



# KING COUNTY SOUTH VOTER

November 2007

*LWV Mission: The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*

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## General Election November 6th.



### Impact of CLIMATE CHANGE On our WATER SUPPLY

Wednesday November 28 6:30-9PM

Kent City Hall, Council Chambers  
220 Fourth Ave S, Kent, WA 98032

What priority does water have in the milieu of problems presented by climate change?

What plans are under way to protect the livability of our region?

Are solutions being framed rapidly enough?

**A panel will provide information and respond to questions from the audience. This is a public forum. Please join us.**

**National Immigration Policy**  
Start reading! See pages 5-13

## Local Transportation Needs Your Help by December 1st!

**Plan a bus trip! Take it! Tell us about it!** "Real Time Experience" is the focus of our League's current transportation study.

**Either alone or with a companion**, pick a destination and then plan a bus trip to get there. After the planning, take the trip. While on the trip, consider its comfort, convenience, safety and accessibility. After taking the trip, call one of the members of the study committee to share your experience, or send comments to the League Office using one of the methods above. Be sure to include your name.

**Complete your journey and your commentary by December 1.**

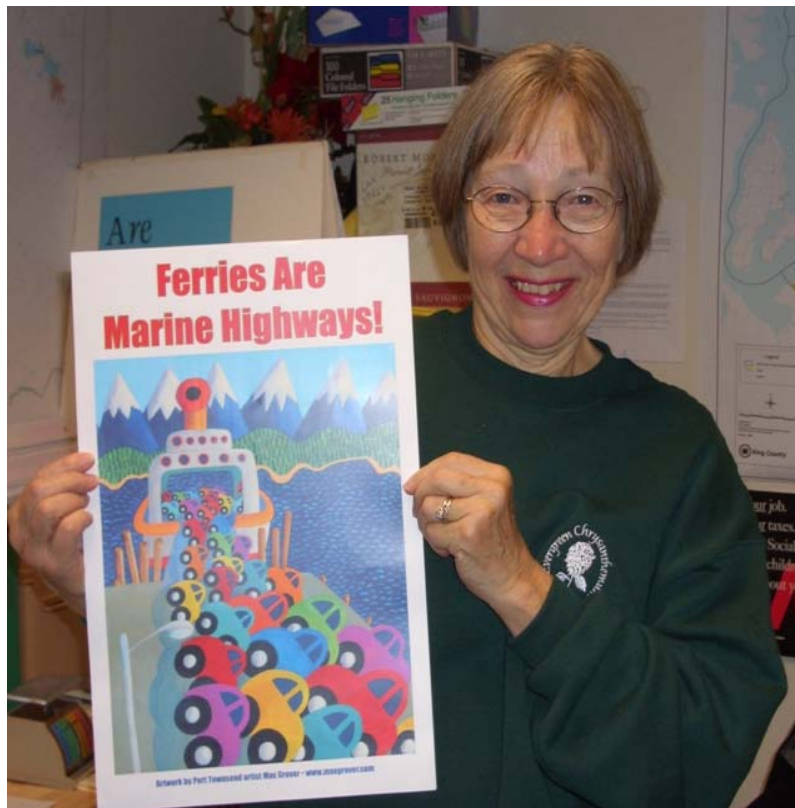
**Committee:** Betty Colasurdo, 206-246-4097; Becky Cox, 206-243-4236; Mary Ellen Hamblin, 425-255-6675; Dave Lilly, 253-630-8478. Pat McCann, 206-878-2799; Susan Sanders, 253-833-9376

**Links are active on Voter at our online site > <http://www.lwvwa.org/king-co-south/index.htm>**

## President's Musings

A small piece of our League's vital core was taken from us with Christel Brunnenkant's death. She was an activist, an adventurer and a very special person, dedicated to her family and her community. She was Highline's Unit Leader and the Chair of the King County Coordinating Committee. If there was an article on King County Government printed anywhere, I found it on my e-mail within hours! How did she do that?

The Board was debating a proposed by-law change last spring to remove the words "citizens" from our League purpose. The debate didn't last long when Christel reminded us that she had joined the League BEFORE she became a citizen. Of course, we should welcome those who are not yet citizens!



This is week after our Ballot Issues Forum in Renton. There was a nice attendance (a little short on League members—but maybe you already know how to vote!). Karen Lunder and the Renton AAUW did a great job providing treats and beverages to all. AAUW also arranged the meeting space.

Many kudos to Pat McCann, Voter Service Chair, who did a mammoth job of rounding up speakers on the many issues. She served admirably as "Miss Negativity" on those issues for which we had no speakers. League is obligated to present both sides at such issues meetings.

Our moderator for the evening, Dave Lilly, was really "on" and managed the meeting with panache and humor. Thanks, Dave.

A note on the Immigration Study in November: Read this Voter and if you have access to the internet, read the background papers on the national LWV website. National Voters have contained "briefs" since February. October's National Voter has two briefs on immigration. Read, read, read! This is NOT an easy topic. Warning: National LWV has suggested the number of minutes to spend on each of the 6 questions. It isn't much so be ready!

