



League of Women Voters of Washington

Barbara Seitle, President // Marilyn Johnston, Lobby Team Coordinator // Newsletter edited by Laura McCarty

[www.lwvwa.org / advocacy](http://www.lwvwa.org/advocacy)

Legislative Newsletter, Vol.39, No.9

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ACTION PRIORITY

March 9 - 15, 2007

"If you have time this week to make only one phone call, choose one of these..."

SUPPORT dedicated funding for public health
OPPOSE re-enacting Initiative 747
SUPPORT mitigating the impacts of climate change

OPPOSE—HB 2117—Reenacting Initiative 747

This bill would codify I-747's damaging 1% annual cap on the growth of state and local property tax levies.

League Position: LWVWA opposed I-747 in 2001. Property taxes fund essential public services, and the 1% cap has made it more difficult to adequately fund those services.

Status: **House Finance Committee** did not report the bill before the Monday cutoff, but the leadership may still bring it to the floor.

Action: If **Speaker Chopp** is in your district, call him. Also, contact other **House leadership** and representatives from your district. Urge them not to bring HB 2117 up for consideration, and, instead, to take time to consider all the property tax reform measures that have been introduced.

Contact: Barbara Bush, 425-349-5184, omi.bush@verizon.net

SB 6001—Mitigating the Impacts of Climate Change

The purpose of this bill is to lessen global warming. The bill would

- Establish state goals to reduce greenhouse gases emissions
- Require the Department of Ecology to establish a greenhouse gas emissions performance standard for electric utilities operating in the state
- Authorize the Department of General Administration to purchase 100 plug-in hybrid vehicles when commercially available
- Authorize municipal electric utilities and public utility districts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from their electricity operations and purchases
- Create the Office of Washington State Climatologist
- Create a public utility tax credit for consumer-owned utilities that invest in energy efficiency measures

League Position: LWVUS Energy elements 3 & 5

Status: Stuck in **Senate Rules**. The bill must come to the floor by this Wednesday.

Action: This bill must pass the Senate by Wednesday, March 14. Everyone should call his/her senator and ask them to vote for this. This is the most important bill we have ever had to lessen global warming. **Talking Points: Tell your senator that you want state goals written into statute that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and that you want there to be established a greenhouse gas performance standard for electric utilities operating in this state.**

Contact: Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, antoniapotter@comcast.net

2SHB 1825—Providing Dedicated Funding for Public Health

Second Substitute HB 1825 would

- establish a Local Public Health Financing Account to be funded through a portion of cigarette taxes
- fund core public health functions of statewide significance provided by local health jurisdictions
- establish the Public Health Improvement Committee to develop the Public Health Improvement Plan as well as performance measures for local health jurisdictions
- be a comprehensive effort to provide a stable and predictable source of funding and oversight for a public health system across the state.

League Position: LWVUS Position on Health Care includes the following: “Every US resident should have access to a basic level of care that includes the prevention of disease, health promotion and education...” which are core public health functions.

Status: This bill has made it to the Rules Committee for a 2nd reading, but it is CRITICAL that it move out of committee for a floor vote.

Action: If your legislator is a member of House Rules, please contact him/her and urge a vote for moving this bill on. Members of the House Rules Committee are: Chopp (Chair), DeBolt, Armstrong, Bailey, Buri, Ericks, Ericksen, Grant, Green, Hudgins, Hurst, Kelley, Kessler, Kristiansen, Lovick, McCoy, McCune, McDonald, Morrell, Ormsby, Santos, Springer, Sump, Williams. And even if your legislator is not on this committee, please make contact urging support for this bill.

Contact: Ann L. Brand, 206-533-6269, anklbrand@comcast.net

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**Other ACTION ITEMS**

“If you can make another call or two...”

**SUPPORT—SSB 5278 and SHB 1551—Public Funding of Campaigns for Local Office**

These bills would lift the ban (imposed in 1992 by Initiative 134) on the use of public funds to finance political campaigns for local elective offices. (The ban on use of public funds to finance statewide campaigns would remain.)

