



# League of Women Voters of Washington

Linnea Hirst, President // Kim Abel, Action Chair // Newsletter edited by Stasha McBride

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

Legislative Newsletter, Vol.42, No.1

League office: 4730 University Way NE #720, Seattle 98105 / 206-622-8961 / 800-419-2596 / [lwvwa@lwvwa.org](mailto:lwvwa@lwvwa.org)

## Action Priority

11 January - 17 January 2010

"If you have time this week to make only two phone calls..."

### Support - **HB 1738** - Providing public funding for Supreme Court campaigns

Establishing a program of optional public financing of campaigns for the Washington State Supreme Court, thereby allowing candidates the option of financing their campaigns solely or primarily on public financing.

**League Position** - The League of Women Voters supports campaign finance reform and a public campaign finance option.

**Status** - In the House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs

**ACTION** - Please contact Rep. **Sam Hunt**, the Chair of the House State Government & Tribal Affairs Committee, and the other members of the committee (**Appleton, Armstrong, Alexander, Flannigan, Hurst, Miloscia & Taylor**) and ask that this bill be scheduled for a public hearing before the Feb. 5th cut off date.

**Contact** - Katy Sheehan, [katsysheehan@gmail.com](mailto:katsysheehan@gmail.com), 316-250-0431

### Support - Working Connections Child Care

We must act quickly to protect the childcare services that children need to thrive and low-income parents need to hold onto their jobs. The Governor's December budget proposes cutting \$88.5 million from Working Connections Child Care (WCCC). Targeted to low-income families, WCCC helps pay for childcare for parents who need it to find or keep jobs. Although the governor's revised January 12th budget would restore \$39.5 million to WCCC, it would still leave a \$49 million cut. Cuts of this drastic magnitude would mean between 7,000 and 8,000 families would be turned away—and 1 in 3 families seeking and eligible for WCCC would lose their child care subsidy or be denied services each month. Also, a \$49 million cut would hurt thousands of childcare providers statewide, particularly those in low-income communities, who are already struggling small businesses. We need the WCCC funding restored by \$88.5 million to meet these critical childcare needs for children, their parents, and childcare providers and so no working families lose the childcare services they are already using.

**ACTION** - Please ask your legislators to restore the full \$88.5 million funding for Working Connections Child Care.

**Contact** - Margie Reeves, [mpreeves@comcast.net](mailto:mpreeves@comcast.net), Pat Dickason, [p.dickason@comcast.net](mailto:p.dickason@comcast.net) or Karen Tvedt, [tvedtkl@msn.com](mailto:tvedtkl@msn.com)

## Action Items

### Support - **SCR 8409** - relating to the implementation of Federal Health Care Reform

**Senate Concurrent Resolution 8409** would create a joint select committee of Senate and House members who would work together to determine how best to implement Federal legislation in Washington State. This is proactive legislation to improve the access of health care to all residents of Washington State.

**League Position** - LWVWA supports universal access for all residents to a comprehensive, uniform, and affordable set of health services regardless of one's health status or financial status.

**Status** - On January 14th there was a public hearing on **SCR 8409**. An executive session on this bill has not been scheduled.

**ACTION** - Contact members of the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee, (**Keiser, Franklin, Pflug,**

**Becker, Fairley, Marr, Murray, Parlette**) who represent you and ask them to support **SCR 8409** to be proactive in the implementation of Federal legislation on health care reform. If Senator **Karen Keiser** is your Senator, thank her for being proactive in introducing this bill.

**Contact** – Susan Eidenschink, [susaneiden@harbournet.com](mailto:susaneiden@harbournet.com), 253-572-9305

### **Support - HB 2753 - Creating a workforce housing program**

This bill was introduced in the 2009 Legislative session and was reintroduced this month. It would allocate funds from the outstanding indebtedness of the housing finance commission to implement a workforce housing program. **HB 2753** would increase the outstanding indebtedness of the commission from six to seven billion dollars. One billion dollars of the outstanding indebtedness would be used to increase opportunities for nonprofit organizations and public agencies to purchase, acquire, build, and own real property to be used for affordable housing for low and moderate-income households.

**League position** – League generally supports the use of public funds for the purpose of creating housing for low-income residents.

**Status** - referred to the House Capital Budget Committee, where it will be heard on January 19th at 3:30 PM.

**ACTION** – contact members of the House Capital Budget Committee (**Dunshee, Ormsby, Warnick, Pearson, Anderson, Blake, Chase, Hope, Jacks, Maxwell, McCune, Morrell, Orwall, Smith & White**) to voice your support for **HB 2753**.