If your unit believes you cannot complete the discussion, you can have a unit in December to finish up. We decided to not have a Holiday party this year to concentrate our efforts on the climate change forum being set up by MaryEllen Hamblin for Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> so there is time in December to finish up your discussions.

I am sure all of you will vote. Make sure your neighbors and friends do, too.

*Becky*

## Books

**The World Without Us** by Alan Weisman ponders just that – what would our planet be like with us suddenly gone, and how long would the transformation take. No plastic created has yet to disappear, but one day a microbe will evolve to consume it. In the meantime, our plastics are being ingested by ever smaller bottom — and filter — feeders that are part of the ocean's web-of-life. It's a good lesson in how nature works. Library call no. 304.2 WEI, ISBN-13: 978-0312347291 Submitted by Mary Roberts.

*Have you read a book on a topic other Leaguers might be interested in? Send your review to the office to have it included in the Voter. And if you own the book, and are willing to loan it to a member, include that comment.*

# Calendar

## November unit topic: Immigration **Consensus due February 2, 2008**

- 1 **Seattle Forum:** Topic: Immigration. Usually 1st Thursday 7:30PM Seattle First Baptist Church 1111 Harvard Avenue (corner of Harvard & Seneca on First Hill) Always check <http://seattlelwv.org>
- 6 **General Election**
- 7 **Board Meeting:** 1st *Wednesday*, 9:30-12 Conference room, 616 SW 152nd, Burien. All members welcome.
- 8 **WA Women's Suffrage**  
**ENUMCLAW:** *Second Thursday*, 7-9PM High Point - 1777 Highpoint. Contact Sandra Nelson, 360-825-6771
- 10 **Action Workshop** 10 AM – 3 PM, St. Andrews Lutheran Church 2650 148<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Bellevue
- 12 **HIGHLINE:** *Second Monday*, 1:30-3:30PM at our office. Contact: Jean Hueston, 206-878-8706
- 15 **VASHON:** *Third Thursday*, 2:30PM at Vashon Library. Contact Ellen Kritzman, 206-567-4837
- 16 **Light Rail (Sound Transit) Tour**—see page 13
- 20 **King County Coordinating Committee:** Third Tues, 12:30PM, Seattle League Office Contact: Miriam Helgeland, 253-852-4167 Tracks what is happening in county government
- 21 **FEDERAL WAY:** *Third Wed*, 7-9PM Foundation House, 32290 1st Ave. So. Kathy Jorgensen - 253-859-8349
- 26 **Social Justice Committee** (Ending Homelessness): Fourth Monday, 5:30PM, Seattle League Office Contact: Pat Cleary at 206-725-9002
- 28 **Winter Forum: [Water as Impacted by Climate Change](#),** Kent City Hall, 6:30-9PM, 220 Fourth Ave S, Kent, WA 98032

## Upcoming

- December Supplemental unit topic: Continuation of Immigration Discussion  
 4<sup>th</sup>-Consensus on Ferry Study due

# November 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6 ELECTION	7 Board	8 Enumclaw	9	10 Action Workshop
11	12 Highline	13	14	15 Vashon	16 Light Rail Tour	17
18	19	20 KCCC	21 Federal Way	22	23	24
25	26 Social Justice	27	28 Forum	29	30	

## Christel Brunnenkant

Christel Brunnenkant passed away September 21st, 2007 of complications from carcinoid cancer. A celebration of Christel's Life produced stories, poems, and quotations from many, with a display of her US patent certification, travel photos and scrapbooks of plays and events that interested her. She had even taken photos of the land and cities below from the airplanes that brought her from Germany in 1958. Stories were shared by League members, Toastmasters, neighbors, friends, and family.

Arati (George is Christel's other sibling) told of their reading by flashlight under the bedcovers to finish some exciting book, and of several youthful escapades involving the rivers that flooded every spring. Christel 'egged on' her sister to join her in boating to the source of the river, a journey they couldn't complete at the time. Arati suggested 'her sister has now reached the source of the river, and hopes she will be happy there'.

Christel's favorite—and only—son Kurt, sibling to Monika, told of her saving/ mailing articles 'he needs to read', which he didn't; and of his admonishing her to travel 'to countries that have streetlights', which she didn't. Instead, her travels were to Bali, the Dead Sea in Israel, Ethiopia, Zambia, the Yucatan, Chiapas, the Andes, Bolivia, Peru, and more. She also hiked and backpacked all over.

A granddaughter (one of seven grandchildren) shared a written poem; another told of Christel's serving them green pancakes, made of spinach and broccoli, and her surprise when they asked for more; how she read to them and hiked with them, taught them to knit and sew, and cook (No box mixes allowed).

Christel, curious about everything, supported, inspired and pushed those around her to experience more. Others described her as fearless, spunky, an optimist, with a 'tolerance for risk-taking', whose spirit was always free, and who wanted to make the world a better place that would be better for everyone in it.



Christel Brunnenkant  
1937-2007

The following description of Christel, a quotation from George Bernard Shaw, was submitted by Betty Colasurdo.

