



TO PROMOTE POLITICAL  
RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH  
INFORMED AND ACTIVE  
PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS IN  
GOVERNMENT AND TO ACT ON  
SELECTED GOVERNMENT ISSUES

**THE VOTER**  
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF TALLAHASSEE  
[www.lwvtallahassee.org](http://www.lwvtallahassee.org)  
850-309-3005

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TALLAHASSEE

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**09 Wednesday 4:00 p.m.**

Tallahassee City Commission  
City Hall 2nd floor

**15 Tuesday 3:00 p.m.**

Leon County Commission  
County Courthouse 5th floor

**15 Tuesday 6:30 p.m.**

LWVT Board Meeting  
LWVF Office, Beverly Court

**16 Wednesday 9:00 a.m.**

Health & Human Services  
Target Issue Committee Meeting  
City Hall Conference Rm 4

**16 Wednesday 1:30 p.m.**

Education Committee Meeting  
M. L. Baker, 2423 Shalley Drive

**21 Monday 1:00 p.m.**

CRTPA Meeting  
City Hall 2nd floor

**21 Monday 3:00 p.m.**

Environment & Energy  
Target Issue Committee Meeting  
City Hall Conference Rm 4

**23 Wednesday 6:00 p.m.**

Legislative Seminar Dinner  
Florida Capitol 22nd Floor

**30 Wednesday 4:00 p.m.**

City Commission Meeting  
City Hall

**31 Thursday 3:00 p.m.**

Health Care Committee Meeting  
Theresa Chase 2302 Trescott Drive

## LEGISLATIVE SEMINAR MARCH 23, 2011

### FAIR DISTRICTS CELEBRATION

You are invited to attend Redistricting:  
Celebrate 5 & 6

Please join us for the launching of our annual Legislative Seminar and the celebration of the passing of Amendments 5 and 6. The League of Women Voters of Florida is hosting a dinner on the 22nd floor of the Capitol on Wednesday, March 23. Honored guests will include Ellen Freidin, who launched and led the Fair Districts campaign for four years.

Former State Senator Dan Gelber, who is the Fair Districts Now attorney, will also be on hand. If you are registered for Legislative Seminar, there will be no charge for the dinner.

**Time:** 5 p.m.

**Place:** State Capitol Building  
22nd floor  
400 S. Monroe Street

**Cost:** \$35.00 payable at the door

**Reservations:** Please call the LWVF office, 224-2545, no later than Monday, March 21, 2011.



Since the League has to pay for all meals ordered, cancellations received after the deadline will be billed for the cost of the lunch.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

If it's March then the legislators must be back in town. Then, what was all that going on the past three weeks??? Much of the legislation that is controversial was rushing through committees before the official start of the session.

For instance, TABOR legislation will be headed to the floor of the Senate during the first week of session. SB736 is bulldozing its way through committee. There is plenty of talk about "cuts" and none about raising revenues. Have you contacted your state senator about either one of these bills? Hopefully, you have.

Thanks to Gaynell Waldo, Joan Patterson, Jan Rubino, Kathy Winn, Peggy Ramsey, Rebecca Sager, Janet Findling, Susie Caplowe, and Marilynn Wills for answering phones at the first of two spring fund drives for WFSU-FM. If you didn't get a chance to volunteer, there will be another opportunity on April 14, 2011. Mark your calendar.

For the very first time ever Legislative Seminar and State Convention will be combined and held right here in Tallahassee. I encourage you to sign up for both. During the seminar, you will have an opportunity to hear from many of your legislators, and convention gives you the opportunity to vote on what the League's program should be for the next two years. These occasions also give you the opportunity to meet League members from all over the state. If you cannot attend Seminar, I hope you will be able to attend the Celebration Dinner at the Top of the Capitol on Wednesday, March 23rd.

LWVF 1st Vice President Annie Betancourt spent almost one year negotiating and arranging a trip to Cuba for members of the Florida League. We just returned from Cuba on Saturday, March 26 after a week of meeting with Cuban women who are members of Parliament, magazine publishers, teachers, and doctors. We visited a school, an area health center, and the fortress built to stave off attacks from Spain. Miami Leaguer Elizabeth Pines took many photos and will present a slide show at one of the evening gatherings during the State Convention.

