



# FORWARD

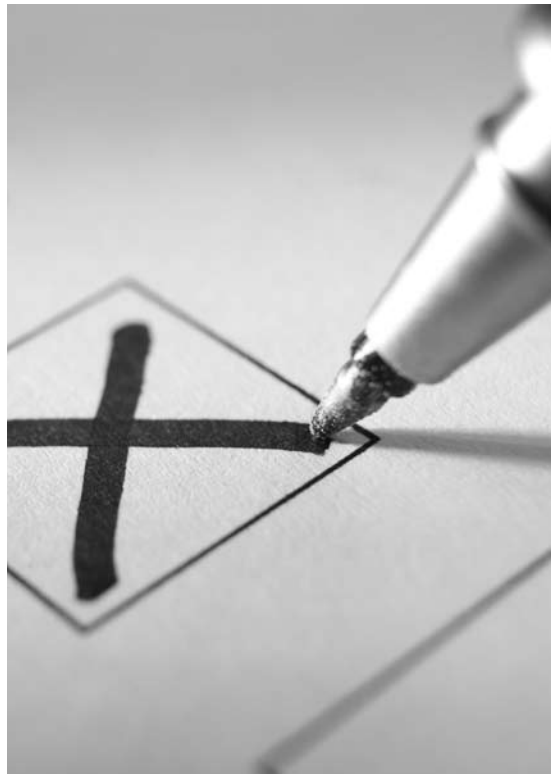
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WISCONSIN EDUCATION FUND, INC.

## Voter ID Bill Doesn't Pass Accountability Test

*On January 26, 2011, the Wisconsin State Senate Committee on Transportation and Elections heard testimony on Senate Bill 6, legislation that would require Wisconsin voters to show photo IDs at polling places in order for their votes to be counted. If passed the measure would make Wisconsin the most restrictive and difficult state in the nation to cast a vote. Below is testimony given by Andrea Kaminski, LWVWI Executive Director.*

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today about why the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin strongly opposes Senate Bill 6. Over the years there have been a number of voter ID bills, generating much legislative and public debate. The League has steadfastly opposed them as legislation that is unneeded and unfair. I won't use my limited time before you today to repeat the facts about Wisconsin's tradition of clean elections or about the people who would be at risk of disenfranchisement because of this legislation. I will focus specifically on government accountability.

The League of Women Voters believes government must be able to function efficiently with a minimum of conflict, wasted time or duplication of effort. Wisconsin law should provide for election administration that is adequately coordinated and funded, to achieve both statewide standards that are uniformly applied and local municipal effectiveness.



Last year many candidates promised voters that, if elected, they would go through state agency budget requests line by line, seeking to cut expenses that cannot be shown to be useful or effective. Let's hold voter ID to that test.

In the nonprofit world, where I operate, funders are seeking increased accountability. With reduced endowments, they want to know that the programs they fund will make a difference. Many funders require nonprofits to identify measurable outcomes in our grant requests, so we can assess later whether a program was successful. Likewise in the for-profit world, no business leader would undertake the expense of a program intended to address unsubstantiated rumors in the hope of achieving results that cannot be measured. They want accountability.

In the case of government programs, the taxpayers are the funders. If the voter ID bill is passed, how will you measure the success of this government program?

Proponents say voter ID is necessary to fight fraud. Yet the only type of fraud this government program would prevent is impersonation at the polls, and there are no documented cases

*cont. on p. 4*

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## President's Message

Melanie G. Ramey

In late February and early March, people across Wisconsin received misleading "robo-calls" with a recorded message that seemed to indicate that the League supported Governor Walker's "budget repair" bill. The name of the organization was spoken so quickly at the beginning of the message that many people could not understand it, but the end of the call identified the caller as the League of American Voters (LAV), a conservative group based in Washington, D.C.



Numerous people contacted the League about the venomous robo-calls. Some were angry until we assured them that the call did not come from the League of Women Voters and that we did not support the Governor's bill. Others were sympathetic because they knew the League and the voters were being scammed. Not one person contacted the League to thank us for the message!

In these confusing times, the League's nonpartisan approach is needed more than ever. Unlike LAV, the League of Women Voters has encouraged open, civil discussion of the issues for 91 years. The League sponsors unbiased debates and forums at the local, state and national levels. We never endorse or oppose any candidate or political party, but we do take positions on issues. One member rather aptly called it "nonpartisan with attitude."

