



THE VOTER

April 2017

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization, that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

THE ANNUAL MEETING April 15

IMPORTANT THINGS HAPPEN AT THE ANNUAL MEETING:

- New friends are met and old acquaintances renewed.
- Business of the League is conducted: Officers elected, Budget discussed and passed, ByLaws revised, Committee updates given, Issues chosen, and Direction for the upcoming year determined.
- An outstanding speaker is heard.
- A delicious meal is enjoyed.

To prepare for the meeting, please read the information included in this issue so you can vote intelligently on April 15th, 2017. We hope you find it helpful.

Annual Meeting Speaker

Paula Dockery!

Mrs. Dockery is a syndicated columnist who served in the Florida Legislature for 16 years as a Republican from Lakeland. She has been an outstanding advocate for the citizens of Florida.

As a speaker, Paula never disappoints!

Don't disappoint yourself by missing this opportunity to hear her.

Saturday, April 15, Countryside Country Club — 10:30 a.m.
3001 Countryside Blvd, Clearwater, FL 33761



OUR MEETINGS THIS MONTH: Come! Invite Others! Offer Rides!

April 3—International Relations

Rise of Isis

Judy McSwine, Presenter (See next page.)

April 5— New Member Orientation

Join Us!

Want to know more about the League?

- Meet other members.
- Explore Volunteer Opportunities.
- Become a new member.

No need to RSVP

(See next page for more information.)

April 15-LWVNPC Annual Meeting

10;30-1 p.m.

Countryside Country Club, 3001 Countryside Blvd, Clearwater

10:30-Noon: Annual Meeting open to all members and no charge.

Noon– 1 p.m. Luncheon and Speaker Paula Dockery

Cost is \$25/Member and \$30/Guest

Please make your reservation by April 11th!

**Note that the location has changed from Belleair Country Club
to Countryside Country Club.**

Questions: Call or write a Board member.

Check your Membership Directory
for contact information.

Please note the majority of web addresses
in this issue are hyperlinked.

In This Issue:

Annual Meeting-pp. 1-4

April Events, p. 2

President's Message-
pp. 3, 4

Legislative Update- pp.
5– 7

New Members– p. 7

Pinellas Co. Legislators-
p. 8

Minutes of 2016 Annual
Meeting-p. 9

LWVNPC Programs– p.
10

Bylaws with proposed
changes-pp.11–15

Nonpartisan Policy-pp.
15-16

Conflict of Interest-pp.
16 –17

Committee Reports- pp.
18-21

For Your Information-22

Consensus Results– pp.
22-23

Capped Medicaid - pp.
23-24

Join the LWVNPC- p.
25

Board Members- p. 26





INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS - APRIL 3, 2017

Please plan to attend (bring a friend, too) to our April 3rd International Relations group at 2:00 pm at the Pinellas Park Library located at 52nd St. & 78th Ave., Pinellas Park.

Judy McSwine will present "*THE RISE OF ISIS*". Why did this occur and how is it different from al-Qaeda? Has it been successful? We'll see the Great Decisions video and discuss this topic.

Your 2017 Great Decisions books will be available to you so please bring \$28 in cash or check (made out to Judy McSwine). Those ordering books are: Dwight Lawton, Kay Pitchon, Louise LaSala, Mary Berglund, Sheila Bernhard, Linda McGeehan, Joe LeBas, Rosalyn Anderson, Peggy Toohey, Roslyn Banks, Pat Budlong, Virginia Howie, June Bedford, Vollie Riskin, Carole Pope, and Kay Lahdenpera.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION-APRIL 5, 2017

6-8 p.m. at Clearwater East Library, Main Meeting Room, 2251 Drew Street, Clearwater, FL 33765

No reservation needed. Just come and get informed!

PRESIDENT KAREN KARINJA'S MESSAGE

Dear LWVNPC Members,

I hope that you have circled Saturday April 15, 2017 on your calendar for our 68th Annual Meeting starting at 10 am. New this year will be the business meeting open to all members at the Countryside Country Club at 3001 Countryside Boulevard, Clearwater 33761. (Take advantage of the free valet parking!) Our **Voter** is quite expansive this issue because I wish you to be prepared before the meeting. We have much to cover during this hour and a half, and those bolded items will require your response at the meeting:

1. The minutes from last year's 67th Annual Meeting. These have been read and approved at last May's board meeting.
2. **The LWVFL Programs and LWVNPC Programs Chart with retain and adoption information.**
3. In order to align our policies with the LWVFL, we have rewritten our Conflict of Interest Statement/Disclosures and our Nonpartisan Policy. These have already been approved by the Board of Directors.
4. **Our Bylaws have gone through an extensive editing process over this past year and Articles XII and XIII have been added.**

(continued next page)

President's Message continued:

5. Reports from our very busy committees and off board directors:

- a. Education
- b. International Relations
- c. Juvenile Justice
- d. Membership
- e. Poverty/Health
- f. Social Media
- g. Voter Services
- h. Website

Following the 68th Annual Meeting, you are invited to join us for a delicious buffet lunch (\$25/member and \$30/guest), and we will hear Paula Dockery's musing about the goings on with our Legislature in Tallahassee. Four of us travelled from Clearwater on March 29 at 4:30 a.m. to drive to Tallahassee for the League Lobby Day and met with Christopher Sprowls and Chris Latvala on League business. So, we'll have our own musings to share with you as well!

Let's celebrate our local League, our increasing membership, and the passion that all Leaguers share! Fill in the following form and drop it in the mail today! See you on the 15th!

Karen Marie Karinja
League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County
President & Voter Service
Karen.karinja@gmail.com

214.929.8984

RESERVATION FOR ANNUAL MEETING ON APRIL 15, 2017

Check appropriate line:

Attend Annual Meeting only (free and open to all LWNPC members including valet parking)

Attend Annual Meeting & the following luncheon with speaker Paula Dockery

Cost: \$25 members; \$30 guests

Name: _____

Phone/E-Mail: _____ / _____

Guest(s): _____

Amount of Check Enclosed: _____ (Please include payment with this form.)

Let us know if there are special diet restrictions. CCC is aware of Passover restrictions.

Mail to: LWNPC, P. O. Box 6833, Clearwater, FL 33758.

Make it easy on yourself: Include your 2016-2017 Annual Dues with your Annual Meeting reservation check. \$30 Student, \$55 Individual, \$85 Household, \$110 Cornerstone, \$140 Household Cornerstone

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS FL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

March 24, 2017 — The third week of the 2017 Legislative Session was full of at least 9-12 bills for every committee meeting! The Legislature is gearing up for what could be a very productive session. As a reminder, the League will always take one of three positions: 1. Support; 2. Oppose; or 3. No Position. No position means we are neutral on the issue and are closely monitoring the bill. A no position can change if a bill is amended and sways the League to either a Support or Oppose position.

This coming week, League members invaded the state Capitol and met key legislators from across the state.