**League Positions:**

- Representative Government: Action to facilitate changes in the state constitution to achieve a representative and effective state legislature. Action to limit methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office, and promote citizen participation in the election process.
- Campaign Financing: Campaign contributions should be limited. These limits should apply to both state and out-of-state contributions. The PDC should implement laws pertaining to these limitations.

**Status:** SHB 1551, modified so no state or federal funding could be used, is on second reading, and may be approaching a successful floor vote. SSB 5278, modified to apply only to cities, has been held by sponsor **Sen. Franklin**, who has proposed an amendment forcing a referendum before cities could use public funding. This may mean supporters have been lost, so concentrate on this one.

**Action:** Contact your **Senator** to support SSB5278.

**Contact:** Susan Sanders, 253-833-9376, [DavidAndSusan@Sanders.name](mailto:DavidAndSusan@Sanders.name)

### **SUPPORT—SHB 1186—Public Funding of Judicial Campaigns**

The goal of public financing of campaigns is to reduce the impact of special interests in campaigns. SHB 1186 is a comprehensive bill on public funding of judicial campaigns for appeals and supreme court judges that includes a six-year pilot program.

#### **League Positions:**

- Administration of Justice: Action to ensure that our courts are fair, efficient, accessible and staffed with qualified personnel.
- Campaign Financing: Campaign contributions should be limited. These limits should apply to both state and out-of-state contributions. The PDC should implement laws pertaining to these limitations.
- Representative Government: Action to facilitate changes in the state constitution to achieve a representative and effective state legislature. Action to limit methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office, and promote citizen participation in the election process.

**Status:** SHB 1186 has passed to [House Rules](#) for second reading. Apparently, legislators are hesitant to pursue this bill.

**Action:** Contact [House Leadership](#) members from your district to schedule and support SHB 1186.

**Contact:** Susan Sanders, 253-833-9376, [DavidAndSusan@Sanders.name](mailto:DavidAndSusan@Sanders.name)

### **SUPPORT—ESSB 5627—Review and Develop Basic Education Funding**

Engrossed Second Substitute SB 5627 would authorize the WA State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to staff a task force to review the definition of basic education and all current basic education funding formulas and develop a new funding structure and a new definition of basic education. The task force would review available studies and then report: it would give an initial report within 60 days of passage, a second report by Sept. 15, 2007, and a final report with recommendations by Jan. 1, 2008.

**League Position:** The state has the responsibility for amply funding education through the Basic Education Act. All programs mandated by the legislature should be fully funded.

**Status:** ESSB 5627 has passed the Senate and is scheduled to be heard in the [House Education Committee](#) on March 15.

**Action:** We preferred the original bill authorizing WSIPP to appoint members with school finance experience to the task force rather than having the governor appoint members. However, our priority for this session is to support a plan to amply fund education, and this is the bill that is moving forward. Contact your legislators on the House Education Committee and ask for their support for ESSB 5627.

**Contact:** Catherine Ahl, 360-697-7924, [cathahl@hotmail.com](mailto:cathahl@hotmail.com)

### **SUPPORT—SB 5446—Extending Mental Health Parity**

This bill would extend existing mental health parity requirements to the individual and small group plans. Its companion bill in the House has been passed.

**League Position:** LWVWA has been a member of the Washington Coalition for Insurance Parity since 2000 and was a strong supporter of the bill that passed last year to achieve parity for mental health coverage in the large group insurance market. The goal has always been to include people insured through the individual and small group insurance plans under the parity requirements.

**Status:** This bill has been passed out of committees and is awaiting floor action in the Senate.

**Action:** Contact [your senator](#) and urge a "yes" vote for this bill.

**Contact:** Ann L. Brand, 206-533-6269, [anklbrand@comcast.net](mailto:anklbrand@comcast.net)

**SUPPORT—SHB 1201—Extending Medicaid Coverage for Foster Youth**

This bill would extend eligibility for Medicaid or Medical Assistance for youth that were in foster care on their 18th birthday, up to age 21, irrespective of continuing placement in foster care (for more, see “Background” of [Legislative Newsletter, Vol. 39, No. 3, January 26-January 31, 2007](#)). The companion bill, HB1201, has been passed, 95 to 1.