Enclosed in this VOTER, you will find information pertaining to our Annual Meeting; plan to attend and bring the insert with you. We will be voting on new officers, the budget, and a bylaws change. Your vote is your voice in these matters.

We also need financial sponsors for our VOTER. If you can afford to, it is a great way to support our League. You can also support the Tallahassee League by becoming a Susan B. Anthony Member when you renew your membership at our Annual Meeting in April.



## HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

Health Care Committee members are monitoring health related bills in the state legislature. We attended the Senate Budget Committee's 02/22/11 meeting on SJR 2 - Health Care Services (presented by Senator Haridopolis as the Florida Health Care Freedom bill) which "proposes an amendment to the State Constitution to prohibit laws or rules from compelling any person, employer, or health care provider to participate in any health care system. Permits a person or an employer to purchase lawful health care services directly from a health care provider. Permits a health care provider to accept direct payment from a person or an employer for lawful health care services, etc." ([www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail...](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail...)) This amendment is a response to the new federal health care reform law enacted in March of 2010.

Another bill to watch is Medicaid Reform (Health and Human Services Bill 28-01190A-11). It includes proposals for moving Medicaid recipients into managed care, increasing payments of doctors, lawsuit reform, changes in personal health behavior focusing on smoking and obesity, and long-term care changes. Please look for details at [www.healthnewsflorida.org](http://www.healthnewsflorida.org) and [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov).

We are encouraged by our local chapter of PNHP (Physicians for a National Health Program) to follow the news from Vermont on single payer legislation. Governor Peter Shumlin has said he wants Vermont to adopt a single payer program (<http://www.pnhp.org/news/2011/february/shumlin-outlines-health-care-plan>).

At the regular public meeting in February, the Board of County Commissioners of Leon County planned to make nine appointments to the Community Health Coordinating Committee (CHCC). This committee replaces the Health Advisory Board. You can obtain details on its responsibilities and appointments at [www.leoncountyfl.gov/bcc/committees/detail](http://www.leoncountyfl.gov/bcc/committees/detail).

Our next LWVT health care committee meeting will be on March 31 at 3 pm.

Theresa Chase

"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

Discussion at the Local Government Committee's meeting on February 24 focused on follow-up of December's meeting with City Manager Anita Favors Thompson and a number of new topics, including the recent approval of Canopy, a development in the planning stages on a tract of land referred to as Welaunee and located in northeast Tallahassee.

Our meeting with the City Manager was about the city utilities advisory group she put together several years ago. Information from that meeting was published in a previous . Although that meeting clarified the purpose and function of the advisory group, which is not a City Commission advisory board, Local Government Committee members will continue gathering information by talking with electric utilities staff about how much of the revenue earned by the service is used by the City for other services.

Our discussion of the Canopy development resulted in a decision to learn more about it and the plans that have been approved. In particular, we are interested in any exceptions made and special treatment received in the approval process. Ruth O'Donnell and Stuart Baker will do some research for our March meeting.

The Tallahassee League position supporting functional consolidation of city and county services continues to be a Committee interest. Leon County is discussing at least one additional possible area of consolidation as far as we know. Barbara Sterling will research the status of any discussions or actions on that topic.

Carol Weissert brought up two topics which were discussed as possible areas for Committee inquiry. The first is pensions for at-risk categories of local government such as police and fire departments. In many cities in Florida the cost of funding these pensions has become a large part of annual budgets and even placed some cities in danger of bankruptcy. The second topic relates to retirees and insurance and the fact that no state agency is tracking what cities and counties are doing. Further discussions on these issues will be held at the next meeting.

Linda Davis and Barbara Sterling reported on a February 28 program called Renewable Energy in the South which they found to be very interesting. The Committee maintains an interest in local government

efforts related to this topic. The speakers, faculty members from Duke University and Georgia Tech discussed efforts to get a Florida law passed that would require achievement goals and standards of performance related to renewal energy efforts by local government. No bill has been put forward to the Florida Legislature at this point.