League member **Rep. Lori Berman** has been a supporter of the League for years. Look on page 6 to find out why she is appreciated.



of

EDUCATION

- The League continues to monitor and is neutral on **HB 591** that passed out of the House PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee on Tuesday. The bill hopes to allow flexibility and not lose funding as long as they are compliant with their class sizes. **SB 808**, its companion, passed out of the Senate Education committee and moves onto the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on PreK-12 Education. Follow the story here: <http://bit.ly/2mzEeHu>
- Religious Expression in Public Schools, **SB 436**, was heard on the Senate floor on Tuesday. The Senate bill was passed without an amendment that had been added prior. Read more on SB 436 here: <http://bit.ly/2n1tCO0>
- **HB 303** was in the House on Thursday and passed its final committee. It will now go to the House Floor. The League is in opposition to these bills as they stand right now. Read more on HB 303 here: <http://bit.ly/2nZ9sF0>

This week, the Senate Education committee held a workshop on **SB 926** and **SB 964**. This means there are a few bills that have similar language and the legislators are looking for consensus.

ELECTIONS & ETHICS

- The House Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee passed **HB 521**. The bill ensures vote by mail ballots can be submitted to early voting locations throughout the state. The League is in support of this bill.
- The League is in support of **HB 707** and **HB 709**, which both address potential voter fraud issues by having the Florida Secretary of State share voter registration information across states. This will prevent multiple registrations. Both bills also passed the House Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee unanimously. Follow both bills here: <http://bit.ly/2n202HQ>
- The House Government Accountability Committee heard **HB 7021** and **HB 7023**. These are linked bills that specifically speak to ethics reform for local governments. This would require lobbyists to register through a statewide system in each county or municipality they intend to lobby in. **HB 7021** also expands ethics education for all elected officials and full financial disclosure to elected officials in municipalities with a revenue over \$10 million.
- **HB 7023** creates a statewide system to collect the registration fees. The League is in support of these bills. Read here: <http://bit.ly/2odSDFC>
- **HB 105** relating to vote by mail ballots and fixing mismatched signatures passed the House floor by 113-0. The League is in support of this good bill. Follow it here: <http://bit.ly/2n1TJnR>
- The League is in support of **SB 862** by Sen. Lee that exempts 16 and 17 year-olds from public records request after they've pre-registered to vote.
- The Senate Judiciary passed **SB 954**, which is similar to **HB 105**. This permits the curing of mismatched signatures on vote by mail ballots. The League is in support of this bill.

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- **SB 352** passed the Senate floor on Tuesday with a vote count of 24-14, along party lines. This bill addresses reapportionment and redistricting. The League is in **opposition** because it's an attempt to dictate judicial procedure when the judiciary should remain independent from the other branches. It has been placed in messages to the Florida House. Follow the story: <http://bit.ly/2nPTFLY>
- The First Amendment Foundation has taken the lead on **SB 80** relating to Public Records Requests. Last week, the Foundation and Sen. Steube were able to find common ground. It now moves onto the Senate Floor. The League is in **support** of this bill. Read more here: <http://bit.ly/2odtScQ>
- **ICYMI:** Just this week, Nevada became the latest state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment on the 45th anniversary of its passage by the U.S. Congress. During Women's History Month, **Rep. Lori Berman** introduced **HB 319/SB 140**, the Helen Gordon Davis Fair Pay Protection Act. This prohibits an employer to pay less to an employee based solely on gender. Thank you **Rep. Berman** for taking charge and for being this week's League Legislative Champion!

GUN SAFETY

- The League is in opposition to **SB 1052** that references Stand Your Ground and removes "attack" from the statute. This means you would not need to be attacked where you reside for you to Stand Your Ground. The Senate Judiciary committee passed the bill 7-2. It now moves to its final stop in the Senate Rules Committee.
- On Thursday, **HB 779** and **HB 849** were heard in the House Judiciary Subcommittee. **HB 779** decriminalizes the temporary exposure of weapons or firearms to a non-criminal violation: a \$25 fee for the first violation; a \$500 fee for the second violation; and, a 2nd degree misdemeanor for the third and continued violations. The League is **opposed** to this bill. We feel this could become a catalyst for other gun bills in the future. Read on it here: <http://bit.ly/2nZEUDb>
- The League is in opposition to **HB 849** that would allow for private schools at religious institutions to decide whether they allow guns on their property. The property owner is able to make that decision. We believe there is no need to introduce firearms into churches and parochial schools where children are present. Both bills move to the House floor. Read on HB 849 here: <http://bit.ly/2odXVAY>
- The League is watching **SB 1248** that was temporarily postponed (TP'd) by the Senate Criminal Justice committee. This bill would eliminate provisions that provide criminal penalties for certain conduct constituting a breach of peace. We currently have no position.
- The League is in opposition to **SB 616**. We are concerned about allowing weapons and firearms to be stored by security prior to entering a courthouse. This also becomes a funding issue for courthouses if they do not have appropriate storing capabilities. Read more on it here: <http://bit.ly/2nZwV9h>
- The Senate version of **HB 849** was heard by the Senate Judiciary committee on Wednesday. The League is in opposition to **SB 1330**. Follow the story here: <http://hrlid.us/2nZFFfx>
- The House Judiciary committee passed **HB 245** along party lines. It would shift the burden of proof for a Stand Your Ground case onto the state, and essentially calls for additional evidence from prosecutors to prove why someone should not be granted immunity. The League is in opposition to this bill. Read about it here: <http://wapo.st/2odZNK8>

HEALTH CARE

- The League participated in a Press Conference with the Reps. Asencio, Baez, **Berman**, Duran,
(continued on next page)

HEALTH CARE continued

Smith, For Our Future, the Florida National Organization for Women, and Planned Parenthood. We called on Congress to vote NO on the American Health Care Act on the 7th anniversary of the signing of the Affordable Care Act. Congress must find a viable solution to provide healthcare for all Americans.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Both **HB 861** and **SB 198** were heard in the House and the Senate. HB 861 was passed by the House Natural Resources & Public Lands Subcommittee and SB 198 was passed by the Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation committee. Both bills tackle the issue of appointments being made by the Governor within a certain time frame onto the Environmental Regulation Commission. The League supports both bills.
- **SB 230** allows for the establishment of a pilot program to eradicate specific species from the state. The League is in opposition to this bill because it imposes legislation onto the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission which was created as an independent commission. This would jeopardize its independence and open the door for this to continue.
- **SB 982** takes funding from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund for Water Management Districts. The League is in opposition because we believe those funds should continue to go towards fully funding Amendment 1.
- Sen. Rodriguez introduced **SB 162** that would establish a pilot program authorizing certain municipalities to regulate or ban disposable plastic bags. The League is in support of this bill. It passed the Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation committee and moves onto Senate Community Affairs.

TO KEEP ABREAST OF THE WEEKLY REPORTS, GO TO <http://thefloridavoter.org/capitol-report>



WELCOME, NEW LWVNPC MEMBERS!

