



BRIEF LEAGUE REPORTS

spring 2015

Because our LWV of Louisiana state Committees have been aggressively addressing bills submitted to the 2016 legislative session, this issue of Brief League Reports will change its usual format and instead of reporting on the activities of the local Leagues will report briefly on the activities of the state Committees. More detailed information about a state committee's stand on bills pending before the legislature can be found on the LWV of Louisiana's web site www.lwvofla.org by clicking on the link to that committee.

All of these committees **NEED MORE MEMBERS** to help with their important work. If what you read interests you, please contact one or more of the listed chair and offer to volunteer.

If you do not have the time to help, please consider making a tax deductible donation to the Education Fund of the League of Women Voters of Louisiana at www.lwvofla.org.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE: Bonnie Schmidt, chair.
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Members of the LWVLA Criminal Justice Committee (Terry VanBrunt, Phyllis Henry, Jan Harrison, Joanne Pettit, Marlene Hahn, Bonnie Schmidt, Adina Nelson) met to discuss developing a new public policy position to be presented to the LWVLA Convention next year. Their goal is to reduce incarceration rates in Louisiana through improved funding for the Public Defender Office.

EDUCATION: Annemarie Dewey, chair, annemdewey@gmail.com

Chair Annemarie Dewey reported on the activities of the Education Committee at the LWVLA Advocacy Work held in Baton Rouge. Over 200 education bills have been filed in the 2016 Legislative session. A document with over 40 of the most relevant, organized in various categories, was put together by LWVL members Ann Burruss and Kathleen Espinoza for their Power of Public Education Lafayette event. The categories selected were: Charter Schools, Teachers, Vouchers, Accountability and Testing, Curriculum, Recovery School District, Special Education and Early Childhood Education. Details of the Education bills under consideration can be found at www.lwvofla.org under "Education."



ENVIRONMENT: Wendy King, chair, wking@tulane.edu

The LWVLA Environmentn Committee actively supports legislation that strengthens out state's environmental protections and opposes bills that would adversely impact the environment. Member Dolore Blalock, LWVCB, will testify in support of HB11, which prohibits the open burning of munitions and waste explosives. The committee successfully opposed

HB192, which would have prohibited local governments from banning plastic bags. The Environmental Committee asked members to phone or write their representatives to urge a "no" vote. After testimony was heard in the House Municipal Affairs Committee, the sponsor of the bill, Rep. Hollis pulled it from consideration. Find other Environment Committee positions at www.lwvofla.org, under "Environment."

HEALTHCARE: Linda Hawkins, chair, abitahawk@gmail.com



Linda Hawkins, member of the LWVLA Healthcare Committee, gave a talk, "Medicaid Expansion - Dollars and Sense," to members of the LWV St. Tammany: Eileen Rollman, Kada Harris, Linda Hawkins, Eileen deHaro, Jan

Harrison, Barbara Dodds. The LWVLA Healthcare Committee supports bills before the 2016 legislature that help implement Medicaid Expansion in Louisiana and opposes any that would block or weaken its implementation. Find bills supported and opposed by the Healthcare Committee at www.lwvofla.org under "Healthcare."



The poster for the 2016 Health Summit features a night view of a modern building with lights reflecting in water. The text reads "2016 HEALTH SUMMIT" and "CREATING AN AGENDA FOR A HEALTHY LOUISIANA". Below this is a row of small photos showing people at various events. The event details are: "MARCH 29, 2016", "9:00AM - 5:00PM", "REGISTRATION OPEN AT 8:00AM", "RECEPTION INCLUDED", and "REGISTER NOW". A registration link is provided: <http://2016healthsummit.eventscribe.com>. The location is "C. B. PENNINGTON, JR. BUILDING CONFERENCE CENTER, 6400 PERKINS ROAD, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA". Logos for the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Louisiana Center for Health Equity, and LPHI (Louisiana Public Health Institute) are included. A note at the bottom says "SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE".



Joyce Corrington, LWVLA President, who was in charge of registration at the 2017 Health Summit, greeted General Russel Honore, keynote speaker. Linda Hawkins, LWVST, was on the planning team and in charge of volunteers. Germaine Breaux, LWVL, manned a LWVLA table providing health literature. Governor Edwards spoke on implementing Medicaid Expansion in Louisiana.

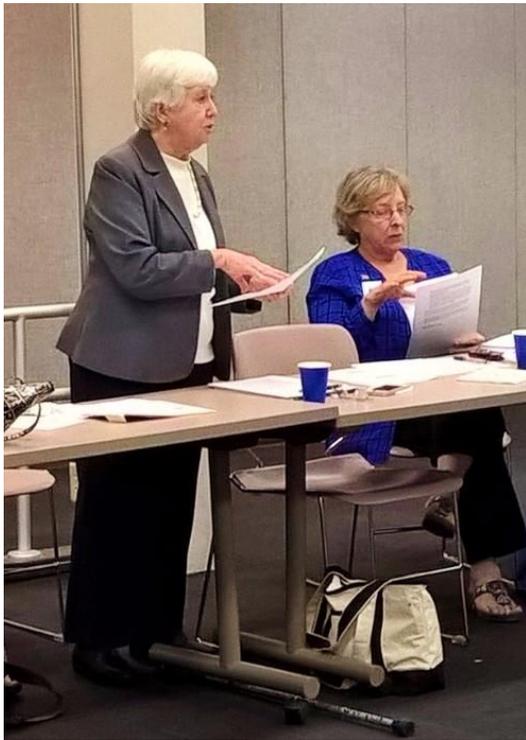
MEMBERSHIP: Thetis Cusimano, chair, tcusimano8@gmail.com

The Membership Committee sponsored a 2016 Legislative Day and Advocacy Workshop in Baton Rouge. Eighteen members attended legislative hearings at the Capitol, primarily that of the House Appropriations Committee which was reviewing HB1, the proposed budget bill for 2016-2017. The budget for Juvenile Public Defenders was of special interest to the LWVLA's Criminal Justice Committee, as was the budget for Early Childhood Education to the Education Committee.

Afterward, all moved to a Seminar Room at the State Library where they had lunch and participated in an Advocacy Workshop. A few of the speakers are pictured below below: Michelle Erenberg, LWVNO and founder of LIFT Louisiana, presented a talk on effective advocacy. Alma Steward, founder of Louisiana Center for Health Equity, and Linda Hawkins, LWVLA Healthcare chair, discussed their three-year advocacy of Medicaid Expansion in Louisiana.



VOTER SERVICES: Linda Walker, chair,
walker3203@bellsouth.net



LWVLA Voter Services Committee chair Linda Walker and Pat Bedenbaugh, LWVNO, discuss bills submitted to the 2016 Louisiana Legislature. Linda has sent letters and testified before the House Governmental Affairs Committee urging passage of legislation that expands voter registration and reforms election procedures and has urged other LWVLA members to do likewise. Specific bills the Voter Services Committee supports and opposes are detailed on the LWVLA website, www.lwvofla.org, under "Voter Services."

WOMEN'S ISSUES: Rosalind Cook, chair, rcook@tulane.edu



When SB254, the Equal Pay bill, came up for a vote in the Louisiana Senate, the America Association of University Women asked supporters to come to the Capital to support it. LWVLA members answered the call. The author of the bill, Senator Jean-Paul Morrell, discusses the bill with Rosalind Cook, chair of the LWVLA Women's Issue committee, Linda Walker, Jane Jurik and Felicia Kahn, LWVNO members. The bill passed the Senate on a 20 to 8 vote. Details of other bills this committee supports and opposes can be found at www.lwvofla.org under "Women's Issues."

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