"This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no 'brief candle' for me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."

Mary Ellen Hamblin, who shared stories of their two trips to Bali, brought a basket of daffodils so each attendee could plant a few in Christel's memory.

In lieu of flowers remembrances may be made to The Carcinoid Cancer Foundation. Obituary notice at <http://legacy.com/NWclassifieds/DeathNotices.asp?Page=LifeStory&PersonID=95313621>

## LWV-KCS October Board Meeting

Board authorized research and purchase of an office printer to replace our ten-year-old printer from the Muckleshoot Tribe grant. Would like printer to handle 'normal' monthly output of 20+ newsletters, and we would continue to use Roadrunner for large batches of copies.

Hamblin and McCann will continue work on speaker(s) for program about climate change effect on water in lieu of holiday party to be held November 28th at Kent City Hall. We will advertise this event to the public. Lunder (LWV and AAUW) suggested honorarium might be appropriate.

An audit of our League's financial books was conducted by Enid Dolstad with treasurer Faye Wilkinson present to answer questions. The audit found our processes in order with an accurate accounting of our income and expenses. A copy of the audit letter is available in the League office.

McCann, Lunder discussed plans and speakers for Ballot Issues night. Cox added information about other candidate events.

Discussed topics and events for future monthly meetings.

Dave Lilly reported on the Sound Transit Tour taken by some members of the Local Transportation Study team. Tour costs \$10, includes lunch, and is held monthly. Dave felt tour of light rail system was worthwhile — team has saved the handouts at our office. To reserve a spot for a tour (next tours are October 26th or November 16th), see page 13. Site is <http://www.soundtransit.org/x4825.xml>

## November Discussion Topic: National Immigration Policy

Local units of the League of Women Voters nationwide will be attempting to reach consensus on National Immigration Policy. The National League of Women Voters (LWVUS) has done much research and writing over the past year to educate the membership on the facts and issues involved in this important topic. Go to the LWVUS website at <http://www.lwv.org> to gain a broader understanding. At the site, click on Projects, Immigration Study page. Scroll to the bottom where you will see articles, a video of a panel discussion, and additional resources. Read! These articles will begin to answer the many facets of immigration that most of us are puzzling over. If you have questions about the process or publications, please contact Becky. Above text primarily from <http://www.seattlelwv.org/sites/default/files/Seattle%20Voter%20October%202007.pdf>

### Background Papers

Immigration Policy: Family Reunification  
 What Motivates Immigration to America?  
 Federal Immigration Policy: Enforcement Issues  
 Immigration: Diversity and Inclusion  
 Effects Of Global Interdependence On Migration  
 Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration  
 Immigration and the Economy  
 Overview: Federal Immigration Policy and Proposed Reforms

### Resources Lists

Immigration 101: the Basics  
**From National Voter (Briefs are subsets of Background papers)**  
 Immigration: A Historical Perspective  
 Immigration Study Brief #1 Global Interdependence and Migration  
 Immigration Study Brief #2 Immigration: Impact on U.S. Economy  
 Immigration Study Brief #3 Border Enforcement  
 Immigration Study Brief #4 Family Reunification and Diversity Policies

## National Immigration Policy Consensus Questions

**Consensus** is the process by which the League achieves member agreement on study issues. It is neither a simple majority nor unanimity; instead, it is *an overall sense of the group*. Consensus results from answers to questions on which members can find common ground and agreement; this process entails an exchange of ideas and opinions. Based on the results of the consensus process, the LWVUS formulates a new position. (from National Voter, October 2007, p. 3)

**Questions 1a, 2-5 Instructions:** Rate each "High Priority," "Lower Priority", "Disagree

**Question 1:** Federal immigration laws should take into consideration criteria such as the following (not listed in any particular order or hierarchy):

**Part a:**

- a. Ethnic and Cultural Diversity
- b. Economic, Business and Service Employment Needs
- c. Environmental Impact/Sustainability
- d. Family Reunification of Authorized Immigrants and Citizens with Spouses and Minor Children
- e. History of Criminal Activity
- f. Humanitarian Crises/ Political Persecution in Home Countries
- g. Immigrant Characteristics (health and age)
- h. Rights of All Workers to Safe Working Conditions and Liveable Wage
- i. Rights of Families to Remain Together
- j. Rights of all Individuals in U.S. to Fair Treatment Under the Law (Fair Hearing, Right to Counsel, Right of Appeal, and Humane Treatment)
- k. Education and Training

**Part b:** Rank the top 3 you labeled 'high priority' in part a. 1 is highest.

**Question 2:** Unauthorized immigrants currently in the U.S. should be treated as follows: (rate each one)

- a. Deport Unauthorized Immigrants
- b. Some Deported/Some Allowed To Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Length of Residence in U.S.
- c. Some Deported/Some Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Needs of US Employers
- d. All Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status by Doing Things Such as Paying Taxes, Learning English, Studying Civics, Etc.
- e. Assess Fines Before Allowed To Earn Legal Adjustment Of Status

**Question 3:** Federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the U.S. for immigrants who are: (rate each one)

- a. Immediate Family Members Joining Family Member Already Admitted for Legal Permanent Residence in the U.S.
- b. Entering the U.S. to Meet Labor Needs
- c. Entering the U.S. as Students
- d. Entering the U.S. because of Persecution in Home Country

**Question 4a:** In order to deal more effectively with unauthorized immigrants, Federal immigration law should include: Social Security Card or Other National Identification Card with Secure Identifiers for All Persons Residing in the U.S.