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

### **Support - SB 6248/HB 1180 - Safe Baby Bottle bill**

This is a priority for Environmental Priorities Coalition (LWVWA is a member). This bill would phase out BPA in baby bottles, cups or other containers intended for food or drink for children three and under, as well as in sports water bottles. More and more evidence shows that the chemical bisphenol A (BPA) is harmful to children's health. Laboratory studies have linked BPA to cancer, miscarriage, obesity, reproductive problems, and hyperactivity. Yet manufacturers can still legally use BPA in products such as baby bottles, infant formula cans, and other food containers. Alternative non-BPA containers are now readily available. Please see Issue Background at end of Newsletter.

**League positions** - LWVWA supports this bill based upon the LWVUS positions, Early Intervention for Children at Risk, and the general theme in our national Natural Resources positions of support for prevention of harm before the damage occurs.

**Status** - A contentious hearing occurred on the first day of session before the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee. The chemical companies and some retail companies have put together strong opposition to the bill.

**ACTION** - Please contact your senator if he/she is a member of the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee (**Keiser, Franklin, Pflug, Becker, Fairley, Marr, Murray, Parlette**) urging support for this bill. In addition, we support an amendment to include in the BPA ban liquid infant formula cans and baby food jars.

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

### **Support - ESHB 1614 – Reducing the amount of petroleum in storm water**

**League Position** - “The protection of the marine environment should be the prime consideration when decisions are made regarding the movement of crude oil into or through the State of Washington....The state should...take ...appropriate steps to ensure the protection of Washington waters against oil pollution.”

**Status** - This bill, introduced in last year's session, is a revenue-producing issue with a \$1.50 charge per barrel of oil, has been referred to the Capitol Budget Committee.

**ACTION** – Please contact your representatives if they are members of the House Capital Budget Committee (**Dunshee, Ormsby, Warnick, Pearson, Anderson, Blake, Chase, Hope, Jacks, Maxwell, McCune, Morrell, Orwall, Smith & White**) and urge them to support this bill.

**Contact** – Mary Moore, [mymtrain@comcast.net](mailto:mymtrain@comcast.net), 360-357-3712

(Also see 2010 Environmental Priorities in Background Items)

### **Oppose - Cuts in 2010 Supplemental Budget**

Senators and Representatives are working on the 2010 Supplemental Budget. The governor released her all

cuts budget in December and released a Book II letter on the budget in January. The governor's letter contained fewer cuts, but health care access was cut substantially in 2009 and more cuts are recommended for 2010. Currently there are more people on the waiting list for the Basic Health Plan (BHP) than there are people on the BHP. General Assistance – Unemployable (GAU) may be limited to six months of lifetime benefits per person.

**League Position** - LWVWA supports universal access for all residents to a comprehensive, uniform, and affordable set of health services regardless of one's health status or financial status.

**Status** – On January 13th and 14th public hearings were held in the House Health & Human Services Appropriations Committee. On January 14th the House Ways & Means committee held a public hearing on the health and human services portions of the Governor's 2010 Supplemental Operating Budget Proposal. On January 18th the Senate Ways & Means Committee will hold a public hearing on the Governor's 2010 Supplemental Budget Proposal.

**ACTION** – Contact members of the House Health & Human Services Appropriations Committee (**Pettigrew, Seaquist, Schmick, Alexander, Appleton, Cody, Dickerson, Fagan, Johnson, Miloscia, Morrell, O'Brien, Roberts, Walsh, Wood**) and the House Ways & Means Committee (**Linville, Ericks, Alexander, Bailey, Dammeier, Chandler, Cody, Conway, Darneille, Haigh, Hinkle, Hunt, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Pettigrew, Priest, Ross, Schmick, Seaquist, and Sullivan**) and the Senate Ways & Means Committee (**Prentice, Fraser, Tom, Zarelli, Brandland, Carrell, Fairley, Hewitt, Hobbs, Honeyford, Keiser, Kline, Kohl-Welles, McDermott, Murray, Oemig, Parlette, Pflug, Pridemore, Regala, Rockefeller, and Schoesler**) who represent you and ask them to preserve the health care safety net by not cutting the Basic Health Plan, GAU, public health, children's health, family planning, and mental health.