Future meetings will be on the last Thursday of the month which, for March, is the 31st. Join us for lively discussion and an open forum for discussing a variety of issues and topics.

Ruth O'Donnell

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Senate Bill 0736 (House Bill 7019) The Student Success Act, is moving smoothly and quickly through the process of becoming law. It is a bill intended to change the way that instructional personnel and administrators in Florida schools will be evaluated and compensated. Based on the concept that the classroom teacher is the single most important element in students' growth and learning, the bill proposes that retention and compensation of teachers and administrators be based on measurements of student learning and growth (at present, the level proposed is 50% of the evaluation). The importance of the classroom teacher is a strong belief of Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education, and is supported by President Obama. It is a view that has become popular with legislatures in their constant quest to fix the schools and to improve the education of all students: the famous "silver bullet". It is probably popular because it offers a simple solution to a complex and baffling problem.

This approach to classroom education is not without resistance. There are problems based on the difficulty of measuring how much of student learning can be directly related to what the teacher does in the classroom. Only the most naïve or laziest of thinkers believe that the teacher is the only thing that affects student learning and that one can be sure about what percentage of student learning is directly related to teacher performance. Nevertheless, it seems fairly certain that changes along these lines will be made.

But as anonymous once said, "The devil is in the details". If this relationship must be measured, then how to do it. If you want to get some understanding about what methods might be used and how reliable they are, there is a very current book, *Value-added*

*Measures in Education*. Douglas N. Harris. Harvard Education Press, 2011, that can give you some insight into what are the best methods available and how such data should be used. Perhaps the most apropos quote from this book would be: *The Cardinal Rule of Accountability: hold people accountable for what they can control*.

Citizens will need to pay attention to the measures of accountability chosen, if this bill passes and it looks as if it will. If this bill sets the teachers of Florida up to be measured by elements in a student's life over which they have no control, what good can come of this?

Florida is often given high marks for the equity of its state funding for schools; the much noted *Quality Counts 2011* gave the state a rating of 89% (based on a score of 100% for the highest ranking state, Maryland). But we all know that does not translate into equity in what each school has to offer its students. This might be because districts may generate revenues from private sources. Recently in Leon County, this translated into \$10,000 donated by Rudy and Kari Rowe and the Rowe Companies, Southland Contracting, Inc. and Rowe Roofing Company. The donation carried the stipulation that it would be for the sole use of Gilchrist Elementary.\*

This donation was processed through the Leon County Schools Foundation and will be used to enhance the Tech Lab at the school. The Rowes have a child at Gilchrist.

Who your parents are, how well off they are, and how interested they are in the school you attend really does make a difference, as we have all known for a long time. It may even rival or even exceed the value of the teacher in the classroom, however wonderful you may remember her as being.

\*details of the grant and its uses was taken from: *A \$10,000 donation helped buy computers for Tech Lab*. *Northeast Chronicle*, Thursday, Feb. 3, 2011, pg 1.

M. L. Baker

Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.

G. K. Chesterton

**2011 ANNUAL MEETING  
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TALLAHASSEE**

**Nominations for 2011-2012 Board:**

President: Rebecca Sager  
Vice-President: Marilyn Wills  
Treasurer: Peggy Ramsey  
Secretary: Kathy Winn

**Elected Directors: 2011-2013**

Cristina Crotty  
Lanue Ryan  
Carol Weissert

**Elected Director 2011-2012**

M.L. Baker

**Continuing Elected Directors: 2010-2012**

Stuart Baker  
Ruth O'Donnell

**Appointed Board Members:**

(to be appointed by incoming Board)  
Maximum: six appointed by board members

**2012 Nominating Committee:**

Ruth O'Donnell, Chair  
Amy Mann  
3<sup>rd</sup> member to be appointed by the Board