**Question 4b:** Federal immigration law dealing with unauthorized immigrants should be enforced by including: (rate each one)

- i. Physical Barriers (such as Fences) and Surveillance at Borders
- ii. Increased Personnel at Land, Air, and Sea Entry Points
- iii. More Effective Tracking of Persons with Non-Immigrant Visas Until They Leave the Country
- iv. Verification Documents, such as Green Cards and Work Permits with Secure Identifiers
- v. Improved Technology to Facilitate Employer Verification of Employee Visa Status
- vi. Improved Technology for Sharing Information Among Federal Agencies
- vii. A Program to Allow Immigrant Workers to Go in and Out of the U.S. to Meet Seasonal and Sporadic Labor Needs
- viii. Significant Fines Proportionate to Revenue for Employers Who Fail to Take Adequate Steps to Verify Work Authorization of Employees

**Questions 5 and 6 instructions:** ask whether each League group has consensus with the text or not.

**Question 5:** Federal immigration law should address and balance the long-term federal financial benefit from immigrants with the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

**Question 6:** Federal immigration law should be coordinated with U.S. foreign policy to pro-actively help improve economies, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations.

**Question 7:** Comments

## LWVUS Immigration Study Consensus Background Information and Discussion Questions

The following discussion questions may be used to help participants focus on the various viewpoints associated with the consensus questions and sub-questions. Brief background material has been provided for most of the questions.

**Question 1: Federal immigration laws should take into consideration criteria such as:** (Rate each one)

### **a. Ethnic and cultural diversity**

#### Background Information

From its founding, this country has been made up of a mixture of ethnic groups. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 denied entrance by race for the first time, while a 1924 law incorporated a quota system to limit immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. This system was broadly followed until 1965 when the quota system was eliminated. In recent years, large numbers of unauthorized/undocumented and authorized/documentated immigrants have come to the U.S., especially from Mexico and Central America, to work and live, changing the demographics of large parts of the country

#### Discussion Questions

1. What contributions to American culture— such as food, art, music, language, literature, traditions, for instance – have been made by immigrants from different parts of the world?
2. What problems arise when immigrants retain their cultural traditions, stay connected to their native countries and continue to speak their native languages, rather than becoming integrated into and assimilated by the larger American culture?

### **b. Economic, business and service employment needs in the United States.**

#### Background Information

Historically, large numbers of immigrants have come to this country for economic opportunity, and the U.S. economy has accommodated the expanding labor supply that today encompasses 1.5 million immigrants per year. With Americans retiring at increased rates, economists expect this expansion to continue. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 56 million new jobs will be created between 2002 and 2012. By 2010, nearly 43 percent of all job openings will require only minimal education.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Are immigrants necessary to bolster the current and future work force, or could those jobs be filled in other ways?
2. Should employers be required to pay Americans higher wages in order to reduce the need for foreign labor?

### **c. Environmental impact/sustainability**

#### Background Information

Any increase in the population of the U.S. helps accelerate the continued expansion of the economy, which frequently creates conditions harmful to local environments. On the other hand, most major environmental impact issues have global impact and are not limited by borders.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Are you concerned that population growth due to immigration may have a serious negative impact on the environment?
2. Because most major environmental issues have global impact, how will curtailing immigration lessen environmental impact on the U.S.?

### **d. Family reunification of authorized immigrants and naturalized citizens with spouses and minor children**

#### Background Information

Many believe that policies that facilitate the stability of families are in the best interest of both the immigrant families and the U.S. Naturalized citizens and legal permanent residents are more productive workers and more invested in their communities if their spouses and minor children are allowed to join them in the U.S. in a timely manner. However, this must be balanced against admitting persons with skills needed by U.S. businesses. Some people think that meeting the needs of the economy is more beneficial to the country as a whole than indirect benefits from family reunification.

#### Discussion Questions

1. What priority should be accorded to immigration policies that ensure family reunification?

### **e. History of criminal activity**

#### Background Information

History of criminal activity generally indicates a propensity for crime, and crime is already a costly social and economic problem in the U.S. However, data show lower crime rates among immigrants than among native born.

#### Discussion Question

1. Is it fair that under current immigration law individuals' minor offenses that would be considered misdemeanors for American citizens can be grounds for exclusion or deportation of immigrants?

2. Should immigrants be held to the same legal standards and accorded the same rights as American citizens?

**f. Humanitarian crises/political persecution in home countries**

Background Information

Historically, Americans have prided themselves on providing safety to those fleeing persecution in their homelands. However, refugees rarely bring financial resources when they flee their homelands and may become financial burdens on their communities.