**League Position:** LWVWA Health Care: “Ensure universal access for all residents to a comprehensive, uniform, and affordable set of health services...” “Provide ‘seamless’ coverage and continuity of care, to the extent possible, regardless of changes in life circumstances...”

**Status:** SHB 1201 is scheduled for a hearing in the [Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee](#) on Thursday, March 15.

**Action:** Urge members of the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee to vote for this bill and pass it on for further action. Committee members are Keiser, Franklin, Pflug, Carrell, Fairley, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Marr, Parlette. Urge support for the bill when it reaches the floor of the Senate.

**Contact:** Ann L. Brand, 206-533-6269, [anklbrand@comcast.net](mailto:anklbrand@comcast.net)

**SUPPORT—HB 1827—Requiring a Tax Expenditure Report as Part of Biennial Budget**

A tax expenditure report as part of the state’s budget documents would provide current information about the cost of tax exemptions at the time the legislature is considering spending and revenue measures for the biennial budget.

**League Position:** Any tax exemption proposal should be carefully evaluated for purpose, benefit, and cost; and, all tax exemptions should be periodically reviewed.

**Status:** House Finance Committee reported the bill to [House Rules](#) this week.

**Action:** If you have a representative on House Rules Committee, call or e-mail them urging them to move the bill to the floor for a vote.

**Contact:** Barbara Bush, 425-349-5184, [omi.bush@verizon.net](mailto:omi.bush@verizon.net)

**SUPPORT—HB 1528—Electronic Voter Registration**

This bill would allow a person with a valid Washington state driver’s license or state ID card to submit a voter registration application electronically on the Secretary of State’s website. This would be considered to be a registration by mail. The Secretary of State’s office would have to obtain a digital copy of the applicant’s driver’s license or state ID from the Department of Licensing.

Military families, citizens who are overseas, and students support this bill. Also, according to testimony, some people who now download the registration form from the Secretary of State’s website already believe that they are registering to vote when they fill out a registration form online.

**League Positions:** Positions in Action, Page 12—“Registration should be simple and convenient for voters while ensuring accuracy.”

**Status:** The bill has been referred to the [Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee](#).

**Action:** Contact your senator on this committee and say that you support the bill.

**Contact:** Betty Sullivan, 206-682-5240, [jaybetty2@msn.com](mailto:jaybetty2@msn.com)

**SUPPORT—HB 1303—Encouraging the Use of Cleaner Energy**

This is one of the environmental [Priorities for a Healthy Washington](#). To reduce fossil fuel dependence and build our clean energy economy, the state should develop policies and incentives that help businesses, consumers, and farmers gain greater access to affordable clean fuels and affordable clean vehicles, and to produce clean fuels in our state. This bill would encourage development of such policies and incentives. The purpose is to lessen greenhouse gases and other pollution.

**League Position:** (LWVUS) Energy, elements 3 and 5

**Status:** On 2nd reading in [House Rules Committee](#).

**Action:** Everyone should call her/his representatives and ask them to vote for this bill. It must pass the House by Wednesday, March 14.

**Contact:** Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, [antoniapotter@comcast.net](mailto:antoniapotter@comcast.net)

**SUPPORT—SB 5739—Vehicle Idling in Washington State Ferry Holding Areas**

Owners of vehicles waiting in a Washington State ferries holding area are prohibited from idling gasoline-powered vehicles in excess of three consecutive minutes, and diesel-powered vehicles in excess of five consecutive minutes. Various exemptions would be provided.

**League Position:** LWVWA Q&A on Climate Change

**Status:** On 2nd reading in **Senate Rules**

**Action:** Everyone should ask her/his senator to vote for this. The Senate must pass this by March 14.

**Contact:** Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, [antoniapotter@comcast.net](mailto:antoniapotter@comcast.net)

**SUPPORT—HB 1024—Eliminate Toxic Flame Retardants (PBDEs)**

The bill would ban two forms of PBDEs by January 2008, and phase out the most widely used form of PBDE, deca, in computers, televisions, and residential upholstered furniture by January 2011. It would also provide a safety clause if suitable and effective alternate flame retardants could not be found.