Other organizations would do well to consider the League process. Our positions come from grassroots study and debate on a broad range of issues. Often we educate the public while we educate ourselves through public forums with speakers representing both sides of an issue. We rely on member consensus to determine our positions, and then we advocate for them. The whole process from study to action often takes as long as two years.

As the current legislative session proceeds, the LWVWI Education Fund will continue to monitor legislation, educate the public about what these potential laws mean and advocate for fair and responsive state government. It's all part of our ongoing effort to make democracy work in Wisconsin, and we welcome your participation and support. ❖

# FIRST CALL TO 2011 ANNUAL MEETING

UW-Whitewater Campus  
June 10-11

*Mark your calendar and make plans now to attend the LWVWI Education Fund Annual Meeting on the UW-Whitewater campus. This year's meeting features training on a variety of topics, including:*

- *Membership Recruitment Initiative Training;*
- *Using the League's New Members-Only Website;*
- *Successful Candidate Forums in a New Age;*
- *Compliance with the Proposed 501(c)(3) Group Exemption.*

*The meeting will open at 3 p.m. on Friday, June 10 with optional training sessions and an evening social hosted by LWV Whitewater. The agenda for Saturday, June 11 runs from 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. and includes a keynote speaker, more training and the Annual Meeting. Delegates will elect new leaders, prepare programming for the coming year, approve the budget and revise the bylaws to be compliant with the proposed 501(c)(3) Group Exemption.*

*Lodging is available in UW-Whitewater's new green-built, LEED-certified Starin Hall. The dorm's suite-style rooms include four individual bedrooms, a lounge area, kitchen and bathroom. Local League presidents and the state League website, [lwvwi.org](http://lwvwi.org), will have more meeting details soon. ❖*

# Voter ID: Unneeded, Unfair and Expensive

## Voter ID is Unneeded

There is no evidence of widespread or organized fraud in Wisconsin's elections, despite numerous investigations by federal, state and local officials. The state Department of Justice has substantiated 18 cases (0.0006 percent) of illegal voting out of the almost 3 million votes cast in the November 2004 election. Most of these were felons who were unaware they were not allowed to vote. There have been no cases of anyone trying to vote using someone else's identity—the only form of fraud that voter ID would address.

## Voter ID is Unfair

Voter ID legislation would place an unfair burden on people who do not need a driver's license or who move frequently. In particular, it would impact the elderly, people with disabilities and students. According to a 2005 University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee study:

- In Wisconsin 55 percent of African American males, 49 percent of African American females, 59 percent of

Hispanic females, and 46 percent of Hispanic males do not have a valid Wisconsin Driver's License (WDL), compared to 17 percent of white males and females.

- 82 percent of 18-20 year olds living in student-intensive neighborhoods—in Eau Claire, La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Platteville, River Falls, Stevens Point, Menomonie and Whitewater—do not have a driver's license for those zip codes. Students with out-of-state driver's licenses would have to give them up in order to get an acceptable ID for voting in Wisconsin.
- An estimated 177,399 residents aged 65 or older do not have an acceptable photo ID.

Proponents claim the bill provides for state-issued ID at no cost, yet it does so only if you specifically ask the DMV to waive the fee. Also, many people will have to apply at a personal cost to get copies of their birth certificate or other required

documentation. Many will incur a cost to take time off work and/or arrange round-trip transportation to the DMV.

## Voter ID is a Waste of Tax Dollars

The DMV has estimated it could cost up to \$2.7 million per year to implement voter ID. In addition, the Government Accountability Board would need to train local officials and educate citizens about the new law and procedures. In Georgia, the public education campaign cost millions of dollars. Local governments would need to train Election Day officials and educate voters in their communities. In particular, clerks will have to train poll workers on how to process provisional ballots. Many clerks do their public service during evenings and weekends. To process provisional ballots, clerks may need to add supplementary hours and, in some cases, take time off their "day jobs."

See the LWVWI Voter ID Resource Page at: [lwwwi.org/IssuesAdvocacy/2011VoterIDResourcePage.aspx](http://lwwwi.org/IssuesAdvocacy/2011VoterIDResourcePage.aspx) to learn more. ❖



Marion Ruelle and Beatrice Smith show off the cake as the LWV of Wisconsin Rapids Area celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the national League's 90<sup>th</sup>.