Discussion Questions

1. Do we have a continuing obligation to provide safety to those fleeing persecution in their homelands?
2. Should we accept fewer refugees because of concern that they could become a financial burden on their communities?

**g. Immigrant characteristics (health and age)**

Background Information

Federal law has historically included provisions for medical examinations to identify immigration applicants with inadmissible health-related conditions. The law requires medical examinations for all refugees and applicants applying for immigrant visas from outside the U.S. The list of communicable diseases that can make an applicant inadmissible include, among others, tuberculosis, HIV infections, Hansen’s Disease and several sexually transmitted diseases. Age, on the other hand, has not been regulated, except to determine eligibility for a child as a minor in order to accompany a parent.

Discussion Questions

1. Should we refuse entrance to immigrants with serious communicable diseases that have been virtually eliminated in this country, even those that can be eliminated and/or controlled by modern medicine?
2. Should immigration policy give preference to relatively young and productive immigrants so that fewer older or retired immigrants are granted visas?

**h. Rights of all workers to safe working conditions and liveable wage**

Background Information

Many feel that ensuring safe working conditions and a liveable wage for all workers improves the country as a whole. Others are concerned that these improved conditions would make unauthorized immigration more appealing and exacerbate current border control problems.

Discussion Questions

1. Should Federal law limit immigrating workers to those who are guaranteed a job with safe working conditions and a liveable wage, taking into consideration that such a guarantee could increase costs to be passed on to consumers and that workers who are citizens would not have the same guarantee?

**i. Rights of families to remain together**

Background Information

The pull of family ties is one of the most powerful motivations for immigration. Keeping families intact reflects a core American value. Many believe that immigration policies that ignore this motivation unintentionally promote unauthorized immigration. Others believe that immigrants are aware of the possibility of a lengthy separation when they decide to emigrate.

Discussion Questions

1. Because immigration policies that ignore the pull of family ties unintentionally promote unauthorized immigration, should family reunification be an important priority for immigration reform?
2. Is long-term separation from immediate family members one of the costs that immigrants must be willing to pay when coming to the U.S.?

**j. Rights of all individuals in U.S. to fair treatment under the law (fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and humane treatment)**

Background Information

The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution forbids depriving any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law and denying any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. Non-citizens must be accorded these constitutional rights, but many would not receive even these rights in their home countries.

Discussion Questions

1. Should immigrants, including unauthorized immigrants, be afforded this Fourteenth Amendment protection?
2. Do you agree that because many immigrants would not be granted the most basic rights in their own countries, they should not have the same legal protections as U.S. citizens?

**k. Education and training**

Background Information

Studies have shown that high skilled immigrants contribute more to the U.S. economy. However, while education and training are important, the U.S. badly needs workers with little or no education and training to fill jobs in manufacturing, service industries, agriculture, construction, and restaurants.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Should immigrants with specialized training and strong academic credentials receive priority admission?
2. Should workers with little or no education and training needed to fill jobs in manufacturing, service industries, agriculture, construction and restaurants and hospitality, be given a lower priority than highly skilled workers?

### **Question 2: Unauthorized immigrants currently in the U.S. should be treated as follows:**

#### Background Information

Approximately 12 million immigrants currently live in the U.S. without authorization or have overstayed their visas. The question of giving these unauthorized immigrants some type of amnesty is dividing Congress and the country.

#### **a. Deport unauthorized immigrants**

##### Background Information

Many feel that because unauthorized immigrants broke the law to come here, deportation appropriately reverses the process. Others argue that unauthorized immigrants are here because the U.S. government does not issue a sufficient number of visas to meet labor demands.

##### Discussion Questions

1. Some people argue that because they have broken the law unauthorized immigrants should be deported and not granted legal status in the U.S. Do you agree?
2. Others argue that we have unauthorized immigrants because the government doesn't issue enough visas to meet labor demands, and that it would be unfair to plan mass arrests and deportation of millions of unauthorized immigrants?

#### **b. Some deported/some allowed to earn legal adjustment of status based on length of residence in the U.S.**

##### Background Information

As precedent, the 1986 law's amnesty provisions were based on length of residency. Immigrants who could show ability to support themselves were allowed to stay in this country.

##### Discussion Questions

1. Should immigrants who have lived in this country for an extended period of time and have shown they can support themselves and have integrated themselves into our society be allowed to stay?
2. Is it fair to give someone priority status in the legalization process because they have been in violation of U.S. laws for a longer period of time?

#### **c. Some deported/some allowed to earn legal adjustment of status based on needs of U.S. employers**

##### Background Information

The U.S. has an expanding economy requiring a larger labor force than Americans can supply. Providing jobs for immigrants, even low-skilled jobs, serves the U.S. economy well, but many feel that unauthorized immigrants, working for low salaries, drive salaries down for some low-income American workers.

##### Discussion Questions

1. Does allowing unauthorized immigrants achieve legalization because of their work status serve the expanding U.S. economy well?
2. If unauthorized immigrants who are willing to work for low salaries drive salaries down for some low-skilled American workers, should the immigrants be deported?

