



# LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS of NEW ORLEANS

Volume 60, Issue 1, April 2017

## League Essentials

### Write or Call Your Legislators!

Tell them that you, as a LWVNO member and constituent, support or oppose the following bills



### *Bills Filed for the 2017 Louisiana Legislative Session*

#### Bills Supported or Opposed by LWVNO Voter Service Committee

**HB544 Danahay: Support**

Revises the system of laws comprising the Louisiana Election Code

**HB565 Morris: Oppose**

Repeals provisions of the law that allows voter affidavits; therefore limits voter participation

**SB201 Donahue: Support**

Election of Louisiana members to Congress to occur at the same time as other members of Congress

**HB456 Abramson: Support**

A limited constitutional convention following a study to determine need relative to local finance, allocation and expenditure of funds, education funding

**HB229 Smith: Support**

Allows for former convicted felons to vote after a period of 5 years

#### Bills Supported by LWVNO Women's Issues Committee

**HB112 Bouie: Support**

Requires state contractors to comply with the Louisiana Equal Pay for Women Acts

**HB222 Moreno and Hunter: Support**

Prohibits employer retaliation against an employee who discusses wage information

**SB153 Troy Carter: Support**

Provides for an increase in the state minimum wage--raises the minimum wage in the state to \$8.50 by 2019 (to \$8.00 in 2018)

**SB24 Morrell: Support**

Local governments in the state can ban the application of sales taxes on feminine hygiene products and diapers

### **HB23 Moreno: Support**

Dating partners ("any person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim") are covered by Louisiana domestic violence laws; closes the loophole

### **HB2 Connick: Support**

Extend the state's domestic abuse laws to same sex couples; removes the restriction that a household member must be a of the opposite sex to apply

*Studies by Voter Services Committee, Linda Walker, Chair*

*Women's Issues Committee, Rosalind Blanco Cook, Chair*

## **Learn to Track Bills**

You can create a personal tracking list by going to

<http://legis.la.gov>

Log in or create an account with a user ID and password. Please find more information on our website

[www.lwvno.org](http://www.lwvno.org)

## **SAVE THE DATES**

### **2017 Legislative Session**

Baton Rouge, La.

April 10, 2017 - June 8, 2017

### **LWVNO 75th Anniversary Celebration**

The Cannery 3803 Toulouse St.

October 19, 2017

### **Women's Health Day and Retreat**

La. State Capital & Welcome Center

May 17, 2017 9:00 - 3:30 PM

### **Holiday Party**

Home of

Regina Bartholomew Woods

December 3, 2017

### **LWVNO Annual Luncheon**

Ralph's on the Park

July 22, 2017

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## **Message from the President**

*Dear Members,*

*As president of LWVNO, I am honored to have the opportunity to build upon our local chapter's strong foundation. Our membership and program numbers have grown, and enthusiasm for the organization is at an all time high.*

*Throughout our 75 years, we have been recognized as an organization of integrity, dedication and devotion to voter rights. Our accomplishments would not have been possible without the continued service of our members and leaders. Our state League provides inspiration and support. Local members who attended last month's conference in Lafayette returned motivated to participate in productive events that further the goals of the League.*

*With that, I ask you to join me in thanking members that have been so active in the past several weeks. New and existing members joined together in an awesome Meet-and-Greet recently at Smith Library. I think I am correct in reporting that all had an amazing time getting to know each other and learning*

about our programs, activities, and news about the upcoming legislative session. Just a few days later, LWVNO co-hosted, with the New Orleans Sierra Club Group and the Tulane Green Club, a well-crafted presentation about coastal restoration and the Master Plan.

Under the watchful eye of Linda Walker, we are looking forward to the fall 2017 election season. But now, we need to concentrate on Louisiana's busy legislative session. Issues are so important and we have the opportunity to make an impact. As League members, we will continue to work for equity and equality. Members will make the trek to Baton Rouge - taking part in lobby days at the Capitol (including Equal Pay Day, Louisianans for Prison Alternatives Day, Planned Parenthood Lobby Day); testifying before House and Senate committees; talking with legislators in the halls of the Capitol, and, of course, making phone calls and writing letters and emails. Join us on Wednesday, May 17th, for a celebration of women, wellness and culture, at Women's Health Day and Retreat, to be held at the Capitol and the Capitol Park Welcome Center.