**League Positions:** (LWVUS) Early Intervention for Children at Risk; (LWVUS) Environmental Protection & Pollution Control; LWVWA Toxics in the Home.

**Status:** After passage of this bill in the House on February 16 with a strong bipartisan vote (71 to 24), the bill is now set for hearing in **Senate Committee on Water, Energy & Telecommunications**. This committee had already passed the companion bill, SB 5034, in January. But the decision has now been made to go forward with the House version of the bill in the Senate. A public hearing has been scheduled on March 20 before the Senate Committee on Water, Energy & Telecommunications.

**Action:** If your senator is on this committee, please contact him/her urging support for this bill.

Committee members are Sen Poulsen (chair), Rockefeller (vice-chair), Honeyford, Delvin, Fraser, Holmquist, Marr, Morton, Oemig, Pridemore, Regala.

**Contact:** Elizabeth Davis, 360-331-4184, [elizabethd@whidbey.com](mailto:elizabethd@whidbey.com)

**SUPPORT—Increased Funding for Wildlife & Recreation**

This is a capital budget request to increase the funding to \$100 million per biennium from \$50 million, the amount provided each biennium since the program was established in 1990. In 2005 two new areas—farmland and riparian habitat—were added, increasing the need for additional funds for this program under the Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program.

**League Positions:** LWVWA Parks, Open spaces and Greenbelts

**Status:** Capital Budget process

**Action:** See **Legislative Newsletter for Feb. 2 - 8** to find out how to get a list of past WWRP funded projects in your area, and future proposed projects. Send that list to your legislator to urge his/her support.

**Contact:** Elizabeth Davis, 360-331-4184, [elizabethd@whidbey.com](mailto:elizabethd@whidbey.com)

**SUPPORT—SSB 5659—Family and Medical Leave Insurance**

This bill would establish a program to allow parents to take paid time off from work to bond with a newborn or newly placed child, or allow people to take paid time off to care for seriously ill family members or to recover from their own serious health condition.

**League Positions:** (LWVUS) Early Intervention for Children At Risk; Health Care; Welfare; Meeting Basic Human Needs

**Status:** SB 5659 passed out of Senate Ways & Means to **Senate Rules** for 2nd reading. The substitute bill would require the Secretary of State to submit this Act to the people for their adoption or rejection at the next general election. (Its companion, HB 1658, did not pass out of the House Appropriations Committee before the cut-off, so the House version of the family and medical leave insurance legislation is dead.)

**Action:** Call your senator if she or he is on Senate Rules and ask that **SB 5659** be voted out of committee by the Wednesday, March 14, cut-off date for consideration of bills on the floor of house of origin.

**Contact:** Marjorie Reeves, 360-866-7507, [mpreeves@comcast.net](mailto:mpreeves@comcast.net)

### **SUPPORT—Asthma Pilot Program Budget Proviso**

Rep. Shay Schual-Berke introduced a budget proviso (DSHS-Medical Assistance Program) to the **House Appropriations** Committee to provide home visits for 720 Medicaid children in King County. \$466,000 would be provided for the first two years of a four year project (\$198,000 for fiscal year 2008, and \$268,000 for 2009). The home visits would be provided by trained community health workers of Seattle-King County Health. The program would be evaluated for its impact on urgent physician visits, emergency room utilization, and in-patient hospitalization. It is estimated that there could be a net savings of over \$1,000 per child. An effort would be made to use the savings to expand the program to all 39,000 children in Washington state with moderate to severe asthma.

**League Positions:** (LWVUS) Early Intervention for Children At Risk; Health Care; (LWVWA) Health Care. We support efforts to reduce exposures in the home, early intervention for children at risk, as well as policies and programs that promote the well being, development, and safety of all children.