#### **d. All allowed to earn legal adjustment of status by doing things such as paying taxes, learning English, studying civics, etc.**

##### Background Information

Immigrants who gain English proficiency and assimilate quickly in other ways will qualify for better jobs and pay higher taxes. But many feel that all immigrants are expected to assimilate and unauthorized immigrants who have learned English, studied civics and paid taxes should not be rewarded with legal adjustment of status.

##### Discussion Questions

1. Should unauthorized immigrants who gain English proficiency, qualify for better jobs, and pay higher taxes be granted legal status?

#### **e. If deported, assess fines before possible re-entry**

##### Background Information

Fines would help compensate the U.S. for deportation costs as well as for any advantages/benefits unauthorized immigrants received while living in this country. Others maintain that most unauthorized immigrants have been paying taxes and fees for services they cannot access, which would compensate for deportation and legalization costs.

##### Discussion Questions

1. Should unauthorized immigrants be penalized by paying fines before re-entry, fines that would help compensate the U.S. for the cost of deporting them and for any advantages/benefits they received while living in this country without authorization?
2. Should payment of taxes and fees for services unauthorized immigrants have been unable to access, including substantial payments to Social Security, be sufficient to cover costs such as deportation and legalization and make re-entry penalties unnecessary?

**f. Assess fines before allowed to earn legal adjustment of status**

Background Information

Unauthorized immigrants pay taxes and fees for services they cannot access, which would compensate the U.S. for legalization costs. Others feel that unauthorized immigrants should be penalized in some way for breaking the law when they entered the country illegally.

Discussion Questions

1. Should unauthorized immigrants be penalized for breaking the law by paying fines to help cover the cost of their legalization and to compensate the U.S. for any advantages/benefits they received while living in this country without authorization?
2. Because most unauthorized immigrants work at low-skilled, low-paying jobs, should payment of taxes and fees for services unauthorized immigrants have been unable to access, including substantial payments to Social Security, be adequate compensation?

**Question 3: Federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the U.S. for immigrants who are:**

**a. Immediate family members, joining family members already admitted for legal permanent residence in the U.S.**

Background Information

Many believe that policies that facilitate the stability of families are in the best interest of both the immigrant families and the U.S. Naturalized citizens and legal permanent residents are more productive workers and more invested in their communities if their spouses and minor children are allowed to join them in the U.S. in a timely manner. However, this must be balanced against admitting persons with skills required to meet this country's labor needs. Others think that meeting the needs of the economy is more beneficial to the country as a whole than indirect benefits from family reunification.

Discussion Questions

1. Are policies that facilitate the stability of immigrant families in the best interest of both the immigrant families and the U.S.?
2. Is meeting the needs of the economy more beneficial to the country as a whole than indirect benefits, such as higher productivity and increased community investment, that can result from giving family reunification a high priority?

**b. Entering the U.S. to meet labor needs**

Background Information

For the past decade, market forces have attracted 1.5 -1.8 million skilled and unskilled immigrants to work in the U.S. each year. However, annual legal quotas admitted only about a million immigrants, resulting in a significant imbalance.

Discussion Questions

1. Should Federal immigration policy make the annual legal intake of workers more or less equal to the flow generated by supply and demand?
2. Should employers be required to pay higher wages to all workers in order to attract native-born workers to fill most of the jobs currently held by immigrants?

**c. Entering the U.S. as students**

Background Information

Students come to this country on non-immigrant visas with expiration dates. They are here temporarily and for a specific purpose – to attend school. These students are a major part of the life of most American universities, especially at the graduate level in science and technology, and academia competes for them.

Discussion Questions

1. Because of this country's excellent educational opportunities, should we encourage students from abroad to come here to go to school so that they will be able to use their expertise to help people in their home countries and elsewhere, as well as in the U.S.?
2. Should we reduce the number of visas granted to foreign students because some may overstay their visas, becoming unauthorized immigrants, and because study in the U.S. contributes to a "brain drain" in developing countries?

**d. Entering the U.S. because of persecution in home country.**

Background Information

Historically, Americans have prided themselves on providing safety to those fleeing persecution in their homelands. However, refugees rarely bring financial resources when they flee their homelands and may become financial burdens on their communities.

Discussion Questions

1. Do Americans have an obligation to provide safety to those fleeing persecution in their homelands, as well as a special obligation to those refugees who can no longer remain safely in their homelands because of the aid they gave to U.S. troops during time of war?

2. Should we accept fewer refugees because of the inordinate amount of assistance and support required to keep them from becoming a financial burden on their communities?

**4a. In order to deal more effectively with unauthorized immigrants, Federal immigration law should include:**

**Social Security Card or other national identification card with secure identifiers for all persons residing in the U.S.**

Background Information

The national identification card debate became more intense after 9/11 and has gone far beyond the Social Security card. The Real ID law, enacted on May 11, 2005, requires states to issue drivers licenses based on all of the following sources of verifiable information – a photo ID, documentation of birth and current address, and proof that a Social Security number is legitimate. These drivers' licenses will be required as primary identification for the Social Security Administration, airline travel, entering national parks, and opening bank accounts, for instance. Provisions are to become effective in December 2009.

