



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WISCONSIN EDUCATION NETWORK

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## **Two Bad Ideas and a Winner for the 2012 Elections**

By Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director

MADISON: Just when you think people might take a brief holiday break from political shenanigans, there comes a report about some interesting flyers people found on their windshields this week. If the flyers are not a hoax, it appears that a group calling itself "Mines for Wisconsin" was urging people to sign a recall petition as "Adolf Hitler, 666 Hell St (your city)." This advice was offered as a way to protest the recall effort against Governor Walker and to support development of new mining business in Wisconsin. The flyers incorrectly claimed it is not illegal to sign Hitler's name on the petition. In fact, it most certainly is illegal to intentionally falsify a name on a recall petition. Besides, this protest does not make sense. The burden of proof for challenging the bogus signatures will fall upon the very elected officials this group seems to want to protect. This is a bad idea. Don't do it.

On the other end of the political spectrum, the League of Women Voters has heard from a couple of people who swear they will vote in 2012 without showing a photo ID and that their vote will be counted. I don't understand how they think that will work. Unless at least one of the three lawsuits that have been filed against the new voter ID law succeeds very soon, there will be an election in which citizens will have to show an acceptable photo ID. Without an ID, you will receive a provisional ballot which won't be counted unless you show your ID to your municipal clerk by the Friday after the election. And if these rebels are considering disrupting the voting process, they should think twice. They could be charged with a felony and, if convicted, they might find themselves disenfranchised for a few years. Another bad idea. Find a better way to protest the ID law.

Rather than attempt acts of civil disobedience that will at best cost you your vote and at worst land you in jail, make a New Year's resolution to participate as an informed, prepared voter in the 2012 elections.

Make sure you have a valid ID by contacting your municipal clerk or the Government Accountability Board's website (<http://gab.wi.gov/>). Most voters will use a Wisconsin driver's license. If you have an ID, help out a relative or neighbor who needs one. If you don't have an acceptable ID, contact your local clerk or the League of Women Voters about how to get one. In Dane County the League has limited funding available to assist people who need to order a certified copy of their birth certificate in order to obtain an ID for voting.

Once you are sure your ID will work, check the GAB's Voter Public Access website (<https://vpa.wi.gov/>) to confirm your voter registration and polling place. Seek reliable information about the candidates from sources that do not have a stake in the election. Don't believe everything you hear in 30-second ads on television.

The League of Women Voters was founded by women suffragists 91 years ago, following a 70-year struggle for voting rights for women. We will never take the right to vote for granted. That's why we are suing to block implementation of Wisconsin's new voter ID requirement. We encourage every citizen in our state to be an informed and active participant in their government in the New Year.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Network is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that promotes informed and active participation in government. There are 16 local Leagues in Wisconsin. The LWVWI Education Network is a proud member of Community Shares of Wisconsin. [Find the League on Facebook.](#)

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