*Betty Johnson and Richard Smith

*We certainly hope all new members
will attend the Annual Meeting.*

*If it is a bit overwhelming, no
worries; talk with your tablemates, ask*

questions, and realize next year you'll be in the know!

YOU can be an advocate! Let these Legislators know your stance on bills.

Track bills: <http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/MyHouse/login.aspx> & <https://www.flsenate.gov/Login?referrer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.flsenate.gov%2F>

You can write or call. They need to hear from you.

Senator

Jack Latvala Dist. 16
Senate Office Bldg
404 South Monroe St.
Tallahassee 32399-1100
850-487-5016



850-487-5019

Senator

Darryl Rousen Dist. 19
212 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe St.
Tallahassee 32399-1100



Senator

Representative

Jeff Brandes Dist. 24
416 Senate Office Bldg
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, 32399-1100
(850) 487-5024



Wengay Newton, Sr. Dist. 70
1302 The Capitol
402 South Monroe St.
Tallahassee, 32399-1300
850-717-5070



Representative

Larry Ahern Dist. 66
222 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, 32399-1300



Representative

Chris Sprowls Dist. 65
412 House Office Bldg
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, 32399-1300



Representative

Kathleen Peters Dist. 69
303 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300
Phone: (850) 717-5069



Representative

Ben Diamond Dist. 68
1402 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300
Phone: 850-717-5068



Representative

James W. Grant Dist. 64
1301 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300
Phone: (850) 717-5064



Representative

Chris Latvala Dist. 67
313 House Office Bldg.
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300
Phone: 850-717-5067



Clicking on the picture of each legislator will take you to his/her webpage where you can choose to email him or her.

2016 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES April 9, 2016

Minutes of the Annual Meeting 2016 were approved by the Reading Committee and the LWVNPC Board of Directors in accordance with a motion made at the 2016 Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County.

CALL TO ORDER: The 2016 Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas was called to order by Donna Sharpless, President, at 10:36. Donna noted that this chapter of the LWV was founded in 1949 in Clearwater and has a great history -- and at this time we are seeking a historian to document that history. She urged members to check out the informative poster boards surrounding the room and to join a committee. **AWARD:** The ACLU presented an award in the form of a "Lady Liberty" trophy to the LWV of NPC and SPA for their work in the fight for redistricting.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Donna Sharpless, President, 2014-2016; Karen Karinja, Voter Services; Tamsen Martin, First Vice President; Marti Folwell, Treasurer; Joy Comstock, Publicity; Lois Rogers Watson, Education and the *Voter*; Ashley Wilson Pimley, Environment Chair and Associate Membership Chair; Peggy Toohey, Transportation & Environment Chair ; Anne Decker, Secretary

ABSENT: Carolyn Underwood, Membership Chair

MEETING PERSONNEL:

The following persons have been appointed as officials for this Annual Meeting: Parliamentarian: Marti Folwell; Registration: Valli Katzl, Delia Hancock-Miller; Credentials Committee Chair: Delia Hancock-Miller; Installation: Virginia Howie

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT: Delia Hancock- Miller reported for the Credentials Committee on the number of voting members present. Those members present and voting constitute a quorum per the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County, Article VII, Section 3. Delia reported that there were 40 LWVNPC members, and 5 guests present. 21 are needed for proposals to pass.

ADOPTION OF THE STATEMENT OF RULES: Tamsen Martin moved. Bill Jonson seconded. All in agreement.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: Anne Decker moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Seconded by Joy Comstock. Motion carried.

2015 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES: Donna Sharpless moved that the minutes be reviewed by the Reading Committee and then approved at the next board meeting. Move to accept. Seconded by Lois Rogers-Watson. Marti Folwell questioned where the Reading members were listed. These should be listed next year. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: Marti Folwell reported that the budget is on page 4 & 5 of the program. Bill Jonson asked for a correction of the year on page four. Move to accept by Lois Rogers-Watson, seconded by Bill Jonson. Motion carried.

PROPOSED PROGRAM AND BYLAWS PRESENTATION & ADOPTION: Referring to page 3 under Proposed Programs for 2016-2017, existing programs will be retained and a new Social Policy program under III will be added as a subsection of Social Policy:

- Quality of Life in Pinellas County – Support the reduction of poverty in north Pinellas County.
- Beth Hovind will chair. Barbara Letvin moved to approve as a program, Peggy Toohey seconded. Motion carried.

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES: Tamsen Martin moved to adopt the bylaws as amended, page 3. Joy Comstock seconded. Motion carried. Adopted as amended.

DUES INCREASE: Marti Folwell pointed out that family dues are totaled incorrectly. They should be \$85. Tamsen moved to change dues for family members to \$85 per family, \$55 for individuals, and \$140 for Cornerstone. Valli Katzl motioned to approve; Tamsen seconded. Motion carried.

PROPOSED BUDGET: Page 6, 2016-2017. Donna Sharpless moved to adopt the budget. Bill Jonson seconded. Budget adopted.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT: Elisabeth Mannion and Carol Bailey were the nominating committee. Elisabeth read the list of nominees: President, Karen Karinja; Treasurer, Marti Folwell; Directors: Joy Comstock, Rita Garvey, Judy McSwine, Ashley Wilson Pimley, Judy Ramsey, Donna Sharpless, and Withdrawn: Leigh Learing. Elisabeth Mannion opened the floor to nominations. No nominations from the floor were forthcoming. Nominations are closed. Elisabeth urged the membership to volunteer for the Nominating Committee – 3 members are necessary. Pona Piekarski volunteered, and two more are needed. Nominating committee is elected as presented.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Donna Sharpless thanked the Web Mistress, Kay Pitchon, for her excellent work. She also cited the importance of everyone volunteering at whatever level and time commitment that they have. Back-up personnel are critical she noted. Membership has increased this past year. Everyone can do something! She also noted how special Virginia Howie has been – Virginia gives tirelessly.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD: The 2016-2017 Board was introduced and approved for election. They were given the oath of office by Virginia Howie. And what a great job Virginia did!

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The new President, Karen Karinja, pitched the activities of the League and encouraged the membership to survey the poster boards and get involved. Karen then presented Donna Sharpless with a gift. Bill Jonson wanted to thank the League and pointed out that elected officials need to hear from groups like the League. Marti Folwell reported for ICROC (Independent Citizens Referendum Oversight Committee) that the referendum will be on the ballot in November and she urged support. Elisabeth Mannion recruited a second nominating committee member Mary Griffith.

ADJOURNMENT: The 67th Annual Meeting was officially adjourned at 11:21.