Be sure to mark your calendar to attend our annual meeting at Ralph's on the Park, Saturday, July 22nd and the 75th Anniversary Celebration of our League at the Cannery, on Thursday, October 19th - a unique opportunity to celebrate, to invigorate, and to reflect.

Rosalind Blanco Cook

## LWVLA Conference March 11 and 12, 2017, in Lafayette, La.



LWVNO Strong Presence at the LWVLA State Conference  
Felicia Kahn is holding LWWUS document commemorating the 75th anniversary of the founding of LWVNO

Photo by Felicia Kahn



Joyce Corrington Honored for Service to LWVLA  
Photo by Felicia Kahn

The LWVLA Convention at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Lafayette, La. was well-represented by all of our local chapters. A public workshop "Follow the Money" educated our members on budget and tax issues that will be the focus of the 2017 Legislative Session. Linda Walker, LWVNO, and Thetis Cusimano, LWVL, moderated the workshop. The speakers were Jan Moller, Director of the Louisiana Budget Project, and Patrick Goldsmith, Director of the House Fiscal Division.

New officers and Board of Director members were elected to lead the LWVLA

for the next two years. LWVNO members who are serving in our state league include: Stacy LeFleur, Vice-President, Ellen Torgrimsen, Secretary, Joyce Corrington, Nominating Committee, Annemarie Dewey, Education, Wendy King, Environment, Linda Walker, Voter Services and Program Committees and Rosalind Cook, Women's Issues. Thanks to all of you for your dedication and hard work.

The papers presented at our workshop and other League information can be found on the LWVLA website [www.lwvofla.org/state-budget-tax-policy](http://www.lwvofla.org/state-budget-tax-policy)

Joyce Corrington, LWVLA President 2016-2017



Linda Walker introducing Patrick Goldsmith, Director of the House Fiscal Division  
Photo by Pat Bedenbaugh



Joyce Corrington with Linda Hawkins as she received the LWVLA Advocacy Award for her tireless efforts advocating for affordable healthcare.

Photo by Felicia Kahn

## Investing in Louisiana

Patrick Goldsmith, Director of the House Fiscal Division, updated us on the state budget, what is dedicated, what can be cut or changed. Jan Moller, Director of the Louisiana Budget Project, presented a series of slides outlining Louisiana's coming budget crisis (the fiscal cliff), and recommendations on how to prevent it.

See the Louisiana Budget Project <http://www.labudget.org/lbp/> for additional information

Tax change (compared to current base)	Revenue impact (million/year)
Eliminate federal income tax deduction	\$931
Eliminate excess itemized deduction	\$263
Lower sales tax to 4 percent, expand base	(\$475)
Double Earned Income Tax Credit	(\$49)
<b>Net New Revenue</b>	<b>\$670</b>

Source: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (2016), Louisiana Department of Revenue



*Jessie Nieblas, LWVNO Vice-President, giving an overview of New Orleans' league efforts and accomplishments*

## LWVNO Welcomes 2016-2017 New Members

Jamie Attenberg, Cynthia Bernard, Katherine Burgun, Dan Casey, JoAnne Casey, Laura Coutts, Inga Denman, Hilary Dreher, Laura Droddy, Charlin Fisher, Amy Foster, Julie Forsythe, Carolyn Graetz, Kathleen Graythen, Sandra Green Thomas, Judith Haspel, Dawn Hebert, Veronica Henry, Sylvia Huges-Gonzales, Rachel Jones, Stacey LaFleur, Ingu Latour, Palela Melder, Patricia Nicewander, Sarah Olivier, Casius Pealer, Adrienne Petrosini, Amy Pirtle, Angelique Reed, Elizabeth Reed, Henry Singer, Ellen Torgrimson, Erica Wilson.

## Call for Volunteers

The Voter Services Committee is seeking volunteers to assist voter registration following the naturalization ceremony each Friday at the Office of Homeland Security, 1250 Poydras, 18th floor. The ceremony usually begins at 10:30 am.

Contact Sue Dicharry at 504 210-9102 [sdicharry@yahoo.com](mailto:sdicharry@yahoo.com)

**JOIN**

## League Membership on the Rise

A recent article in the Washington Post reported on the insurgence of women joining the League of Women Voters since the recent election.