Submitted by 2011 Nominating Committee, Peggy  
Ramsey, Chairperson

**PROPOSED PROGRAM**

**Education:** Continue to attend School Board Meetings, monitor legislation relevant to education. (M.L. Baker, Chair)

**Election Reform:** Monitor the election and auditing processes, Adopt-A-Precinct. (Ben Wilcox, Chair)

**Health Care:** Support, monitor and take action for ongoing national, state and local health care reform with educational and legislative initiatives which promote socio-economic and racial equity in quality health care access for all. (Theresa Chase, Chair)

**Lobby Corps:** Continue to monitor legislative committees during the session.

**Local Government:** Observation of county and city commission meetings. (Ruth O'Donnell/Barbara Sterling, Co-Chairs)

**Promote Political Responsibility:** Continue monthly Hot Topics Luncheons devoted to topics informing members and the public about selected governmental issues. Continue to hold evening meetings on issues.

**Transportation:** Participate in the state study on transportation.

**Voter Service:** Register voters, work with other community groups to educate voters on issues of importance to League priorities. Continue producing an online voter guide (Janet Findling, Rebecca Sager, Co-Chairs)

**Retain Positions:** Positions previously adopted by this League are listed below. The Board recommends that all positions be retained.

## **POSITIONS:**

### **CHARTER GOVERNMENT:**

July 2000, LWVTallahassee supports a charter government in Leon County. This position supports a charter review committee that would review the charter periodically. We support a reduction of duplication of services. We support “an achievable percentage” of registered voters to bring about citizen petitions (we oppose requiring 10% of registered voters from each district for citizen initiatives.) We support establishing oversight of constitutional officers. We oppose allowing county ordinances to supersede city ordinances.

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

1960-1961, LWVT supports measures in the Tallahassee Comprehensive Plan leading to long-range City and County planning.

February 1964, Continued attention be paid to community planning with support of measures that will provide the best long-range comprehensive planning for the community.

1979, (regarding the Comprehensive Plan) actively participate in the decision-making process and encourage citizen input.

### **CONSOLIDATION:**

October 1971, LWVT reached consensus in support of the consolidation charter. The consolidation charter failed on the November 1971 ballot.

April 1973, LWVT supports the new Charter for Consolidation including changes made by the Charter Commission. They include:

1. Addition of a Department of Planning
2. Procedural change in the recall of elective officials, by increasing the percentage of qualified electors who must sign a petition from 10% to 20%.
3. Accountability for county officials (all officials would be required by the commission to submit “uniform estimates or budgets for the operation of their offices...”) and,
4. Taxation rate: “The commission shall provide and maintain a fair and just differential between the tax levy in city and county”. (The charter amendment failed.)

September 1991, LWVT supports the concept of consolidation if it provides for efficient and accountable government support for initiative, referendum, and recall. The legislative body shall appoint at fixed intervals a charter review commission that shall have the power to propose amendments to the charter for direct placement on the ballot at the next general election, and provide that all amendments to the charter be accomplished by a simple majority vote.

We support Constitutional officers becoming charter officers. We support the removal of non-judicial functions from the Clerk of the Circuit Court position. We support appointed charter officers (formerly Constitutional Officers). If the positions are elected, elect the Supervisor of Elections on a non-partisan basis.

We support providing for fair and equitable representation.

We support clearly defined lines of authority and responsibility. We support an appointed, qualified administrator with clearly defined duties and the power to appoint and fire department heads.

We support coordinated countywide law enforcement.

We support full implementation of the official comprehensive land use plan.

We support adequate and equitable revenue sources with tax in proportion to service provided. (Charter failed)

### **TRANSPORTATION:**

July 1994, LWVT supports a transportation system that protects the environment and neighborhoods and gives incentives for multi-person transit. To this end, LWVT supports parking limitations, dedicated high occu-

*cont'd next page*

pancy vehicle lanes (HOV's), Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies such as flextime, telecommuting and ride sharing. The LWVT agrees that consideration should be given to a light rail system.

The LWVT supports establishment of a countywide bicycle and pedestrian system of bike lanes, bike paths and sidewalks to facilitate motor-free transportation.

