

LWV Ohio Statehouse Day – April 9, 2014

LWVO Lobbyist Report

Judiciary

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The Legislature has not pursued judicial reform, but there has been activity on other fronts. Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor proposed eight possible reforms to the judiciary and requested public comments. The League submitted formal comments, which can be found at <http://ohiocourts2013.org/wp-content/resources/LWV.pdf>. We supported several of the Chief Justice's proposals, including the elimination of party affiliation for judicial candidates in the primary elections, establishment of an appointment process for judges who first reach the bench by appointment (estimated to be over 50% of the judges) and an emphasis on education of the public about judicial candidates and where they can find reliable information. We anticipate that in the near future the Chief Justice will announce which of her proposals she intends to pursue based on comments received.

The League testified before the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission's Committee on the Judicial Branch and the Administration of Justice. To read this testimony go to: http://www.lwvohio.org/assets/attachments/file/Nov2013_OCMC%20LWV%20Ohio%20Submission_final.pdf. The League urged consideration of an appointment/retention election system and also discussed other possible reforms.

Much of the League's focus is on educating Ohioans about the role of judges and where they can find meaningful information about judicial candidates. See: <http://www.lwvohio.org/site.cfm/Voter-Election-Center/Judicial-Voter-Information.cfm>. We are partnering with the National Association of Women Judges and the Ohio State Bar Association among others in these efforts.