



November 2013 Ohio League Leader Updates

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1. Update on Ohio Legislation

This month the League of Women Voters of Ohio has offered legislative testimony on a range of issues including gun control and election reform. Below is a snapshot of the testimony on each bill.

Summary of Gun Legislation

HB 31 - Rosie Craig, member of LWV Shaker Heights, testified in favor of House Bill 31 calling for "a uniform law requiring safe gun storage practices for all Ohioans". [Click here](#) to read the testimony. Linda Slocum also testified on behalf of the LWV Oberlin. [Click here](#) to read Linda's testimony.

HB 203 - Rosie Craig testified against House Bill 203, a gun bill that would adopt a "stand your ground" rule in Ohio and make other changes that would further loosen Ohio's already weak gun control regulation. [Click here](#) to read the testimony. Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick also presented testimony on behalf of LWV Oberlin Area. [Click here](#) to read Mary's testimony.

Summary of Election Legislation

The legislature is considering numerous election reform bills, and LWVO has been active in lobbying and testifying on them. These include:

- HB 78** - Online Voter Registration
- SB 200** -Voter Database Management

9. Holiday Hours

SB 205 - Absentee Voting
SB 216 - Provisional Voting
SB 238 - Early Voting

For a full summary of election bills LWVO is working on, [click here](#).

To read testimony on the election bills, [click here](#) or go to www.lwvohio.org.

2. Update on LWVUS Agriculture Study

Many Leagues have inquired about when we can expect to receive the study materials and consensus questions on the agriculture position update from LWVUS. We reached out to our US Board liaison, who informs us that materials should be out in the next few weeks.

The scope of LWVUS's update study has been narrowed to focus on the following:

- 1) Current technology issues in agriculture, including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling;
- 2) Current agriculture finance issues, including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies, and the federal agricultural regulatory process.

In preparation, local Leagues may want to consider holding forums to explore agriculture issues in Ohio and inviting speakers who are local and state experts on this issue.

3. NEW Report on the Judiciary - "The New Politics of Judicial Elections, 2011-12"

Justice at Stake, the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, and the National Institute on Money in State Politics just came out with a new

report entitled "The New Politics of Judicial Elections, 2011-12: How New Waves of Special Interest Spending Raised the Stakes for Fair Courts".

The report analyzes the prominent role of special interest money in state Supreme Court elections. In 2011-12, many of these races "seemed alarmingly indistinguishable from ordinary political campaigns- featuring everything from Super PACs and mudslinging attack ads to millions of dollars of candidate fundraising and independent spending."

The report documents how the "boundaries that keep money and political pressure from interfering with the rule of law have become increasingly blurred."

The report found some disturbing trends in judicial elections across the country including:

- \$56.4 million was spent on high court elections in 2011-12. Interest groups and political parties pumped in nearly 50% of that total, compared to just 26% of the total in the last presidential election cycle. Super PACs funneled money into state judicial elections for the first time.
- More than 35% of the money spent on state high court races came from just 10 deep-pocketed special interest groups or political parties, up from 21% in 2007-08.

[Click here](#) to read the full report.

In Ohio, LWVO testified before the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission Judicial Committee in November in favor of an appointment and retention election system. [Click here](#) to read the testimony.

4. December All-Member Conference Call

Our next all-member conference call will be held on Tuesday, December 3rd, 12-1pm.

Topic: Update on local and state League advocacy.

Hear about local League organizing around gun control legislation and state League advocacy on the numerous election bills. These bills are moving fast, so the information included in this LLU may be stale. Join us to hear the latest update and learn what you can do to help.

Call- In Number: 866-740-1260, PIN 4691505#

Upcoming all-member call dates and topics:

- **Jan. 7th-** LWVUS is updating their Agriculture position to explore issues such as ag technology (GMOs, herbicides, pesticides, water pollution, and food labeling) and finance (crop subsidies and regulation). Join the discussion about how these issues relate to Ohio farms.
- **Feb. 4th-** Join us as we discuss Ohio water issues. Ohio is part of two watersheds, the Ohio River watershed and the Lake Erie watershed. What are some of the major concerns impacting our watersheds and what can we do about them?

5. LWVO Board Liaisons with Local Leagues

As most of you know, your local League has an LWVO Board member assigned to it as its liaison. Board member liaisons interact with their assigned local Leagues and keep them up to date on LWVO issues, upcoming events, and many other topics. Liaisons are also a good way for local Leagues to pass along questions and suggestions to the state League.

The LWVO Board will be sending a questionnaire to each local League to learn about how the Liaison system is working. It will help the LWVO Board to determine how to make the Liaison Program more

effective. The state board looks forward to your League's suggestions and thoughts regarding the program.

6. Fundraising Tip of the Month

Be Part of #GivingTuesday: New Templates Available

This year, the League will partner in the second annual #Giving Tuesday campaign on December 3, 2013. [Click here](#) to read about the campaign.

In the same way that retail stores come together to offer deals on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, [#GivingTuesday](#) brings the nonprofit community together to raise awareness about the importance of supporting our valuable mission and work. Your League can take advantage of this national movement and fold it into your year-end efforts to solicit funds by following the three simple steps outlined on this [page](#). Be sure to scroll down to the bottom of the page for tools such as a sample email request for funds, a sample donation form to post on your League's website, and a press template and social media tools to raise awareness of this important campaign.

If you have questions about how to take advantage of this national movement to raise funds for your League, please contact Rose Simmons at rsimmons@lww.org.

7. MLD Tip of the Month

Engage College Students in the Work of Your League!

A new webinar, "Reaching Out to Millennials on Campus," is now available online from LWVUS [in the Nikki Harris Online Training Library](#). Hosted by National Board Member Anne Schink and the [Young People's Task Force](#) Co-chairs Amy Hjerstedt and Melissa Currence (of LWV Cincinnati Area!), this webinar focuses on a variety of ways in which local

Leagues can create a lasting presence on campuses by partnering with various student groups and staff members, ways to set realistic goals for campus outreach, and how creating a presence on campuses across the country will introduce a whole new generation to the great work of the League.

8. Save the Date!

a. LWV Ohio Statehouse Day & Council Wednesday, April 9, 2014

New location! We will be using the conference center at the Sheraton on Capitol Square, across from the Statehouse. Registration will begin in January. Check the website - www.lwvohio.org -for announcements about speakers, event schedule, meeting with your legislators, and information for Council delegates. Sponsorship opportunities are available. It promises to be an exciting event, so put it on your calendar now.

b. February 2014 Regional Meetings are Coming

LWVO will once again be hosting regional meetings across the state during the month of February. If there are any Saturdays in February that your local League already has booked for other League events, please let the state office know so that we can avoid schedule conflicts. You can email your preferred dates to lwvinfo@lwvohio.org. Thank you!

9. Holiday Hours

The LWVO office will be closed on Thursday and Friday next week, November 28 & 29, for the holidays. We wish you and your families a very Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Hanukkah!