## Our Holiday Party at the Home of Joel Myers



***A Good Time Was Had By All***  
Many thanks to Joel for hosting a lovely party.  
*Photos by Pat Bedenbaugh*



***Sybil Morial***  
Reading from her memoir *Witness to Change: From Jim Crow to Political Empowerment*



## Women Who Changed New Orleans

From the Historic New Orleans Collection

*Voices of Progress: Twenty Women Who Changed New Orleans*

### **Oretha Castle Haley (1939-1987)**

Oretha Castle Haley became one of Louisiana's leading civil rights, women's rights and human rights activists. She was a founding member, and then president, of the New Orleans Chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Later she advocated for better health care for New Orleans black citizens and helped found the New Orleans Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation.

(From Frystak, Shannon "Oretha Castle Haley" in *knowlouisiana.org Encyclopedia of Louisiana*)



**Doris Jean Castle (1942-1998)**

Doris Jean Castle, younger sister of Oretha Castle Haley, was a civil rights advocate who dedicated her life to social service. She joined in a boycott and protests organized by the Consumers' League of Greater New Orleans to fight racially discriminatory employment practices of Dryades St. merchants.

She and her sister helped desegregate New Orleans public service buses, worked for voter registration and joined boycotts. Castle courageously participated in the 1961 Mississippi Freedom Rides and was arrested in Jackson, Mississippi. *(From Wikipedia)*

*Article submitted by Pat Bedenbaugh, Board Member*



## **Environmental Committee Report**

### **"Walk the Walk Without Talking the Talk: Louisiana's Response to Climate Change"**

New Orleans Sierra Club, LWVNO, LWVLA, and the Tulane Green Club invited Amy Clipp, one of the authors of the Louisiana Coastal Master Plan, to speak on the topic of climate change. Ms. Clipp discussed the Coastal Planning Law and the future of the Master Plan. The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority will present the next 50

year master plan to the Louisiana Legislature next month, and the Legislature must vote up or down on the plan. The plan projects that if the state takes no action, more than 4,000 square mile of coastal land could be lost over the next half century. The researchers concluded that New Orleans' infrastructure would be the hardest hit in the state, losing approximately \$1.7 billion in public structures such as roads, ports, and buildings.

*Wendy King, Environmental Chair*



## **LWVNO Polly Guthrie Scholarship Award**

Jessie Nieblas, LWVNO Vice-President, presents our Polly Guthrie Scholarship Award to Warren James Thompson, a sophomore majoring in Elementary Education at SUNO.



## In Memorium

We mourn the loss of two of our long time members, Elizabeth Rack and Evelyn Christman and one of our new members, Dr. Janet Higgins. Their support for voter rights and women's rights made a lasting contribution toward improving the future for us all.



**Evelyn Landis Christman (1919-2017)**

*Evelyn Landis Christman was a beloved educator and community leader. She was a Phi Beta Kappa student, later teaching at Isidore Newman School in New Orleans. She believed strongly in the necessity of an informed and active electorate and robust citizen participation in government, a vision she pursued as President of the League of Women Voters of Jefferson Parish, New Orleans, and the State of Louisiana.*

**Elizabeth Philbrook Rack (1921-2017)**

*Elizabeth Rack was a civic activist and champion of civil rights who served as president of both the New Orleans and State league. She served on the boards of the NOLA school board and Planned Parenthood and was a founding member of NOCCA and the Committee of 21, which encouraged women to run for office and for women to be appointed to boards and commissions.*



**Janet Bienert Higgins (1944-2017)**

*Janet Bienert Higgins, MD. joined L WVNO in 2016. She was a graduate of Newcomb College and LSU Medical School. She worked tirelessly throughout her adult life for candidates and issues that advocated for those in need. She was a fierce supporter of affordable health care, civil rights, equal pay and of women running for public office.*



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### L WVNO on Facebook

Facebook and Twitter are two excellent ways to remain in contact with our members and to pass information along to other like-minded individuals. Please ["like"](#) and ["share"](#) our Facebook page. Send us pictures or information about events that could be posted to our page.

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## 2016-2017

President.....Rosalind Blanco Cook  
Vice President....Jessie Nieblas  
Secretary.....Carol Billings  
Treasurer.....Yvonne Mitchell-Grubb  
Board: Lisa Marie Manning Ambrose,  
Pat Bedenbaugh, Suzanne Dicharry,  
Wendy King, Barbara LaFleur

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

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