Respectfully submitted, Anne Decker, Secretary 2015-2017, April 09, 2016

2016-2017 PROGRAMS
LWVF Programs & LWVNPC Programs (bolded)

<p>GOVERNMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional Amendment review • Restoration of felon voting rights • Ethics and campaign finance • Voter rights • Election reform • Extend voter registration deadline • Pursue open primaries • Support online voter registration • Electors support popular vote winner • Adopt “motor voter” law • CRC 	<p>EDUCATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain construction and renovation funding • Accountability for test scores and needs of diverse students • Oversight of charter schools • Conflict of interest among legislators • Eliminate public funds supporting private education • Require private schools to be accountable 	<p>NATURAL RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalition to prevent privatization of parks • Support sustainable energy solutions • Support water quality improvement • Support full funding to protect/preserve natural resources 	<p>PINELLAS POVERTY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the reduction of poverty in North Pinellas county • Children's medical insurance • Support Medicaid expansion • Juvenile justice • Reproductive Rights • Eliminate the 24 hr. abortion provision 	<p>GUN SAFETY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand background checks • Statewide ban on assault weapons • No campus carry • No open carry • Require permits • No expansion of “stand your ground” • No guns in schools
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ADOPTION OF PROPOSED 2017-2018 PROGRAM

Retain existing programs: Education; Health, Poverty, Juvenile Justice; Natural Resources including Solar and Transportation

Add Constitutional Revision Commission oversight.



ADOPTION OF BYLAW CHANGES
ARTICLE 1 – NAME

Sec.1. Name. The name of this organization shall be: The League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County (LWVNPC). This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of Florida (LWVFL) and of the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS). In the event of dissolution of this organization, all funds and property will become the property of LWVF.

ARTICLE II-PURPOSE and POLICY

Sec. 1. Purpose. ~~The purpose of the League of Women Voters is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected government issues.~~ The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Sec. 2. Political Policy. The League shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.

ARTICLE III-MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 1. Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the Purpose and Policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Sec. 2. Members.

a) Voting Members. ~~Citizens~~ Persons of at least ~~48~~ 16 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of the local Leagues, state Leagues and of the League of Women Voters of the United States: (1) individuals who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League; (2) those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a Local League; (3) those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be Life Members excused from the payment of dues. Those who wish to support the League in a more substantial way may apply for a Cornerstone Membership.

b) ~~Associate Members~~. ~~All others who join the League shall be associate members.~~ Members are expected to pay annual dues to the organization. The President, may, at her discretion, determine a reduced rate when appropriate.

ARTICLE IV-BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sec. 1. Number, Manner of Selection, Term of Office. The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers of the League, eight (8) elected directors and not more than eight (8) appointed directors. One-half of the elected directors shall be elected by the General Membership at each Annual Meeting, and shall serve for a term of two (2) years, or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The elected members shall appoint such additional directors, not to exceed eight (8), as they deem necessary to carry on the work of the League. The terms of the appointed directors shall be one (1) year and shall expire at the conclusion of the next Annual Meeting.

Sec. 2. Qualifications. No person shall be elected or appointed or shall continue to serve as an officer or director of this organization unless he or she is a voting member of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County.

Sec. 3. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors by reason of resignation, death, or disqualification of an officer or elected member may be filled, until the next Annual Meeting, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board of Directors. Three (3) consecutive absences from a Board meeting of any member without a valid reason shall be deemed a resignation. Board members operating at odds with the prescribed purpose of this organizations may be removed by a vote of 2/3 of the Board.

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ByLaws continued:

Sec. 4. Powers and Duties. The Board of Directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the organization, with full power and authority to manage and conduct same, subject to the instructions of the General Membership. It shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the Program adopted by the National Convention, the State Convention, and the Annual Meeting. The Board shall create and designate such special committees as it may deem necessary.

Sec. 5. Board members assume no personal liability for actions taken as a member of the LWVNPC Board.

Sec. 6. All Board members will conform to the League's Conflict of Interest and Non-partisan Policies.

Sec. 5 7. Meetings. There shall be at least nine (9) regular meetings of the Board of Directors annually. The President may call special meetings of the Board of Directors, and shall call a special meeting upon the request of five (5) members of the Board.

Sec. 6 8. Quorum. A majority of the members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

Sec. 7 9. Electronic Board Meetings. Electronic board meetings to include, but not limited to, telephone, video and web conferencing shall be authorized to facilitate action on timely items that cannot wait until a regular Board Meeting. These meetings must be conducted with a quorum, as designated by the bylaws, and with a twenty-four (24) hour notice of date, time and place, by a technology that is available to all members eligible to participate and that allows all persons participating to hear each other at the same time.

ARTICLE V- OFFICERS

Sec. 1. Enumeration and Election of Officers. The officers of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County shall be a President or Co-Presidents, a First Vice President, a Second Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, all of whom shall be elected for terms of two (2) years, and take office immediately. The First Vice President and the Secretary shall be elected in odd-numbered years. The President(s), Second Vice President and the Treasurer shall be elected in even-numbered years.

Sec. 2. The President(s). The President(s) or Vice-president if so designated shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the Board of Directors. The President(s) may, in the absence of the Treasurer, sign or endorse checks or drafts or notes. The President(s) shall be, ex-officio, a member of all committees except the Nominating Committee. The President(s), until such time as the Board of Directors decides, shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of President and perform such other duties as may be designated by the Board.

Sec. 3. The Vice Presidents. The two Vice Presidents, in the order of their rank, shall, in the event of absence, resignation, disability, disqualification or death of the President(s), possess all the powers and perform all the duties of the office of President(s), until such time as the Board of Directors shall select one of its members to fill the vacancy. The Vice Presidents shall perform such other duties as the President and Board may designate.

Sec. 4. The Secretary. The Secretary shall keep minutes of the Annual Meeting of the League and of all meetings of the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall notify all Officers and Directors of their election. The Secretary shall sign, with the President, all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the Board, and shall perform such other functions as may be incident to the Office of Secretary, and shall keep bylaws up to date.

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Sec. 5. The Treasurer. The Treasurer shall collect and receive all monies due. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of these monies, shall deposit them in a bank, savings and loan, or money market fund as designated by the Board of Directors, and shall disburse them only upon order of the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall present statements to the Board of Directors at their regular meetings and an annual report to the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE VI-FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Sec. 1. Fiscal Year. The Fiscal Year of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County shall be from April 1 of each year to March 31 of the following year.

Sec. 2. Dues. Annual dues shall be set at the Annual Meeting and shall be due and payable on or before May first. Dues paid by new members joining between February 1 and April 30 shall be credited to the ensuing League year. Any member whose dues have not been received by August first shall be dropped from membership, with the consent of the Board of Directors. When two or more members reside at the same address in a common household, full payment of dues shall be made for the first member; a payment equal to one-half the annual dues payment shall be made for each additional member. If the League of Women Voters of Florida or the League of Women Voters of the United States should increase the per member payment, the dues of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County shall be increased to reflect the increase at the time it becomes effective. Dues for Cornerstone Members shall be twice the annual dues.