**Status:** Rep. Shay Schual-Berke has circulated the budget proviso on the House floor. She has signatures from Chase, Green, Moeller, and McIntire. Reps. Anderson and Hunter have indicated support. We still need more members on **House Appropriations Committee** telling committee chair Helen Sommers that they support the proviso. This committee could take action within 10 to 14 days. Appropriations Committee members are **Sommers, Chair; Dunshee, Vice Chair; Alexander; Bailey; Haler; Anderson; Buri; Chandler; Cody; Conway; Darneille; Dunn; Ericks; Fromhold; Grant; Haigh; Hinkle; Hunt; Hunter; Kagi; Kenney; Kessler; Kretz; Linville; McDermott; McDonald; McIntire; Morrell; Pettigrew; Priest; Schual-Berke; Seauquist; Sullivan, P.; Walsh** Sen Jeanne Kohl-Wells has introduced an identical budget proviso to the Senate Ways & Means Committee which has an action date that may be three to seven days after the House action.

**Action:** Please contact members on the Appropriations Committee and ask that they let the chair and you know if they can support this proviso. We understand that if there is enough support expressed to the committee members in the next 8 to 18 days, the item will appear in the House budget. A similar effort will be made in the Senate with the leadership of Sen Kohl-Welles. Talking Point: This expenditure will reduce health costs and help the children learn and work. There will be fewer days missed from school.

**Contact:** John Roberts, 425-868-9439, [jrahimsa@seattle-ts.org](mailto:jrahimsa@seattle-ts.org)

### **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS—SHB 1654—Modifying Vote Canvassing Provisions**

One section of this bill defines auditing procedures. It says that the official political party observers, upon mutual agreement, could request that a precinct be selected at random and that a manual count be made of the number of ballots and of the votes cast on any office or issue. The manual count would be compared with the count on the vote tallying system. Up to three precincts or three batches would be randomly selected and audited.

**League Positions:** LWVWA supports automatic, mandatory audits of election results of randomly selected precincts. LWVWA supports random audits of all ballots, with the percentage of ballots audited to be determined by a statistician.

**Status:** The bill is in **House Rules Committee** and needs help.

**Action:** The bill needs to be amended to strengthen it. **Rep. Appleton** could amend the bill. Audits should be mandatory, with a qualified statistician selecting the number of precincts to be audited, depending on variable circumstances.

**Contact:** Betty Sullivan, 206-682-5240, [jaybetty2@msn.com](mailto:jaybetty2@msn.com)

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## ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

### PRIORITIES FOR A HEALTHY WASHINGTON

All four priorities are alive and well after meeting the requisite cut-off dates (so far) that need to be met in order for that legislation to continue to move through the legislative process. League supports all four Priorities for a Healthy Washington:

**SUPPORT** – Eliminate Toxic Flame Retardants (PBDEs)

**Contact:** Elizabeth Davis, 360-331-4184, [elizabethd@whidbey.com](mailto:elizabethd@whidbey.com)

**SUPPORT** – Increase Funding for Wildlife & Recreation

**Contact:** Elizabeth Davis, 360-331-4184, [elizabethd@whidbey.com](mailto:elizabethd@whidbey.com)

**SUPPORT** – Clean Cars/Clean Fuels

**Contact:** Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, [antoniapotter@comcast.net](mailto:antoniapotter@comcast.net)

**SUPPORT** – Restore & Clean Up Puget Sound

**Contact:** Ann Aagaard, 425-488-8418, [aagaarda@nwlinc.com](mailto:aagaarda@nwlinc.com)

### Home Visit Programs

SB 5830 passed the Senate unanimously and was referred to the House Early Learning and Children's Services Committee. See last week's Legislative Newsletter for more information (in Background section).

**Contact:** Marjorie Reeves, 360-866-7507, [mpreeves@comcast.net](mailto:mpreeves@comcast.net)

or Pat Dickason, 360-753-7647, [p.dickason@comcast.net](mailto:p.dickason@comcast.net)

### Welfare Program Oversight

SHB 2312 passed unanimously in the House. The substitute bill defined the information required to be included in the written quarterly reports made to the oversight committee. See last week's Legislative Newsletter for more information (in Background section).