Discussion Questions

1. Should we have a national identification card as recommended by the 9/11 Commission in order to hinder both terrorists and unauthorized immigrants, as well as to reduce fraud and improve airline security?
2. Would a national identification card infringe upon Americans' privacy and possibly facilitate identity theft?

**4b. Federal immigration law dealing with unauthorized immigrants should be enforced by including: (rate each one)**

**i. Physical barriers (such as fences) and surveillance at borders**

Background Information

Beginning with the Immigration Act of 1990, immigration legislation increasingly focused on unauthorized immigration and border enforcement issues. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) initiated a series of strategies designed to stop immigrants from crossing the U.S. - Mexico border without authorization – “Operation Hold the Line” in the El Paso, TX, area and “Operation Gatekeeper” in California. These systems were a combination of physical barriers such as fencing, as well as high power light systems, and movement sensors. In 2006, Congress passed the Secure Fence Act, with the primary purpose of building 700 miles of new fencing and enhancing the technology to make the U.S.-Mexico border more secure. The cost of building the fence is estimated at \$9 billion.

The northern border has received little attention, primarily because immigrants trying to enter from Canada without authorization generally present false papers at border stations instead of crossing in unregulated areas, as they do from Mexico.

Discussion Questions

1. Are physical barriers such as fences the most effective way to stop unauthorized immigrants, terrorists, smugglers, and drug traffickers in non-regulated border areas, as well as to provide important deterrents that increase the risk of apprehension?
2. Are fences and increased surveillance at borders worth the cost of dealing with increases in the smuggling industry as well as concerns about deaths as people cross in more remote and dangerous areas?

**ii. Increased personnel at land, air and sea entry points**

Background Information

Many argue that more personnel might reduce vigilante efforts, which are problematical, and also reduce the financial burden on state and local police and government. However, increasing the size of the Border Patrol is difficult and takes time. Retention rates are poor because of low pay relative to other law enforcement jobs, poor working conditions and few opportunities for advancement.

Discussion Questions

1. Are more border guards needed to increase border security and reduce the financial burden on state and local police and government?
2. As expenditures for border security have risen, the number of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. has increased as well. Will increasing Border Patrol personnel (which has been increased 200 percent in the last 20 years) bring our borders under control?

**iii. More effective tracking of persons with non-immigrant visas until they leave the country**

Background Information

While 60 percent of unauthorized immigrants enter this country at the southern border, 40 percent come in legally through ports of entry – airports, seaports, northern and southern borders, and overseas consulates - and then overstay their visas. In 1996, Congress defined enforcement more broadly to reflect the need to cover air and land ports of entry and mandated a system for tracking entries and exits of students and foreign-born visitors be fully operational by 2003.

Discussion Questions

1. Should we give a high priority to increasing funding for existing systems capable of effectively tracking foreign students and temporary foreign workers until they leave the country, or should higher priority be accorded to developing a less costly system of issuing machine readable, tamper resistant visas and other travel and entry documents to all international visitors before they enter the U.S.?

2. Are current routine inspections of the documents of train, ship and airline passengers by Immigration and Customs a violation of the Americans' civil rights?

**iv. Verification documents, such as green cards and work permits with secure identifiers.**

Background Information

Social Security cards, "green" cards and immigration authorization cards are generally accepted as the best documents to verify work eligibility, but without secure identifiers they are easy to falsify.

Discussion Questions

1. Should adding biometrics to Social Security or "green" cards be given a high priority?
2. Would adding biometrics to the Social Security card, turning it into what many call a national identification card, raise issues of privacy and confidentiality?

**v. Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of employee visa status**

Background Information

To verify employee eligibility, employers must maintain a record (I-9 form) showing they have asked for and examined one of more than two dozen specified documents that prove employment eligibility. Employers must also verify Social Security numbers with the Social Security Administration – a process that currently can take months. The result is that roughly half of all unauthorized workers are hired by employers who fully comply with I-9 requirements, but have been unable to verify quickly and reliably the authenticity of workers' identity documents. In addition, questioning the documents, or asking for further documentation, can lead to discrimination charges. Basic Pilot, a voluntary federal online system, is available to verify job-seekers' documents. As of 2006, only 3,624 employers were registered with Basic Pilot, less than one-twentieth of 1 per cent of all employers in the U.S.

Discussion Questions

1. Should the Federal online system, Basic Pilot, be mandatory for all employers, regardless of the cost to the government and to employers of implementing and using this program?
2. Are employers, who may feel ill-equipped as document examiners, the most effective group to identify unauthorized immigrants?

**vi. Improved technology for sharing information among Federal agencies**

Discussion Questions

1. Should we give a high priority to integrating all immigration-related federal databases, such as Basic Pilot (employee verification), US-VISIT (visa records) and the Social Security system, and making the resulting system available to appropriate users to produce optimal results?
2. Would a large centralized federal database raise privacy and accuracy concerns, and be too costly to create and implement?