Sec. 3. Budget. A budget for the ensuing year shall be submitted to the Annual Meeting by the Board of Directors for adoption. The budget shall include support for the work of the League as a whole. "Ensuing year" means the fiscal year beginning April 1st of the calendar year in which the Annual Meeting adopts the budget.

Sec. 4. Budget Committee. A Budget Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors at least two (2) months prior to the Annual Meeting to prepare a budget for the ensuing year. The Proposed Budget shall be sent to all members one (1) month before the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall not be eligible to serve as chairperson of the Budget Committee.

Sec. 5. Review of Books. The books of the Treasurer shall be reviewed and inspected annually prior to each Annual Meeting by a person or persons designated by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VII-MEETINGS

Sec. 1. Membership Meetings. There shall be at least four (4) General Membership Meetings each year, including the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting shall be held between the last of March and the first of June, exact date to be determined by the Board of Directors.

Sec. 2. Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting shall:

- a) ~~accept~~ adopt a local program for the ensuing year;
- b) elect Officers and Directors, and members of the Nominating Committee;
- c) adopt a budget; and
- d) transact such other business as may properly come before it.

Sec. 3. Quorum. Those members present and voting at a meeting of which all members have received thirty (30) days written notice, shall constitute a quorum. The act of a majority of the members present at a meeting shall be an act of the organization, unless the act of a greater number is required by these bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII-NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Sec. 1. Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall consist of ~~five (5)~~ three (3) members, ~~two (2)~~ one (1) of which shall be a members of the Board of Directors. The chairperson and ~~two (2)~~ one member, who shall not be members of the Board, shall be elected for the period of a one year term at the Annual Meeting. In the event the League is unable to obtain ~~three~~ two non-Board Nominating Committee members, the number may be less, but a minimum of one. Nominations for those offices shall be made by the current Nominating Committee. The other members of the nominating committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. Any vacancy occurring among the elected members of the Nominating Committee by reason of resignation, death or disqualification, shall be filled by a majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors. The Nominating Committee shall request nominations for Officers and Directors from the membership, this request to be published in **The Voter** sixty (60) days prior to the final report of the Nominating Committee.

Sec. 2. Report of a Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor. The report of the Nominating Committee and its nominations for Officers, Directors and members of the succeeding Nominating Committee, shall be sent to all members one month before the date of the Annual Meeting.

The report of the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the Annual Meeting. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by any voting member, provided the consent of the nominees shall have been secured.

Sec. 3. Elections. Election shall be by ballot, provided that when there is but one (1) nominee for each office, the Secretary may be instructed to cast the ballot for every nominee. A majority vote of those qualified to vote and voting shall constitute an election. Absentee voting or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

ARTICLE IX-PROGRAM

Sec. 1. Program. The program of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County shall consist of education and action:

- a) ~~action~~ to protect the right of every citizen to vote;
- b) to promote those governmental issues chosen at the National and State Conventions, councils and local annual meetings for concerned study and action; and
- c) ~~action~~ to implement League principles.

Sec. 2. Program Selection. The Annual Meeting shall action upon the Program using the following procedures:

- a) The Board of Directors shall consider the recommendations sent in by the voting members two (2) months prior to the Annual Meeting and shall formulate a Proposed Program;
- b) The Proposed Program shall be sent to all members one (1) month before the Annual Meeting;
- c) A majority vote of voting members present and voting at the Annual Meeting shall be required for adoption of subjects in the Proposed Program as presented to the Annual Meeting by the Board of Directors;
- d) Recommendations for Program submitted by voting members two (2) months prior to the Annual Meeting, but not recommended by the Board of Directors may be considered by the Annual Meeting provided that:
 - 1) The Annual Meeting shall order consideration by a majority vote, and
 - 2) The Annual Meeting shall adopt the item by a ~~two-third 2/3 vote~~ majority vote.
- e) Changes in the Program, in the case of altered conditions, may be made provided that:
 - 1) Information concerning the proposed change(s) has been sent to all members at least two (2) weeks prior to a ~~General~~ Membership Meeting at which the change(s) will be discussed.
 - 2) Final action by the membership is taken at a succeeding Membership Meeting.

Sec. 3. Member Action. Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters only when authorized by the local President under the direction of the local, state, or national Board. (Continued on next page)

Continued from previous page:

ARTICLE X-NATIONAL AND STATE CONVENTIONS, STATE COUNCIL

Sec. 1. National Convention. The Board of Directors, at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the National office, shall select delegates to that convention in the number allotted the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Sec. 2. State Convention. The Board of Directors, ~~at~~ as a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the State office, shall select delegates to that convention in the number allotted the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Florida.

ARTICLE XI-PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Sec. 1. Parliamentary Procedure. The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE XII-ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Sec. 1. LWVNPC does not discriminate in employment or membership on the basis of age, race, color, religion, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or other protected group status. The Board of Directors will investigate any and all complaints.

ARTICLE X111-ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

SEC. 1. The LWVNPC will not tolerate unlawful harassment in any form, against anyone, at any time, for any reason. The Board of Directors will investigate any and all complaints.

ARTICLE XIV-AMENDMENTS

Sec. 1. Amendments. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present and voting at the Annual Meeting, provided the amendment(s) were submitted to the membership in writing at least one (1) month in advance of the meeting.

Amended:

April 21, 2001

April 26, 2003

April 23, 2005

April 9, 2016

April 15, 2017

NONPARTISAN POLICY

Adopted June 21, 1991, amended October 9, 1992, endorsed June 11, 2003 and May, 2005. Amended August 9, 2016 to align with LWVUS and LWVFL.

League board members' experience equips them for public life both for elective and appointive office in government and for responsible positions in the private sector. The external contacts, skills and experience that leaders bring to the League, in turn, benefit and enrich the League as an organization.

The LWVNPC board believes that board members should not only be allowed, but also encouraged, to seek and accept non-League positions that confer these mutual benefits. At the same time, the board recognizes the necessity of imposing a few basic limitations on board members' political activity in order to protect the nonpartisan reputation of the League.

With this objective in mind, the LWVNPC board adopts the following guidelines:

1. Elected Office

The League Officers and the Voter Service Chair shall not run for, nor hold, any partisan elective office. Other board members shall not run for, nor hold, local partisan elective office but can run for federal and state office, regardless of party designation, after consultation with the LWVNPC board and with the president of the affected local League. League members shall be considered candidates upon establishing campaign accounts.

(Continued on the next page)

NONPARTISAN POLICY continued:

2. Political Party Office

No member of the board shall serve in any partisan elected position in a political party. Nor shall a board member hold office in another organization that supports or opposes partisan political parties or candidates.

3. Campaign Contributions

The President and the Voter Service Chair may not attend fundraising events or make campaign contributions for candidates. Other board members may attend fundraising events and make campaign contributions for candidates at any level.

4. Political Campaigns

The President and the Voter Service Chair shall not chair or administer fundraising or partisan political campaigns, chair a campaign event or work in a significant way in the campaign of a candidate for office at any level. Other board members may not undertake such activities for candidates for local office but may do so for candidates for federal or state office after consultation with the president of the affected local League.