## Legislative Day

**TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2011**

**11 AM-3 PM**

**Best Western Inn on the Park  
Madison**

**Keynote speaker Jack Norman, Institute for Wisconsin's Future, will discuss how to communicate the need for a fair tax policy to fund Wisconsin's future. League members will also meet with legislators about key issues in the state budget.**

**Registration deadline is April 4, 2011.**

**For registration and lodging information go to: [lwwwi.org/NewsEvents/2011LegislativeDay.aspx](http://lwwwi.org/NewsEvents/2011LegislativeDay.aspx) or call (608) 256-0827.**



of that having happened in Wisconsin. So how will you measure success, or improvement?

Proponents say voters are losing confidence in our elections because they suspect that illegal votes are diluting their own. If this bill is passed into law, we can almost guarantee there will be fewer votes cast and counted—which will magnify the impact of those votes that are counted. Is that how you define success? Really?

Proponents claim that state-issued IDs are easy to obtain and that the ID program will not prevent eligible citizens from voting. How will you measure that? The data on how many provisional ballots are cast versus how many are actually counted will be telling. According to the Election Assistance Commission, 38 percent of provisional ballots cast in the November 2006 election in our state were not counted. Perhaps we should examine a sample of those casting uncounted

provisional ballots to determine if, in fact, they are eligible voters.

Finally, let's get back to cost accountability for this government program. Taxpayer funding will be needed at the state and local levels for:

1. The Department of Motor Vehicles, to meet the demand for voting IDs or certificates. Currently our election system is set up at the ward level with polling places in neighborhoods, to encourage civic participation. How will you make it as convenient and accessible for people to get an ID as it is to vote?
2. The Government Accountability Board, for training local officials and educating citizens about the new law and procedures. This will take significant staff time, as well as funding for advertising and other direct expenses.
3. Local governments, for training Election Day officials and educating voters in their communities. In particular, clerks will have to train poll workers on how to process provisional ballots. Most have

never had any experience with this. Also, many municipal clerks do their public service at night and on weekends, while holding another job during the weekday. Yet voters who cast a provisional ballot need to be able to bring their ID to the clerk's "office" by 4:00 PM the day after the election. To process provisional ballots clerks may need to add supplementary hours and, in some cases, take additional time off their "day jobs" to serve voters.

Given that a voter ID program is expensive, unneeded and unfair, how will you measure success? How will you be accountable to the taxpayers, to the voters?

The best thing for our state is to have a robust civic participation for a strong, representative government. We urge this committee to reject Senate Bill 6 and turn your attention to positive measures to ensure that every eligible citizen has the opportunity to vote. ❖

## State League Leadership

### OFFICERS:

- Melanie Ramey**  
President  
LWV Dane County  
2009-2011
- Debra Cronmiller**  
Vice President  
LWV Appleton  
2010-2012
- Ellen Rosborough**  
Treasurer  
LWV La Crosse Area  
2010-2012
- Julie Arneth**  
Secretary  
LWV Greater Green Bay  
2009-2011

### DIRECTORS:

- Laura Boettcher**  
LWV Janesville  
2010-2012
- Patricia Finder-Stone**  
LWV Greater Green Bay  
2009-2011
- Ethel Himmel**  
LWV Janesville  
2009-2011
- Linda Jorgenson**  
LWV Ashland/Bayfield Counties  
2010-2012
- Joyce McCollum**  
LWV Greater Green Bay  
2009-2011
- Louise Petering**  
LWV Milwaukee County  
2009-2011
- Pamela Rewey**  
LWV Dane County  
2009-2011

### STAFF:

- Andrea Kaminski**  
Executive Director
- Laurel Fleet**  
Administrative/  
Program Assistant

### LOCAL LEAGUES:

- Appleton  
Ashland/Bayfield Counties  
Beloit  
Dane County  
Door County  
Greater Green Bay  
Janesville  
La Crosse Area  
Manitowoc  
Milwaukee County  
Ozaukee County  
Ripon Area  
Stevens Point Area  
Whitewater Area  
Winnebago County  
Wisconsin Rapids Area



# Observer Program Will Monitor Judiciary

A list of current opportunities and an application form can be found on the Court System website at [wicourts.gov/about/committees/participate.htm](http://wicourts.gov/about/committees/participate.htm).