**Contact** – Susan Eidschink, [susaneiden@harbournet.com](mailto:susaneiden@harbournet.com), 253-572-9305

**Support - HB 2418** - Making the names and addresses of persons signing initiative or referendum petitions public records.

**League Position** - The League of Women Voters supports openness and transparency in government and to further open government the initiative process must remain open to public oversight.

**ACTION** - Please contact members of the House's State Government & Tribal Affairs Committee (**Hunt, Appleton, Armstrong, Alexander, Flannigan, Hurst, Miloscia & Taylor**) and express your support for this bill.

**Contact** – Katy Sheehan, [katsysheehan@gmail.com](mailto:katsysheehan@gmail.com), 316-250-0431

**Support - SHB 1250** - Concerning the housing trust fund

This bill and its companion **SB 5300** were introduced in the 2009 Legislative session and have been reintroduced this year. The housing trust fund is used to finance loans or grant projects that will provide housing for persons and families with special housing needs and with incomes at or below 50% of the median family income for the area where the project is located. This bill would expand the uses of housing trust fund monies to include project application, review, selection, contracting and project development.

**League position** – League generally supports the use of public funds for the purpose of creating housing for low-income residents. The planning and project development is a necessary part of implementing housing projects.

**Status** – referred to the House Capital Budget Committee.

**ACTION** – contact members of the House Capital Budget Committee (**Dunshee, Ormsby, Warnick, Pearson, Anderson, Blake, Chase, Hope, Jacks, Maxwell, McCune, Morrell, Orwall, Smith & White**) to voice your support for **SHB 1250**.

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

**Support - PSSB 5279/2SHB 1165** – Secure Medicine Return bill

What does one do with old meds - unused, unwanted, and/or expired? Not down the toilet, not into the landfill, we now know. When they collect in homes, the chances of improper or accidental use increase. These bills provide for a producer provided and funded product stewardship program. Producers of drugs sold in WA must prepare a plan for these unwanted drugs by 1.1.12. The plans must provide for a collection system from

residential sources in all counties of the state. Fees will be charged to the producers for the costs of administering the program. There will be no charge to consumers to dispose of these drugs at the collection places. If this bill sounds familiar, it is; it had public hearings in the legislature last year, but did not get to a floor vote in either chamber.

**League Positions** - LWVUS Natural Resources: support for protection and improvement of water quality, and reduction of pollution. LWVUS Early Intervention for Children at Risk: support for action to remove threats to the health and development of very young children.

**Status** - This bill was heard in the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee on Thursday.

**ACTION** - Please contact your senator if he/she is a member of the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee (**Keiser, Franklin, Pflug, Becker, Fairley, Marr, Murray, Parlette**) to urge support for the bill.

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

**Watch - HB 2837 & SB 6452 - Limited Service Pregnancy Centers**

These bills impose certain conditions on the operations that are also known as Pregnancy Crisis centers. There may be problems with first amendment issues.

**League Position**--LWV supports reproductive rights.

**Status** - No hearing set as yet.

**ACTION** - Watch!

**Contact**--Wayne Martin, MD, [docmartin934@aol.com](mailto:docmartin934@aol.com), 425-746-9960

## Issue Background Items

### TAXES

With more than a \$9 billion dollar revenue short fall this biennium from the economic downturn, you know there is a lot more talk about cuts to programs near and dear to League. My lobby team colleagues will be working hard on critical issues including protecting health care for the poor, educating our youth and working for the environment. I will keep you posted on proposals regarding TAXES. Ideas are currently being bandied about regarding establishing an income tax, increasing sales taxes, reducing or increasing property taxes, creating new excise taxes on items like soda pop, bottle water, and baked goods, and putting new taxes on financial institutions. It should be a hot, hot legislative session.

Washington League Positions on State Tax Policies include:

- \* Inequities in the distribution of the tax burden should be removed. Ability to pay is an important criterion.
- \* Income should be a part of the tax base preferably through a graduated net income tax.
- \* The sales tax should not be levied on food.
- \* Businesses should be taxed on net income rather than gross receipts.

I will be watch dogging all new revenue proposals this session. Keep in touch. You won't want to miss this one. It is your dollar, your neighbors and your community we are talking about!