5. Relatives

The political activities of a spouse or relative of a board member should be considered separate and distinct from the activities of the board member.

Additional Clarification

Action chairs or board members holding sensitive portfolios may be subject to the same restrictions as the President and Voter Service Chair depending on how visible he/she is or to what extent the public identifies that person's partisan activity with those of the League.

Where a board member's activity affects the League's credibility as an effective nonpartisan political organization in the community, board members shall present questions about specific situations to the LWVNPC board and apply the foregoing policies or review them if they do not resolve the question. This policy shall be reviewed and readopted by the LWVNPC board at the beginning of each new biennium.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT/DISCLOSURES

LWVNPC board members are encouraged to be active in their communities. However, no LWVNPC board member shall use her/his position, or the knowledge gained therefrom, in a manner that completes with the nonpartisan interests or concerns of the League of Women Voters.

Each board member has a duty to place the interest of the League foremost in any dealings with the League and has a continuing responsibility to comply with the requirements of this policy.

No board member may obtain for her/himself, or for members of her/his immediate family, or for other organizations of which she/he is also a board member or key staff member a material interest of any kind from her/his association with the League. The materials, products, designs, plans, ideas and data of the LWVNPC are the property of the League and may not be given to an outside firm or individual except through normal channels and with appropriate authorization.

If a board member has an interest in a proposed League transaction that may result in a personal gain for that board member or for her/his immediate family or that may result in a benefit to another organization to which she/he has allegiance, she/he must make full disclosure of such interest before any discussion or negotiation of such transaction. Further, the board member shall not be present for any discussion or vote in connection with the matter. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect that the conflict of interest was disclosed and that the interested person was not present during the discussion and decision on the matter.

A copy of this policy shall be given to each board member at the beginning of her/his term of office. The policy shall be reviewed at the first meeting or board orientation of the duly elected LWVNPC Board of Directors.

DISCLOSURE:

To implement this policy, each LWVNPC board member shall submit a Disclosure of Interest Statement using the attached form at the beginning of each League year. The LWVNPC Secretary shall collect and file these signed statements.

Questions about the application of this policy or about any potential, alleged or actual conflicts of interest shall be referred to the Executive Committee, which shall investigate and attempt to resolve the concern. If the question pertains to a member of the committee, she/he shall not participate in the deliberations. Any questions that cannot be resolved by the committee shall be referred to the full LWVNPC board. (Continued on next page)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT/DISCLOSURES continued:

Disclosure of Interest Statement

Please initial in the space at the end of Item A or complete Item B, whichever is appropriate, then complete Item C, and sign, date, and return the statement for filing with the LWVNPC secretary.

A. I am not aware of any relationship or interest or situation involving a member of my family or myself which might result in, or give the appearance of being, a conflict of interest between that family members or me on one hand the League of Women Voters on the other.

B. The following are relationships, interests or situations involving me or a member of my family which I consider might result in, or appear to be, an actual, apparent or potential conflict of interest between such family members or myself on the one hand and the League of Women Voters on the other.

For-profit corporate directorships, positions and employment with:

Nonprofit trusteeships or positions:

Memberships in the following organizations:

Contacts, business activities and investments with or in the following organizations:

Other relationships and activities:

C. My primary business or occupation at this time is: _____

I have read and understand the LWVNPC Conflict of Interest Policy and agree to be bound to it. I will promptly inform the LWVNPC president of any material change that develops in the information given in this statement.

Signature _____ Date _____



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Voter Services

Throughout the past year, the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County Voter Service team successfully pursued its dual responsibilities of voter education and voter registration. The Voter Service team met monthly and planned for the various events that occur throughout the year, such as voter registrations, candidate forums, canvassing observations, and research of issues pertinent to Florida and Pinellas County.

The Voter Service Hot Topics speaker for 2017 will be Deborah Clark, Supervisor of Elections of Pinellas County, on Saturday, May 13, at the Dunedin Library. Ms. Clark will discuss the results of the November election and changes occurring in the next year. Throughout the time prior to the National Elections Voter Service members were registering voters and updating changes throughout the county at a wide variety of events and focusing on college campuses. During election time members observed the efforts of the Canvas Board as they reviewed provisional ballots and those that presented challenges.

Voter Service team members participated as moderators and timekeepers in Tarpon Springs, Safety Harbor, Dunedin, and Indian Rocks Beach.

A consensus meeting was conducted in March on the issue of Open Primaries.

—Karen Karinja

Membership

- Recruited new members, approximately 40, added with a total of 132 as of 3/6/17.
- Held our first New Membership Orientation meeting.
- Planning New Membership Orientation every 6 months in the spring and fall
- Developed presentation PowerPoint
- Processing new members through PayPal
- Added Facebook page with link to the website so members can like and share events
- Developed welcome letter with softcopy attachments of Directory, Bylaws, and Programs sent to new members
- Attended Women's March and received over 40 leads.

—Cathy Protopapas

Social Media

The LWVNPC has recently updated its Facebook page (search for: *lww north pinellas county* in Facebook.) In addition, we have initiated a Twitter account and a LinkedIn account. More information on all of these types of social media will be available shortly. We anticipate that this type of communication will help our League become better known with younger people.

Website

We added PayPal Payment services to the LWVNPC website so that site visitors would have the option to join the League or renew membership with a credit or debit card.

The LWVNPC website - www.lwvnorthpinellas.org - is available to both the public and League members. An automated website activity report indicates that visitors requested a view of LWVNPC site pages (by clicking a link) in the range of 3600 - 11,000 times a month in 2016.

— Kay Pitchon, LWVNPC Webmaster

Solar

The League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County (LWVNPC) has teamed up with FL Sun (Florida Solar United Neighborhoods - <http://www.flsun.org/>) to launch a rooftop solar buyer's cooperative. The overall aim is to raise public awareness to the many benefits of solar, make residential solar more affordable, lower folks' electric bills, support our local solar industry [and the jobs they create], and try to move FL towards solar leadership nationally ... sadly the Sunshine State is presently a laggard. Specifically, the co-op will hold 3-4 public Solar Information Meetings in order to offer a primer on solar basics, then organize interested homeowners into a group which will solicit competitive bids and group discounts from local installers. FL Sun will help evaluate the bids & companies in order to help the group choose an installer and offer support throughout the installation process.



Nationally, the Community Power Network (<http://communitypowernetwork.com/>) - the core organization behind FL Sun which facilitates the formation of the co-ops and brings the solar expertise - has successfully implemented dozens of solar cooperatives in other states. They brought the concept to Florida in 2016 and it has proven extremely popular! So far FL Sun has successfully formed co-ops in Orange County, St. Petersburg, Sarasota, Brevard area; they have signed up hundreds of participants and are saving co-op members an average of 20%! Presently there are many more co-ops planned state-wide, from Alachua to the Keys, some areas are even embarking on their second co-ops.