Over the past two years, Wisconsin's Supreme Court justices have been dealing with challenging issues related to discipline of two of their own members as well as judicial disqualification, or recusal. This has led to division and dysfunction among the justices.

As a result, the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin has created the Supreme Court Observer Program, which places League observers at open Supreme Court sessions to monitor the discussions and interactions of the justices. The League's goal is to better understand the issues the justices are dealing with and to educate our members and the public.

On March 4, sixteen Leaguers made their way through a security check in the State Capitol to attend a training and planning session for the Observer Program. Two sets of doors filtered the chants of enthusiastic protesters rallying in the Rotunda, as Justice Ann Walsh Bradley welcomed the League delegation. She spoke about the history of women's suffrage in Wisconsin, and in particular in her hometown of Richland Center. Justice Bradley congratulated the League on its advocacy for a fair and impartial judiciary. Her remarks were followed by an overview by Theresa Owens, Executive Assistant to the Chief Justice, who explained how the Wisconsin Supreme Court is organized and operates. She noted that the Court System needs volunteers in all parts of the state to serve on committees and boards.

Justice Patience Roggensack discussed the natural tension she said exists between judicial independence and judicial accountability. She noted that on the federal high court, justices are appointed for "life or bad behavior, whichever runs out first." In states that employ a merit selection process, justices are often held accountable through retention elections. In Wisconsin justices may be appointed or elected, and they then are held accountable by the voters when they run for re-election. Our system, while democratic in design, has been the target of increasing campaign contributions and expenditures by special interests.

In 2009 the League proposed a recusal rule to reduce the perception of influence by moneyed special interests. The Court denied our request and adopted instead rules that were written by business groups. Roggensack defended her vote with the majority by saying she thinks the current contribution limit of \$1,000 for Supreme Court campaigns addresses the League's concerns.

Professor Meredith Ross from the UW Law School offered guidance as to how to select the types of cases and/or open administrative conferences for the League to monitor. She also demonstrated how to find information on the Court's website at [wicourts.gov](http://wicourts.gov).

State League President Melanie Ramey led a discussion of next steps for the Court Observer Program. The group agreed to become the first members of the League's Judicial Committee, with the initial focus to be:

- Encouraging League members to serve on Court System committees and

board. This can be done almost anywhere in the state.

- Following Supreme Court cases of interest. This will likely be limited to cases that directly address League positions. Much research can be done online, although actual observation would take place in the State Capitol.
- Observing and reporting on Open Administrative Conferences in which the justices determine operating procedures and policies. The League already has found this to be a place where tensions in the current Court are causing difficulty. Although we believe there is value in having actual observers in the Supreme Court Hearing Room, these conferences also can be viewed through the online public affairs service, WisconsinEye, at [wisconsineye.org](http://wisconsineye.org).
- Tracking motions to disqualify justices and comparing them with data about campaign contributions.
- Educating the public about the importance of the judicial branch. One way to do this is to ask judicial candidates to speak about the tension between independence and accountability in candidate forums and questionnaires.

League members and others who wish to participate in the Court Observer Program should contact their local League president or Andrea Kaminski, LWVWI Executive Director, at (608) 287-0582 or [Kaminski@lwvwi.org](mailto:Kaminski@lwvwi.org). ❖



## Around The State

- 
- 1 Beloit:** Cosponsored with LWV Janesville “Who is Your Representative Now? How Redrawing District Lines Affects You,” a community forum on redistricting.
  - 2 Dane County:** Hosted “Charter Schools: Current Status; Prospects for the Future,” an issues forum featuring speakers from UW-Madison and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.
  - 3 Greater Green Bay:** Presented “Drawing the Line on Redistricting,” a public forum about the process and importance of redrawing the boundaries of the Brown County supervisor and municipal representative voting districts.
  - 4 Janesville:** Cosponsored a forum with LWV Beloit. See above.
  - 5 La Crosse Area:** Hosted the program “History of Family Planning in the Coulee Region” with a guest speaker from Options Clinic.
  - 6 Milwaukee County:** Cosponsored “How Peace Brings Women’s Rights and Women’s Rights Bring Peace: The Life Lessons of Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Jane Adams,” featuring Adams biographer Louise Knight.
  - 7 Winnebago County:** Hosted a Food for Thought Lunch featuring Craig Maher, chairman of the Public Administration Department at UW-Oshkosh and public budgeting and finance specialist.
  - 8 Wisconsin Rapids Area:** Developed a 2011 work plan for sustainability that includes collaborating with the Wisconsin Rapids Citizens for a Clean, Green & Welcoming Community on workshops, creating a booklet on organizing a “Choose to Reuse” event, highlighting actions by local businesses and creating and distributing a brochure to promote sustainability. ❖

