been well documented and have led to the increase in rainbow trout and steelhead trout, endangered species. However, water is required for the spawning and the health of Alameda Creek to continue.

In 1997 The California Department of Fish and Game (CDF&G) Code 5937 recognized this need and requested the San Francisco Public Utility Commission, (SFPUC) which controls water flow from Calaveras Dam, to enter into a legal Memorandum of Understanding regarding water flows. After seven years of SFPUC failing to provide adequate flow, Jeff Miller and ACA requested environmental groups to demand that SFPUC respond to the Memorandum of Understanding. Sixty-eight environmental groups responded including the local LWVFNUC. We also requested the LWVBA to respond. The health of a creek that enters the SF Bay affects the health of the entire Bay. The LWVBA and the LWVSF both supported by writing to the SFPUC.

Request written by Miriam Keller, President of the LWVFNUC included:

- Commit to the release of sufficient interim summer flows from Calaveras and possibly San Antonio reservoirs immediately to sustain resident steelhead and rainbow trout in good condition.
- Commit to releasing flows necessary to enable restoration of anadromous (ascending rivers for breeding) steelhead trout by 2007.

- Commit to the development and adoption of a restoration study that will provide the necessary information by 2007 to determine the flows needed for steelhead trout restoration.

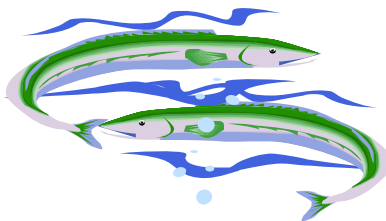
- Commit to the development of a water supply operations plan, which explores ways to offset or mitigate water supply impacts of restoration.

The League of Women Voters supports our native environment and its protection. We will continue to work with the Alameda Creek Alliance to preserve the Alameda Creek trout habitat.

The Proposed SFPUC Interim Operations Plan is preferable to citizen's groups having to file a lawsuit under CDF&G Code 5937 or for illegal take under the Endangered Species Act, or to pursue stream flows by filing a water rights complaint with the state Water Board.

From our local League to the County or Bay Area League, our grass roots process is unique and in this case successful. When necessary, aid from the State or National League gives us tremendous strength, support and respect. This valuable asset should never be underestimated.

—Susan Gearhart

**DIESEL EMISSIONS AND HEALTH EFFECTS**

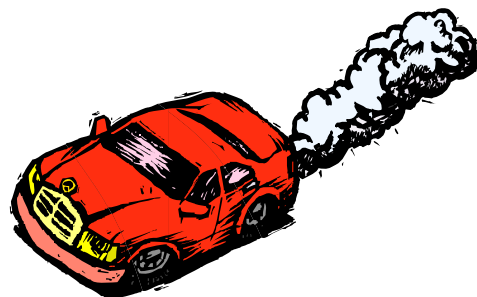
A recent study conducted in West Contra Costa County, Deluged by Diesel, has determined that homes close to freeways and industry in the area receive far more diesel soot and other contaminants than homes in less industrial parts of the county. The study was conducted by the Pacific Institute in partnership with

the

Contra Costa Health Services Department and the West County Asthma Coalition, Neighborhood House of North Richmond, West County Toxics Coalition, and the Community Health Initiative. It included testing for diesel particulates in indoor air and an analysis of diesel emission sources in the vicinity of the tested homes. Data showed that particulate levels in the West County homes were highest on weekdays, while the control home had little variation during the week, indicating that truck traffic was a major factor in the pollution. (The full report is online at http://www.pacinst.org/reports/west_county_diesel/.)

Health impacts of air pollution are illustrated by a Southern California study which indicates that children in the most polluted areas suffer from diminished lung capacity. The University of Southern California study has been following over 1700 children in 12 communities for over ten years, and will continue to monitor them until they are in their early 20s. Scientists suggest that their results may be explained by the constant irritation of pollution on sensitive lung areas, and they also suspect that some pollutants may inhibit growth of the tiny air sacs, alveoli, that are essential to lung function.