The LWVT supports creation of a balanced transportation system that emphasizes protection of the environment and underscores the need for alternatives to single occupancy vehicles. The LWVT, therefore, opposes the proposed limited access beltway known as the Northeast Parkway because of its devastating environmental impact, specifically on Lake Lafayette. Additionally, there are no funds set aside for this Northeast Parkway; funds would be taken from other transportation projects already planned.

Transportation Position adopted at the March, 1995 Annual Meeting. Action in support of present positions, especially on a comprehensive transportation system that includes environmentally sound planning.

Transportation Position adopted at the March 30, 1996 Annual Meeting. Action in support of present positions especially on a transportation system that includes a comprehensive Eastern Sector Study and the implementation of a visioning process by the Leon County MPO to ensure environmentally sound planning and citizen participation in the decision-making process.

**League of Women Voters/Tallahassee  
BUDGET HISTORY FY 2008-10**

Income Category	Budget 2009-10	Actual 2009-10
<b>Income Category</b>		
Member Dues	4200	4750
Susan B Anthony Membership	0	350
Annual Meeting	800	940
Holiday Brunch	1100	1132
Hot Topics	4800	3968
Legislative Seminar Events	2000	1910
Fundraiser: Miscellaneous	500	213
Donations		
Member/Associate		500
Other	600	
Voter Services Publications		
US Education Fund	500	375
State Education Fund		
State Lobby Fund	300	285
Board of Directors Fund	700	
Interest Income	100	219
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>15600</b>	<b>14642</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>		
<b>Administration</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>456</b>
Board Expenses	25	
Copies	25	
Fund Raising	*** 100	
Membership	50	
Memorial	200	
Postal Box & Permit	250	255
President	100	
Uniform Business Report	70	71
Voice Mail	130	130
<b>Communications</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>1312</b>
Voter Bulk Mail	500	400
Voter Printing	900	912
<b>Events</b>	<b>6900</b>	<b>7444</b>
Meeting Expenses	100	
Annual Meeting	800	882
Hot Topics	4800	3666
Legislative Seminar Events		1675
Holiday Brunch	1200	1221
<b>Meetings</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>450</b>
Legislative Seminars	100	□
State Convention/Council	□	450
National Council	450	□
State Convention	450	□
Workshops	* 100	
<b>Per Member Payments- PMP</b>	<b>3800</b>	<b>4012</b>
National	1600	2188
State	1200	1164
Education Fund	600	375
Education Fund (State)	100	
Lobby Fund	300	285
<b>Voters Service</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>756</b>
Band Wagon	*** 0	
VS Outreach	0	
Voter Guides	0	756
Legislative Wrap-up	1200	□
Kids Voting	0	
<b>Program Activities</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>1063</b>
Local	250	300
National	0	
State	0	763
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>15600</b>	<b>15493</b>

\*\*\* = Expense was contributed (no funds expended)

**League of Women Voters/Tallahassee  
FY 2010-11 PROPOSED BUDGET\***

Income Category	Budget 2010-11	Estimated 2010-11	Projected 2011-12
<b>Income Category</b>			
Member Dues	4750	5475	5800
Annual Meeting	900	1000	1000
Holiday Brunch	1100	1200	1200
Hot Topics	4000	4783	4300
Legislative Seminar Events	2000	0	0
Fundraiser: Miscellaneous	250	0	1280
Voter Services Publications	750	550	0
US Education Fund	350	385	400
State Lobby Fund	200	235	250
Board of Directors Fund	1000	2725	1750
Susan B Anthony Membership	450	500	550
Member Donations	250	2225	1100
Memorials	100	0	100
Other		0	0
Interest Income	200	125	125
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>16300</b>	<b>16478</b>	<b>16105</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>			
<b>Administration:</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>755</b>
Board Expenses	95	150	200
Fund Raising	100	0	100
Postal Box & Permit	250	255	250
Uniform Business Report	75	71	75
Voice Mail	130	130	130
<b>Communications</b>	<b>1350</b>	<b>1478</b>	<b>2150</b>
Voter Bulk Mail	350	250	350
Voter Printing	1000	1228	1800
<b>Events</b>	<b>7850</b>	<b>6384</b>	<b>6500</b>
Annual Meeting	900	1000	1000
Hot Topics	4000	4150	4300
Membership Events	50	0	0
Legislative Seminar Events	1800	0	0
Holiday Brunch	1100	1234	1200
<b>Meetings</b>	<b>1050</b>	<b>1050</b>	<b>1050</b>
includes State Convention/Council, Legislative Seminar, and National Convention			
<b>Per Member Payments/PMP</b>	<b>4050</b>	<b>4612</b>	<b>5600</b>
National	2200	2529	3300
State	1300	1463	1650
US Education Fund	350	385	400
State Lobby Fund	200	235	250
<b>Voter Service</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>2904</b>	<b>0</b>
Bandwagon	100	159	0
VS Outreach		1945	0
Voter Services Publications	750	800	0
Kids Voting	100	0	0
<b>Board of Directors Fund</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>50</b>
includes State and Local Program Activities			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>16300</b>	<b>17987</b>	<b>16105</b>

