



VOTER

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE SAN JUANS
P. O. Box 784, Friday Harbor, WA 98250-0784**

June 2011

Calendar

**June 13, 2011 – Monday, 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm at the San Juan Island Library
Membership Meeting**

The upcoming membership meeting will be the last LWV meeting before summer. All three of our state legislators or their representatives will be present to give us a wrap-up of the recent legislative session. Kevin Ranker and Jeff Morris are familiar faces now to most of us and we are especially excited to welcome our newest representative, Kris Litton! Bring questions, concerns, comments and, yes, thank-you's. With the new austerity budget, there are sure to be lots of issues to discuss. We hope you will come to the meeting, talk to the legislators and be an active participant in our governance.

**July 11, 2011 – Monday, 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm at the San Juan Island Library
Board Meeting**

We will not have membership meetings in July and August. However, this is not implying that your League will not be busy during the summer months. The new board has met for the first time and will continue to meet during the summer. All members are welcome to attend the board meetings on the first Monday of the month except in July. The first Monday is July 4th, so the board meeting will be held on July 11th. We would sure love to see some new faces as well as the stalwarts to help with Voter Registration and the Forums too. We also need volunteers help with rides for our speakers and members who come to the meeting by ferry. Remember that we have a book assignment for summer reading: *Hot, Flat and Crowded* by Tom Freidman.

Board meetings are generally on the 1st Monday of each month and Membership Meetings are usually on the 2nd Monday. Annual Membership meetings are usually in May of each year. If you are coming from another island, call any board member and we'll arrange a ride from the ferry.

Membership News

Please remember that annual membership dues are due. Please check the recent roster to make sure that you are current with your membership. LWVSJ has had a 172% increase in membership this last year, the biggest increase in the state. We should be very proud and hope to keep that number increasing! Bring your friends to a meeting. Encourage them to join the League and take an active role.

National LWV

In a letter to Senator Scott Brown of Massachusetts a coalition of organizations expressed disappointment in the Senator's votes to block the EPA from protecting public health. For more information on this issue and the League's involvement, see: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/26/us/politics/26league.html?ref=politics>

May 13, 2011

Honorable Scott Brown
2400 JFK Federal Building
15 New Sudbury Street
Boston, MA 02203

Dear Senator Brown,

We are writing to express our grave disappointment with your votes to block the EPA from protecting public health and the misleading way you have handled the ensuing reaction, including but not limited to your guest editorial in the May 4, 2011 Boston Herald.

In the last two months you have voted twice for legislation that if enacted would severely endanger public health. Your vote for the McConnell amendment to the small business bill would have barred the US EPA from taking action to reduce carbon pollution. In January 2008, President George W. Bush's EPA Administrator, Stephen Johnson explained in a letter to the President that the science shows these pollutants endanger public health and welfare. [1]

The EPA's findings include the determination that one of the effects of current and future carbon pollution is to "worsen regional ground-level ozone pollution. Exposure to ground level ozone has been linked to respiratory health problems ranging from decreased lung function and aggravated asthma to increased emergency department visits, hospital admissions, and even premature death." [2]

Your claim that your vote to prevent EPA had nothing to do with children's health or sick children is therefore unjustifiable. The US EPA clearly identified asthma as one of the diseases that growing carbon dioxide levels will exacerbate. Thus, the League

of Women Voters was scientifically correct in choosing to portray a child asthma victim in its ad criticizing your vote.

Further, your claim that your vote was an attempt to prevent EPA “overreach” is similarly untenable. The US Supreme Court, ruling in a lawsuit brought by your own state against the EPA when the EPA failed to take action, ruled that the Clean Air Act applies to carbon pollution and obligates the EPA to act to reduce pollutants it determines to pose a threat to public health.

Sadly, the McConnell amendment is not the first vote you have cast in support of preventing EPA from taking action required to protect public health. You voted in support of HR 1, the Senate budget bill that some organizations have described as the “Worst Environmental Bill” ever for slashing the EPA’s budget by 30% and for the including of 19 riders to block the EPA and the Interior Department from carrying out laws to protect public health and the environment.

HR 1 would have impeded the EPA’s ability to protect our drinking water and recreational waterways from toxic contamination and toxic slime; it would have stopped the EPA from reducing toxic air pollution that causes cancer, developmental disorders and other severe health effects. HR 1 included a provision specifically barring the EPA from reducing toxic pollution from cement kilns, which are the nation’s third-largest source of airborne mercury, a toxic brain poison which is a particular threat to unborn and young children’s ability to develop normal brains and nervous systems. HR 1 would have also blocked the US EPA from taking action to reduce carbon pollution. [3]

These votes contradict your claim to “support a clean environment.”

The people of Massachusetts have a right to expect that their interests be represented when their elected officials vote, and have a right to a serious discourse on matters that affect their health and welfare as broadly as does this issue. You have failed to do both of these things.

Sincerely,

Berkshire Environmental Action Team
(BEAT)
Center for Biological Diversity
Clean Water Action
Coalition on the Environment and
Jewish Life COEJL), Boston chapter
Conservation Law Foundation
Earthjustice
Endangered Species Coalition
Energy Action Coalition
Environment Massachusetts
Environment Northeast
Environmental Defense Fund

Environmental League of
Massachusetts
Friends of the Earth
Greenpeace USA
League of Conservation Voters
League of United Latin American
Citizens
Massachusetts Climate Action Network
National Audubon Society
Natural Resources Defense Council
Action Fund
New England Conference United
Methodist Women
Ocean River Institute

People for the Environment
Rachel's Network
The Sierra Club, Massachusetts
Chapter
Toxics Action Center Campaigns
Union of Concerned Scientists
UU Mass Action

The Wilderness Society
Women's Community Cancer Project
World Wildlife Fund
Worthy Causes, Inc.
350.org

[1] EPA Administrator Stephan Johnson letter to President Bush: [1]
http://democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/sites/default/files/documents/EnclosureLetter_PresidentfromStephenJohnson_2.8.2011_2.pdf

[2] US EPA fact sheet: http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment/downloads/EndangermentFinding_Health.pdf

[3] "Anti-Environmental Riders on H.R. 1" fact sheet: <http://bit.ly/mLLRCM>.

Mission of the League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan, political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of public policy issues, and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

Goal of the League of Women Voters

To empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide. Membership is open to any citizen over the age of 18 who subscribes to the League’s purposes and policies. All LWVWSJ meetings are nonpartisan and open to the public.

Board Members of the League of Women Voters of the San Juans

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JOIN US TODAY!

YES! I want to become a member of the League of Women Voters of the San Juans.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

Circle one: (Individual Membership-renewal: \$50) (Two members at same address \$75)
(Student Membership \$25)

I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the League of Women Voters of WA Education Fund and have enclosed a separate check (to LWVWA-EF) in the amount of \$_____.

PLEASE RETURN TO:

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