**Contact** - Nora Leech, [nleech2002@yahoo.com](mailto:nleech2002@yahoo.com), 206 328 0445

### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Safe Baby Bottle bill SB 6248/HB 1180**

Does this bill sound familiar to you? It should because we supported the bill in last years' session. It was not an Environmental Priorities Coalition priority in 2009; this year it is. It passed overwhelmingly in the House, 76-21, but stalled in the Senate under pressure from the chemical industry and some large retail companies. This same opposition has been very busy in Olympia in the intervening eight months, and currently the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee appears to be split on the bill. Several cities and states in the country are in the process of enacting similar BPA bans; the federal Food & Drug Administration continues to conduct BPA studies.

The bill as it stands applies only to empty baby bottles, sippy cups and sports water bottles that are made with BPA. This appears to be a senseless distinction: if one wants to protect children from BPA exposure, why limit

that only to empty containers? Why not expand that ban to any container having in it food or drink intended for children age three and under? LWVWA supports that amendment to the bill.

Contact - Elizabeth Davis, chair, LWVWA Natural Resources committee, [elizabethd@whidbey.com](mailto:elizabethd@whidbey.com)

## ENERGY & CLIMATE CHANGE

### Bills to Watch

**SB 6244** – Regarding the definition of a green home and an energy efficient home, which has been referred to the Environment and Water & Energy Committee in the Senate. The bill's sponsor is League member Senator **Karen Fraser**.

**E2SSB 5138** – Creating an integral climate change response. Originally introduced last year, this bill has been reintroduced and is scheduled for a third reading.

**HB 2853** – Authorizing a local financing tool to fund energy efficiency upgrades and removing financial barriers to implementing energy conservation programs.

**HB 2561** –Funding construction of energy cost savings improvements to public facilities.

**HB 2334** – Creating jobs by funding construction of safety, health, and energy-saving improvements to public facilities.

## 2010 ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

### Working for Clean Water **HB 1614, SB 5518**

Contaminated storm water runoff from our roads, parking lots and yards is the number one water pollution problem in our state. And, petroleum products are the number one pollutant in our storm water. This bill deals with the problem by placing a per-barrel fee on petroleum products that contribute to water pollution in waterways like Puget Sound and the Spokane River. The resulting revenue, estimated at \$120 million/year would be used to fund critical water quality projects and create green jobs in communities across the state. The bill passed the House last year but stalled in the Senate in substantial part due to oil companies' opposition. League support for this bill is based on our extensive Natural Resources positions.

### Safe Baby Bottles

See Action and Issue Background sections of this Newsletter.

### Sustain Environmental Protections in the Budget

This priority aims to ensure Washington's budget sustains core environmental protections that safeguard the health of our families, communities and economy. Our state is in the midst of an economic recession that threatens safeguards we all depend on, including core environmental protections. Washingtonians rely on protections that keep our families healthy: clean water to drink, unpolluted air to breathe, and the clean up of toxic contaminations. Maintaining Washington's clean environment also attracts business and qualified workers to our state, making us a driver in the new green economy. While natural resources/environmental protection programs are a small part of the state budget, they are critical in terms of public health, economic opportunity, and quality of life in Washington.

For more information about each of these priorities, see the coalition's website:

[www.environmentalpriorities.org](http://www.environmentalpriorities.org).

Contact - Elizabeth Davis, chair, LWVWA Natural Resources committee, [elizabethd@whidbey.com](mailto:elizabethd@whidbey.com)

## For Reference

## **K**EY SESSION DATES

The 61st Washington State Legislature opened its short session on Monday, January 11. The 2010 legislative session in Olympia runs from January 11 to March 11. Every day (including Saturday, Sunday, and holidays) is counted in the 60-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.

**Feb. 5** – Last day to read in committee reports in house of origin, except House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.

**Feb. 9** - Last day to read in committee reports from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees in house of origin.

**Feb. 16** - Last day to consider bills in house of origin (5 p.m.).

**Feb. 26** - Last day to read in committee reports from opposite house, except House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.

**March 1** - Last day to read in opposite house committee reports from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.

**March 5** - Last day to consider opposite house bills (5 p.m.) (except initiatives and alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session).\*

**March 11** - Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution.

\* After the 54th day, only initiatives, alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, messages pertaining to amendments, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session may be considered.

## **C**ONTACT LISTS

**Legislators**

**Legislative Committees**

## **L**EAGUE POSITIONS

**LWVWA positions**

## **R**ESOURCES

League action website - <http://www.ckwebsites.com/lwvwa/positions.html>

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 (follow "Legislators" link above). 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.



League of Women Voters of Washington  
4730 University Way NE, #720  
Seattle, WA 98105