Our official launch in N. Pinellas will be some time in August (exact date TBD) and at this point we are looking to add a few more Community Partners: groups with trusted names and large footprints, who believe in the future of solar power and want to help spread more solar across FL. These can be environmental groups, community groups, faith groups, foundations, etc. So far our Community Partners include:

Suncoast Sierra Club
Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR)
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE)
The City of Oldsmar

In addition, we are in communication with Pinellas County, other cities in our area, church groups and media outlets in order to try and solicit their partnership.

As we get closer to launch date we will be planning our kick off press conference, Solar Information Meetings, local events where we can share the concept, as well as other aspects of our marketing campaign. We will also attend the Earth Day event in Clearwater to begin to spread the word.

Volunteers are still needed if you or anyone you know may have an interest. — Dave Sillman

International Relations

An International Relations study group is cosponsored by the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County and by the League of the St. Petersburg Area. The group meets the first Monday of the month, from October through May, at the Pinellas Park Library.

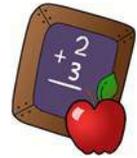
Members of the group present topics selected by the Foreign Policy Association and use the book **Great Decisions** as a guide along with additional research. This year, our presentations have been greatly enhanced by a video about the monthly topic, well-produced by the Foreign Policy Association. On Saturday, February 18, 2017, Dr. William Felice of Eckerd College spoke about "The Ethics of Interdependence: Global Human Rights and Duties."

Our average attendance is about twenty League members and guests. The presentations are most informative and timely. We welcome more attendance at this worthwhile project. — Judy McSwine, Chair



Education

Members: Lois Rogers-Watson, Sue Rishworth, Joy Comstock, Mary Schoonover, Delia Hancock-Miller, Mary Rao, Eliseo Santana, Eileen Long, Pona Pierkarski



1. Collaboration with Hillsborough League of Women Voters Education Committee regarding charter schools
2. March 2016 Hot Topic - Sue Legg – “Florida’s Charter Schools”
3. August - Education Committee LWVNPC School Board Candidate Forum
4. March 2017 Hot Topic - Dr. Lewis Brinson, Pinellas County Schools, “Bridging the Gap”
5. Representation at all Pinellas County School Board workshops and meetings
6. Represent LWVNPC at the District Monitoring and Advisory Committee, a committee established by Judge Merryday in a civil rights desegregation lawsuit
7. Developing collaboration with the Education Committee of the St Petersburg LWV
—Pona Piekarski-Chair



Poverty/Health Committee

The Poverty/Health Committee hosted the November General Meeting and was pleased to have Dr. Norin Dollard, Kids Count, USF and Nancy Rudner, Health Advocate from the Orlando LWV. Both gave excellent power point discussions of the issues of low income families in their daily living and in their health care. These power points are available if there are other groups who may be interested in learning from them.

Following this meeting, the Poverty/Health committee began to look at the local impact of poverty and health issues on residents in North Pinellas and Pasco County. Each member has chosen an issue to research and recommend to our plan for presentation to the larger group at the annual meeting in April. With the approval of LWVNPC we will begin the implementation. —by Beth Hovind, Chair

Juvenile Justice

Beth Hovind has been a steering committee representative to the LWVF state work group on Juvenile Justice. After an initial identification of issues to pursue, all Leagues were notified of a phone conference to discuss these issues statewide and encourage local groups to form their own Juvenile Justice committees and lobby their legislators to make the changes needed in the Juvenile Justice system.

1. CIVIL CITATION: SENATE BILL 196

Law enforcement jurisdictions have the option of using a civil citation process for actions conducted by a youth under 18 that are not a threat to the community, such as minor theft, assault and battery misdemeanor (a fight without injury), or a misdemeanor drug charge, among others. The youth is issued a citation listing the efforts he or she must go through to avoid a delinquency charge, such as counseling or community service. Used by law enforcement in the street setting as well as the school settings, early studies indicate that not only is the cost of juvenile enforcement reduced, but more importantly youth, after receiving services, are more likely not to reoffend and in addition, will not have a permanent record of delinquency, which may harm future ability to find work, etc.



The Implementation: Florida joins 44 other states in providing for civil citations. All but 2 counties have civil citation policies. Implementation is uneven between jurisdictions, within counties and between counties. An annual report,

(continued next page)

Juvenile Justice—continued

"Stepping Up" conducted by Dewey and Associates and available at iamforkids.org documents the progress being made. For example in Dade County, almost all law enforcement units are using civil citations when applicable, but Pasco County varies from 10% usage and 67% usage. A juvenile committing the same act in one jurisdiction will be charged with a delinquency offense while in another county will be given a civil citation and a chance to redeem their record. This is patently unfair and results in the creation in unnecessary delinquents. Ignoring the availability of civil citations in schools contributes to the "school to prison pipeline."

Some advocates are encouraging mandating the use of civil citations statewide to ensure equal protection for all juveniles. Others suggest that educating law enforcement and civil governments in the appropriate benefits to civil citations will greatly increase usage. The Juvenile Justice Committee strongly favors their usage and encourages local Leagues to study and advocate for their use in their home counties.

It is a win-win for everyone. The county saves on delinquency and court costs. Law enforcement can immediately get the youth the help they may need. And the youth has a second chance to change their behavior--something all of us probably needed at one time or another.

2. DIRECT FILE FOR JUVENILES: SENATE BILL 192

The Law: Florida Statute 985.556 and 985.557

98% of juveniles who are referred to adult court at the age of 14 or older are there at the discretion of the prosecutor's office without any judicial oversight. Human Rights Watch (<https://www.hrw.org/>) studies show that the use of direct file varies by prosecutor and judicial circuit. They further suggest that racial bias influences the outcomes, leading to unequal outcomes. While International Law requires that children be treated as children, these youthful offenders are housed in prisons designed for adult behavior, not to provide the rehabilitation the youth may need.

Most states do not allow direct file, which is a remnant of the "super predator" laws created out of fear of surging juvenile crime, which has since been denigrated. Florida continues the practice which denies juveniles the benefit of a judicial hearing with legal representation to challenge this discretionary assignment.

The Issues:

1. Fairness: Differences in usage across state: By race; by crime
2. Appropriateness of adult facility for develop juvenile: Physical/Mental/Emotional
3. Adequate legal representation in process

We encourage local Leagues to study the use of this practice in their counties and join the Juvenile Justice Committee as we make recommendations for state wide practice.

3. COMPETENT LEGAL REPRESENTATION:

The Steering Committee has been concerned that youth, charged with delinquent and criminal acts have adequate legal representation. Often left to the public defender's office, the quality varies with the time and competency that the funding allows. We support adequate funding to ensure adequate and competent legal representation.