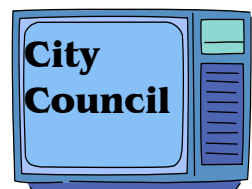
More information is available from the USC News Service office, <http://www.usc.edu/uscnnews/stories/8212.html>.—Bay Area Monitor, 2005



BROADCASTS AND REBROADCASTS OF TELEVISED GOVERNMENTAL MEETINGS

Meeting	Days	Time	Channel	Rebroadcast	Time	Channel
Fremont City Council	1st, 2nd, 4th Tues.	7 PM	27	Wednesdays,	10 AM Following Meetings	27
Fremont City Council Scheduled Study Ses- sions	3rd Tuesday	4PM	27			
Fremont Planning Com- mission	2nd and 4th Thurs.	7 PM	27	Following Fridays	10 AM	27
Fremont Unified SD	2nd and 4th Wed.	6:30 PM	27			
Ohlone	2nd and 4th Wed.	7:15 PM	28	Following Thursdays Following Fridays	7 PM 10 AM	28
Alameda County Board of Education	2nd and 4th Tues.	6 PM		Saturday following board meeting	12 midnight	27
Washington Hospital	4th Monday	10 AM	27	See note		
Newark City Council	2nd and 4th Thurs- days	7:30	26	Tape in Newark Library		
Newark Planning Com- mission	Tuesdays before Council Meetings	7:30 PM	26			
Newark Unified SD	1st and 3rd Tues.	7:30 PM	26			
Ohlone	2nd and 4th Wed	7:15 PM	28	1st Monday	6 PM	15
Alameda County Board of Education	2nd and 4th Tues.	6 PM		Saturday after Board Meet- ing	12 Midnight	26
Washington Hospital	4th Wednesday	3 PM	26	See note		
Union City City Council	2nd and 4th Tues- days	7 PM	15	Following Fridays	6 PM	15
Union City Planning Commission	1st and 3rd Thurs.	6 PM	15	2nd and 4th Thursdays	6 PM	15
New Haven Unified SD	2nd and 4th Thurs- days	6:30 PM	27	Following Tuesdays and Thursdays	6:30 PM	27
Ohlone	2nd and 4th Wed.	7:15 PM	28	1st Monday	6 pm	15
Alameda County Board of Education	2nd and 4th Tues.	6 PM		Saturday following meeting	12 midnight	15
Washington Hospital	4th Sunday	6 PM	28	See note		

Note: Washington Hospital rebroadcasts its board meetings on Channel 78 three times a day. Go to www.whhs.com for listings. Click on icon.



Please tear out this page and place it near your television set.

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
 Donate to LWVNUC \$ _____ Donate to Ed. Fund \$ _____ Total enclosed \$ _____
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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: Ann Crosbie: 510-657-3422, crosbie-clan@comcast.net. 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's diversity.

LWVFNUC Voter
 Published 10 times a
 year by the League of Women Voters
 of Fremont, Newark and Union City.

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 Materials are available 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM with
 permission from a board member.

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.

QUOTE: Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, and today is a gift; that's why they call it the present

—Eleanor Roosevelt, (1884-1962)

ELECTRONIC CORNER

A little quiz

1. What is California's biggest spending area?
2. Is California's spending per student above or below the national average?
3. Does California spend more on each K-12 student or on each inmate in state prison?
4. The average tuition paid by students attending California's public colleges and universities is a) higher, b) lower, c) equal to the national average.
5. The 50 states in the U.S. have an average of 144 employees per 10,000 people. How many employees does California have per 10,000 people?
 A) 108. b) 144. c) 180?
 (Answers below)

From Next Ten (www.next-ten.org)

"Next Ten is an independent, nonpartisan organization that engages and educates Californians so that, together, we can improve our future economy and quality of life.

"We call ourselves Next Ten because we aren't here for the quick fix. We have our sights set on joining with others to improve the state over the next 10 years and the 10 years after that. Next Ten believes that together, we can create the brighter future we all want for ourselves and our children.

"Next Ten was founded by F. Noel Perry, a venture capitalist and philanthropist concerned about California today and the California our children will inherit"

Log on to www.Next-Ten.org for lots of information on California's budget.

—Vesta Wilson



Answers
 1. K-12 education 2. below 3. 6 times more for prisoner 4. c 5. a



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS OF FREMONT,
NEWARK AND UNION CITY**
P.O. Box 3218 Fremont, CA, 94539
(510) 794-5783

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WATCH VOTING MATTERS

Watch Sandi Pantages interview Paul Clifford and Samina Sundas. Topic: Not in Fremont

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

Newark, Channel 26, 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>

CALENDAR

Fri. Sept. 9	Education Committee	9:30 AM	Miriam Keller's home
Sat., Sept. 10	LWVC Workshops	9:30 AM-1 PM	Hyatt Residence, Palo Alto
Mon., Sept. 12	LWVFNUC Board Meeting	7:15	Joanne Landers' home
Mon., Sept. 19	Voter Deadline		
Wed. Sept. 21	Cable	2:30 PM	Comcast Studios
Sat. Sept. 24	Know Your Bay Area Day		Fremont Main Library,
Mon., Sept. 19	Kickoff Meeting	7:00 PM	Fremont Congregational Church
Wed., Sept. 28	Action Committee	9:30 AM	Marilyn Singer's home