

LWV Ohio Statehouse Day – March 31, 2015

Juvenile Justice

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Throughout Ohio's state and county juvenile facilities there have been widely reported disclosures of abuse and in Ohio's communities there have been reports of strife between youth and the police. So far there have been few bills introduced this session that deal with juvenile justice issues. The League would welcome legislation dealing with enforcement of state standards for detention and treatment facilities and the rights of juveniles to unbiased treatment regardless of race or ethnicity in the detention system and in their communities.

In the budget for fiscal years 2016-2017 the Department of Youth Services (DYS) should anticipate cuts over \$30 million. Part of the cuts results from a decline in the youth populations in Ohio institutions. These cuts will not effect changes in programming such as RECLAIM that gives local judges more options to reduce the populations of the DYS facilities and assists counties in developing community-based programs. The League has supported RECLAIM since it was enacted in 1993.

The Governor's Task Force on community and policing has been meeting around the state. The League has been monitoring these meetings through the Juvenile Justice Coalition of Ohio primarily looking at changes that pertain to adolescents and community policing policies. Governor Kasich has asked the task force to issue a report by April 30, 2015 to provide ideas for how communities across the state can build constructive relationships between communities and police.

The League will continue monitoring bills that parallel League positions calling for a system that utilizes the resources of the state and of the extended community to give each individual child a continuum of care within juvenile and, when required, adult institutions.