\* Categories have been streamlined

## SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY HOT TOPICS

We were fortunate to have Mr. Scotty Crowe, Division Director of School Improvement & Technology for Leon County Schools, as our February Hot Topics Speaker. Mr. Crowe has been a teacher and principal in Leon County for the past twenty years.

I will try to highlight some of the more pressing topics he discussed:

Class size—the legislature did not fund the class size amendment during the last legislative session. According to Mr. Crowe, they should either fund it or relax the requirements. For instance, if a 19th student moves into a class, he/she should not be refused but should be allowed to stay in the class. Currently, if this happens, the school district is fined.

Note: As stated, the legislature did not give counties the monies needed to fund the amendment and is now placing heavy fines on those districts that were not able to meet the class size requirements in every class in the school.

Race to The Top--This is a federal initiative; \$4.3 billion was allotted for all the states. Florida did apply for the money, and each school district could apply for funds from the state. Florida received \$700 million and allotted \$350 million to the local school districts. Leon County applied for funds and will receive \$3.4 million. Monies will be spent to increase the graduation rate (Leon hopes to raise theirs from 64% to 85%), close the achievement gap between sub groups in the system (Leon aspires to cut the gap in half), and lower the number of students entering the university system who do not progress past the first year. (Leon students have a success rate of 34% at present).

Senate Bill 736 (son of SB6) has had more input and buy in from FEA and other bargaining units. Mr. Crowe stated that the legislature has been slowly chipping away at teacher tenure. The core of the “reform” in SB736 will require school districts to develop a new teacher evaluation system tied directly to student achievement with 50% tied to other measures. While merit pay has come up in the past, it has usually “crashed and burned.” How do you decide if a teacher is effective?? There are built in pieces in this reform that may help with the implementation of the policy. But, as Mr. Crowe asked, “How do you measure ef-

fectiveness in those classes that don’t make up the core curriculum—art, physical education, guidance counselors, etc.”

He hopes that funding will be available to aid in turning around the lowest performing schools, and thinks that there should be common core standards across the country; also, infrastructure systems like data systems and technologies have to be strengthened. In Florida, there will probably be end-of-course exams which students will have to pass to progress through the school system.

There was also some discussion of the proposed 5% reduction in pay for all state workers, teachers, bus drivers, custodians....

As Mr. Crowe stated, “Leon County has supported the public schools; the half-cent sales tax passed by the county has helped with capital improvements to the schools. However, it will soon be phased out.” What happens next????



### VISION

Leon County Schools will be an engaging, safe and respectful learning environment that embraces change and produces high academic achievers who appreciate diversity and become conscientious contributors to our society.

### MISSION

The mission of the Leon County Schools is to prepare students to become responsible, respectful and independent learners and contributing citizens in a diverse world of change.

The district will facilitate student growth by creating a quality, caring and safe learning environment, and selecting and developing quality teachers, administrators and staff.

The district will provide effective and efficient school, district and community support services that address student and school performance improvements.

Schools and the district will communicate with and involve parents/guardians, business and the community in activities that celebrate and enhance student and school success.