**vii. A program to allow immigrant workers to go in and out of the U.S. to meet seasonal and sporadic labor needs**

Background Information

Under current immigration law, temporary immigration visas are used to meet seasonal and sporadic labor needs for low-income workers. Under the law, only 5,000 visas are available annually for low-skilled workers, but two-thirds of the 500,000 that enter the country without authorization each year enter the work force, mostly in low-wage jobs. Because the system is complex, cumbersome, and slow, employers are unable to get workers when and where they need them, and agree that the current system fails to meet their labor market needs. Attitudes toward guest worker programs do not split on the usual pro-or anti-immigrant lines. Some individuals who believe that there are too many immigrants in the U.S. support guest worker and seasonal worker programs as a means of bringing in short-term workers who will not stay and who do not become permanent residents or citizens. Conversely, some individuals who are pro-immigrant advocates oppose guest worker and other temporary labor programs because they worry that they create conditions for the exploitation of workers.

Discussion Questions

1. Is a guest worker program worth the possibility of adverse effects – declining wages and loss of jobs, for instance, for some low-income Americans?
2. If a guest worker program is implemented, should the law include a permanent path to legalization for workers?

**viii. Significant fines proportionate to revenue for employers who fail to take adequate steps to verify work authorization of employees**

Background Information

Under current law, unchanged since 1986, employer fines for failure to verify work authorization of employees range from \$100 - \$1,000 per immigrant for paperwork errors and from \$250 - \$10,000 for substantive violations.

Discussion Questions

1. Would larger fines that would substantially affect their profits make employers less inclined to accept questionable documentation and give the government greater incentive to aggressively enforce employer sanctions?
2. Because proving intentional violations of immigration law by employers is difficult, will increasing fines actually result in increased prosecutions?

**Question 5: Federal immigration law should address and balance the long-term financial benefit from immigrants with the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.**

Discussion Questions

1. Because the federal government currently realizes a significant financial benefit from Social Security revenues, federal income taxes and Medicare taxes withheld from the wages of authorized and unauthorized immigrants, while some states and localities incur unreimbursed costs for the provision of education, health and social services to immigrants, should this inequitable distribution of resources be redressed?

**Question 6: Federal immigration law should be coordinated with U.S. foreign policy to proactively help improve economies, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations.**

Background Information

Development aid has the potential to reduce some of the attractions of emigration to the United States. In Europe, the lowering of trade barriers within the EU, coupled with targeted economic development has turned countries like Ireland and Spain from net out-migration to in-migration countries. In addition, remittances (the funds sent home by foreign-born workers in the U.S.) act as a form of foreign aid that far exceeds the dollars passed from government to government. To the extent that migration is motivated by poverty and unemployment, aid programs that reduce poverty and create jobs are likely to reduce the pressure to leave the country in search of employment and higher wages.

However, development aid is no panacea. Economic motives are not the only or even the primary reason for migration to the United States. The largest number of immigrants come to be reunited with family members, and smaller, but significant numbers come as refugees fleeing persecution. Furthermore, some forms of aid may actually make it easier for developing country governments to postpone the kinds of economic reforms that will create local jobs and reduce economically motivated out-migration. From a humanitarian perspective, conditioning development aid on policies that limit out-migration could have disastrous consequences if it reduces aid to countries where the need is greatest. To the degree that immigration and foreign policy aims differ, coordination may be very difficult.

Discussion Questions

1. Because migration is often motivated by poverty and unemployment, should Federal law increase funding for foreign aid programs that reduce poverty and create jobs in those countries with the largest migrating populations in order to reduce the pressure to leave the country in search of employment and higher wages?
2. Because some forms of aid may actually make it easier for developing country governments to postpone the kinds of economic reforms that will create local jobs and reduce economically motivated out-migration, should U.S. law reduce funding for this type of aid?

## BUS TOUR OF LIGHT RAIL – NOVEMBER 16<sup>th</sup>

As another “hands-on” experience, your Local Transportation Study committee members encourage you learn more about that Light Rail system being constructed before our eyes.

South Transit offers a bus tour of the Light Rail corridor from the bus tunnel to SeaTac airport. Several of the committee members have taken this and find it informative as well as enjoyable.

**Date:** Friday, November 16, 2007

**Time :** 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Starts at:** 5<sup>th</sup> and King Street, right by the International District Bus Station.

**Lunch stop:** at a Rainier Valley restaurant (varies). Cost of \$10 includes meal, beverage, tax.

**Reserve a place:** Call:206-379-5516. If you leave a message, your call will be returned.

*We have been advised not to make our own list of participants, but rather to have people call Sound Transit directly at the number above. Perhaps you will want to take the bus to 5<sup>th</sup> and King. Consult METRO online to plan your trip! Though this will not be a special tour just for League, you can be sure other local Leaguers will be making the trip.*

From Chair Betty Colasurdo

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BASIC	50.00	75.00
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LWV-WA Positions > [http://lwvwa.org/advocacy/advocacy\\_index.html](http://lwvwa.org/advocacy/advocacy_index.html)

LWV-KCS Positions (and Summary of Positions at all levels) > <http://www.lwvwa.org/king-co-south/index.htm>



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