**Contact:** Marjorie Reeves, 360-866-7507, [mpreeves@comcast.net](mailto:mpreeves@comcast.net)

or Pat Dickason, 360-753-7647, [p.dickason@comcast.net](mailto:p.dickason@comcast.net)

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## FOR REFERENCE

### Key Session Dates

The 60th Washington State Legislature opened its long session on Monday, January 8. The 2007 legislative session in Olympia runs from January 8 to April 22. Every day (including Saturday, Sunday, and holidays) is counted in the 105-day session. The Lobby Team will meet regularly during the session to talk with the League lobbyist, Lonnie Johns-Brown, and to decide on priority action for the upcoming week.

**Jan. 8** – First day of regular session

**Jan. 19** – LWVWA Lobby Day

**Feb. 28** – Last day for any bill to be considered in **policy** committee of its "house of origin" (House for HB, or Senate for SB)

**Mar. 5** – Last day for any bill to be considered in **fiscal** committee of its "house of origin"

**Mar. 14** – Last day for bills to be considered on the floor of their "house of origin" (5 p.m.)

**Mar. 30** – Last day for bills to be considered in a **policy** committee of the opposite house (Senate for HB, or House for SB)

**Apr. 2** – Last day for bills to be considered in a **fiscal** committee of the opposite house

**Apr. 13** – Last day for bills to be considered on the floor of the opposite house (5 p.m.) except initiatives and alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implementing budgets, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session.

**Apr. 22** – Last day of regular session

## C CONTACT LISTS

Portfolios / Lobby Team – [www.lvwva.org/about/officers.html](http://www.lvwva.org/about/officers.html)

Legislators – [www.lvwva.org/advocacy/newsletters/Legislators.pdf](http://www.lvwva.org/advocacy/newsletters/Legislators.pdf)

Legislative Committees – [www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/committeelisting.aspx](http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/committeelisting.aspx)

Representation by legislative district – [www.lvwva.org/advocacy/newsletters/DistrictReps.pdf](http://www.lvwva.org/advocacy/newsletters/DistrictReps.pdf)

## L LEAGUE POSITIONS

LWVWA positions – [www.lvwva.org/advocacy/prog\\_in\\_action05-07.html](http://www.lvwva.org/advocacy/prog_in_action05-07.html)

## R RESOURCES

League action website – [lvvva.org/advocacy](http://lvvva.org/advocacy)

House Floor Activity as it happens – [flooractivityext.leg.wa.gov/default.aspx?chamber=3](http://flooractivityext.leg.wa.gov/default.aspx?chamber=3)

Senate Floor Activity as it happens – [flooractivityext.leg.wa.gov](http://flooractivityext.leg.wa.gov)

Public hearings as they happen – [tvw.org](http://tvw.org)

Bill information – text, analysis, status, committee action – [apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo)

Bill room (legislative information center) – **360-786-7573**

State budget information – [www.ofm.wa.gov](http://www.ofm.wa.gov)

Governor's website – [governor.wa.gov](http://governor.wa.gov)

Washington state's official website – [access.wa.gov](http://access.wa.gov)

### Speaking to a Legislator

Visit, write to, call, or email the legislator directly (see contact list for legislators). Or, use the toll-free Legislative Hotline available weekdays from 8:00 am - 8:00 pm, and Saturdays from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm:

**800-562-6000** / TTY: 800-635-9993

Legislative hotline operators will send your message to one of your legislators, all three of your legislators, the governor and lieutenant governor, or all of these, as you request. Language translation services are also available. Person placing the call needs to know enough English to understand "Please Wait" and to report the language needed.

### Addressing a Letter to a Legislator

Representative \_\_\_\_\_ Senator \_\_\_\_\_

P.O. Box 40600 P.O. Box 404[leg district]

Olympia, WA 98504-0600 Olympia, WA 98504-04[leg district]

### Visiting Your Legislators

Citizens are welcome to visit their legislators in Olympia on any day during the session. Making an appointment first is prudent but not always required. Later in the session, town hall meetings back in the legislators' home districts are good opportunities for talking to your legislators. Lobby day events provide organized support for visits.