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*Change is not made without inconvenience, even from worse to better.*

Richard Hooker

*The following report comes from the Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy:*

### **TAX MODERNIZATION WOULD PRODUCE REVENUE FOR CRITICAL STATE NEEDS**

Modernizing Florida's tax structure would (1) close the state's budget gap, (2) prevent the most severe cuts in essential services like education and health care, (3) increase fairness, and (4) fix the state's long-term structural budget deficit.

Florida's tax system is antiquated, unfair, and inadequate to meet the needs of the nation's fourth-largest state.

Meanwhile, even after several years of damaging budget cuts, the governor and legislature promise additional reductions in services in order to balance the state budget. But they have stated they will not consider any tax reform actions in 2011 that would result in increased revenue.

By acting to implement tax modernization proposals considered in Florida for years and sometimes decades, the state could raise more than \$5 billion each year to pay for services needed for a decent quality of life.

Elected officials have the choice of enacting any or all of these, as well as other modernization proposals discussed for years, instead of relying on more service cuts to balance the budget.

To read the complete report, go to [www.fcfe.org](http://www.fcfe.org)

## From State



### **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS CONVENTION 2011**

You are invited to the League of Women Voters of Florida's 2011 Legislative Seminar and Convention from March 23 to March 26 in Tallahassee. For the early bird registration price of \$175 for both events, be sure to register by March 4 to avoid missing out on the League's most important work of the year!

Take part in lobbying for our issues as a group during Session at Legislative Seminar, discussing and voting on important League decisions for the coming year at Convention, or BOTH!

## From National



### **2010 HIGH SCHOOL VOTER REGISTRATION PROJECT**

The High School Voter Registration Project is a nationwide effort to encourage young people--especially young minorities--to register to vote. This groundbreaking project aims to register 27,000 high school students in 100 high schools. It is also a first-of-its-kind research experiment to measure the effectiveness of various voter registration strategies in schools. Leagues are working in five states (California, Texas, Arizona, Florida and Virginia) to carry out the project in 2010.

Why now?

Research shows that it is possible to create long-term change by encouraging life-long civic participation from young people: 91 percent of registered voters under the age of 30 cast a ballot in 2008. However, Americans under the age of 30 remain severely underrepresented in the electorate, and the disparities in youth voting grow even wider when looking at African-Americans, Latinos, and those with no college experience. What's more, many youth registration drives target college campuses, missing the 43 percent of Americans with no college experience.

From the economy to the future of health care and our energy security, our elected officials are making decisions now that will affect today's youth for decades to come. Young voters have a critical voice to lend. This project aims to empower young people to stand up and make the most of their right to vote. That's why we believe it is vital to reach America's future voters while they are still in high school. We're thrilled to work with educators to fulfill that mission in 2010 and beyond.



## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

A comment that I often hear from members is that “we need to recruit some young people!” Well, I have an opportunity for you to do just that.

One function of the Membership Committee is the recruitment and retention of members. If you have some ideas for how to do this, please contact me and let’s get the LWVT Membership Committee rolling.



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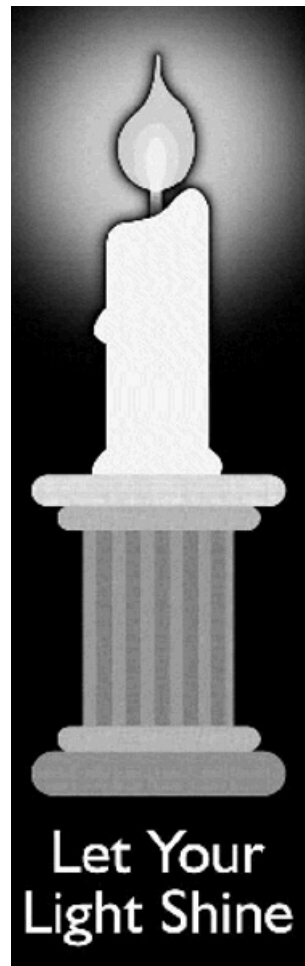


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Many hands make light work. The more persons working on a project the less each one has to do.





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