—Beth Hovind, LWVNPC representative on this LWVFL committee



FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Sent to the County Commissioners:

Direction of inquiry *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner Janet C. Long - District 1 (2017 Chair) • Commissioner Pat Gerard- District 2 • Commissioner Charlie Justice - District 3 • Commissioner Dave Eggers- District 4 • Commissioner Karen Williams Seel - District 5 • Commissioner John Morroni - District 6 • Commissioner Kenneth T. Welch - District 7 (2017 Vice Chair)
Subject *	Poverty Issues to be Addressed
Message *	<p>Dear Pinellas County Commissioners,</p> <p>The League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County has been studying poverty in north Pinellas County for the past year. Two of the areas that stand out as impediments to county residents escaping their poverty are the lack of affordable housing and the need for better public transportation.</p> <p>Too many residents are unable to afford basic necessities due to the high portion of their income that must be spent on rent. Recent ALICE studies from the United Way are showing increases in the number of residents who are pay 50% or more of their income just for housing. We encourage the Commission to look to Pennies for Pinellas monies for additional public housing construction and encourage you to mandate some affordable housing in each major housing project approved by the commission. Since, on average 15% of Floridians are living below poverty, this would be a good figure to use.</p> <p>We encourage the recent discussions about a multi-county transit system and support your efforts to bring this to fruition.</p> <p>Good transportation and affordable housing will make a huge difference for our citizens who are working hard to increase their living standard.</p> <p>Thank you for listening. Please, if we can offer any support for your efforts in these two very important areas, let us know.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
Your Name	Karen M. Karinja

RESULTS OF THE CONSENSUS MEETING ON MARCH 11, 2017

Subject: Open Primaries

The current primary system in Florida hinders voter turnout. Agree

NPA's (No Party Affiliation) and minor party voters deserve an opportunity to vote in all primary elections. Agree

Consensus —continued

The primary system that would best serve the voters of Florida is Rank order your top three (one (1)– being your first choice)

No consensus

Threshold criteria should be established for write-in candidates to minimize political manipulation. Agree

Alone or in combination there are other factors that may improve voter turnout in primaries. These are:

- A. **Automatic registration of eligible voters at age 18 by an appropriate government agency.** Agree
- B. **Exclusive Vote by Mail** Disagree
- C. **Make election voting portable with the county similar to early voting centers.** Agree
- D. **Statewide Election Day (same day) Registration** Disagree



Photos from
the
Consensus
Meeting



CAPPED MEDICAID

From: [Miriam Harmatz miriam@floridalegal.org](mailto:miriam@floridalegal.org)

Subject: What Would Capped Medicaid Funding Mean for Florida? TALKING POINTS 02/13/17

TALKING POINTS

What Would Capped Medicaid Funding Mean for Florida?

Background: Congress is considering changes to Medicaid that would both cap federal dollars to states and radically change Medicaid's current financing structure. Florida's Medicaid program guarantees coverage for limited eligibility categories: low income children, very low income adults (and only if the adult is pregnant, blind, aged, or disabled), and extremely low income parents of minor children. The program covers most people in nursing homes, 2 out of 5 people with disabilities, and (along with KidCare) half of Florida's children.¹ Currently, the federal government guarantees payment for over 60% of the program's costs. Thus, when more people

((continued next page)

Capped Medicaid—Continued:

qualify for the program during economic downturns, or when the state faces increased costs due to unforeseen natural or medical “disasters” (e.g. hurricanes, Zika outbreak), federal funding is available to “match” the increased costs. By contrast, current proposals, which would reduce federal funding by \$1 trillion over 10 years, would also eliminate this guarantee of federal matching dollars and shift to “capped” funding.

“Capped” funding: Capped funding could either be a “block grant” or a “per capita cap.” A block grant would give Florida a set amount of money each year, and the state would determine what and whom to spend money on. Thus, if funding were insufficient to cover all currently eligible Florida residents, there could be wait lists for children, aged, or disabled etc. Under a per capita cap, the federal government would reimburse a pre-set amount per enrollee, and the base amount would likely be tied to current expenditures. Notably, Florida's per capita spending on children, aged and the disabled is currently among the lowest in the country. The cap would be adjusted annually based on a pre-determined growth rate which would be set below currently projected rates. Under both methods of capped funding, federal payments would eventually fail to cover actual health care costs.

Projected funding loss: An analysis of the House Republican 2012 budget plan for Medicaid (similar to current proposals) would have resulted in Florida losing more than \$33 billion over 10 years, or a 23% reduction in federal funding.² Because there will be insufficient funding to provide the current level of services for enrollees, Florida’s Legislature will have to choose between increasing revenue, limiting enrollment, reducing services, or lowering provider reimbursement rates.

“Flexibility”: Proponents often tout new state flexibility in efforts to radically restructure Medicaid. But since these proposals ultimately aim to reduce and cap federal Medicaid funding, any resulting state “flexibility” will simply be deciding who and what to cut. Florida’s Medicaid program is already flexible and efficient, as evidenced by the program’s historically low per-person costs decreasing even more under managed care.³

Shifts costs: Capped Medicaid funding will not reduce the costs of providing health care. Because Medicaid enrollees are indigent, the cost of their care will be shifted to the state, county, or providers. Vulnerable children, elderly, and disabled individuals will be forced to seek emergency room care or go without medically necessary treatment, all of which result in increased costs.

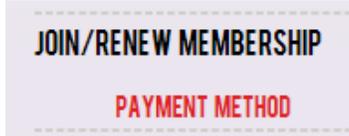
1 Kaiser Family Foundation, Florida Medicaid Fact Sheet (January 2017)

2 Holohan et al. “National and State -by-State Impact of the 2012 House Republican Budget Plan for Medicaid, Kaiser Commission on Medicaid (October 2012)

3 Lynn Hatter, "House Report: Overall Medicaid Costs Rising, But Individual Costs Down" (December 9, 2016)

For questions, contact Miriam Harmatz, miriam@floridalegal.org or Katy Huddleston, katy@floridalegal.org

Now You Can Join the League Online...Just go to our Website



PayPal payment services are there for your convenience.

Just go to the [LWVNPC Website](#), select **Payment Method**, and follow the instructions.

NOTE: There is no extra charge to you for the PayPal service when you use your credit or debit card to pay LWVNPC membership dues.

You can also donate to the LWV Education Fund which is tax deductible. http://www.lwvnorthpinellas.org/donate_form.html

If you prefer to join via mail, here is the form to use:

League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

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NEW MEMBER? PREVIOUS MEMBER? WHERE? _____

Annual membership is \$55. Household memberships are \$85 (2 people). Student membership is \$30. Cornerstone membership is \$110. Household Cornerstone is \$140. After LWV membership for 50 years, dues are waived.

Dues are payable to the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County on or before May 1 of each year.

Please mail the membership application & payment to: LWVNPC, P. O. Box 6833,
Clearwater, FL 33758 OR Join online at LWVNPC!

We are on Facebook!

go to:

League of Women Voters - North Pinellas County



Informed and Active Citizen Participation

Visit us on the web at
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LWVNPC

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Phone: 727-447-1564

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