## WE ARE MOVING!

*The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Fund is moving to the new “Center for Change” in Madison. We will be in our new location April 1, 2011. See page 7 for more details!*

**Our new address will be: 612 W. Main Street, Suite #200, Madison, WI 53703**

**All other contact information remains the same:**

Phone: (608) 256-0827

E-mail: [lwwisconsin@lwwwi.org](mailto:lwwisconsin@lwwwi.org)

Website: [www.lwwwi.org](http://www.lwwwi.org)

## Executive Director's Message



*Andrea Kaminski*

No matter how you slice it, change is in the air around Wisconsin. While LWVWI vigilantly keeps tabs on changes happening in state government, we're also busy making changes to our own operations. Soon the state League will be moving to new offices. I'm quite sure that this is one change everyone can support!

On April 1, the state League will move to office space at the new Center for Change, 612 W. Main Street, Madison. The Center is a shared working environment for organizations dedicated to a just and sustainable society. Tenants will include local, statewide and national groups addressing a variety of issues, including sustainability, civic engagement, environmental protection and nonprofit support and training.

Community Shares of Wisconsin (CSW) is developing this innovative project. CSW was the first social action fund in the country and remains one of the most successful. The League is one of more than 60 CSW members.

The concept driving the Center for Change is collaboration. The League will not only share space, we'll also participate in shared organized networking events, share equipment, and have an integrated phone system and eventually a shared server. Originally built in 1929 as a produce warehouse, our new building is located just six blocks from the state Capitol and UW-Madison. It is owned and managed by Delta

Properties, which has generously contributed build-out of the suite. Easy access to local bike paths and bus routes will make opportunities for collaborations with the University and other agencies convenient.

There are many advantages to this new way of operating League business. While there is no reduction in our monthly rent, we will have access to a bigger, nicer conference room and other resources. Eventually the League expects to reduce costs by pooling resources such as the shared server and phone, ordering office supplies in bulk and collectively managing inventory. By containing overhead expenses, we'll be able to better leverage League resources to build our capacity and divert these funds to other program work.

Another key advantage is the enhanced sustainability this shared working environment will promote. Delta Properties is using "green" building techniques to refurbish an existing building. By sharing a suite with more organizations, we will increase the use of typically underutilized office spaces such as the conference room.

The most valuable resource in the Center for Change will be the opportunities for networking with other like-minded organizations as well as the corporate sponsors. Wegner CPAs, Scholz Nonprofit Law and others are sponsoring a shared resource room and plan to provide training for tenant organizations.

We're excited by all the possibilities this new way of operating presents. I look forward to showing off our new sustainable digs at an open house we'll host later this year. Watch for details. ❖

## Make the League Part of Your Legacy

The League of Women Voters is the organization where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. Guided by principles that help nurture and protect our government systems, the League is a "trusted convener" that helps citizens understand and influence policies that affect their lives and liberties.

You can help advance these efforts in Wisconsin and leave your legacy by making a tax-deductible gift to the LWVWI Education Fund Endowment. Income from bequests, gifts of stock and memorial gifts sustains the League well into the future. The next time you review your charitable giving plan, consider the League. For more information, contact Andrea Kaminski, (608) 256-0827. ❖

# League of Women Voters of WI Education Network/Advocacy Network 2011 Calendar

**Spring Nonpartisan Election**  
**April 5**

**Legislative Day**  
**April 12**  
**Madison**

*See Page 3 for More Details!*

**LWVWEN State Board Meeting & LWV Training**  
**June 10**  
**Whitewater**

**LWVWIEN Annual Meeting**

**June 11**  
**Whitewater**

*See Page 2 for More Details!*

## Save Trees and the League Money!

Money doesn't grow on trees, but we can save both by using email for League communications! Send an email to [lwvwisconsin@lwvwi.org](mailto:lwvwisconsin@lwvwi.org) to sign up for any of the following (be sure to tell us which items you wish to receive by email):

- *Forward Newsletter*
- *League Updates and Action Alerts*



612 W. Main Street, Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53703



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