

November  
2004

# LWV/LAC VOTER

## President's Message

The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County in both its values and practices affirms its belief and commitment to diversity, pluralism and affirmative action.

The League of Women Voters welcomes new members, both men and women, who are citizens of voting age.

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October was Election frenzy month. Viewers were bombarded with ads for and against both candidates and ballot measures. Talk shows and TV news discussed voters' attitudes and potential problems with voting. Outreach to encourage voters to go to the polls appeared on buses, TV, radio and billboards, as well as via phone and door-to-door callers.

League members were consumed with voter outreach and voter education activities. Glendale-Burbank members registered hundreds of voters for Paramount Studios both at the studio and on location. The Los Angeles League was swamped with over 70 Pros and Cons presentations and asked other Leagues to cover additional engagements.

The *Election Info* newspaper was so popular that 5000 additional copies had to be printed to satisfy requests. Many people complimented the League for publishing the *ELECTION INFO* and used it at early voting sites to help make their decisions. Others raved about the value of the Smart Voter website, especially for having information on the judicial candidates. Santa Monica City TV, LA36TV, and Beverly Hills cable ran the "Meet Your Judicial Candidates" many times during the month. Schedules were posted on SmartVoter.

League cooperated with Rock the Vote on at least two events in South Los Angeles in October to encourage informed voting. Through the efforts of Jean Thomson, Daphne Lake, League worked with Friends Outside to register and educate non-felons in LA County jails. Some of them ordered absentee ballots and may have voted for the first time.

Early voting was a resounding success throughout the County as over 65,000 people voted by touchscreen. Among the early voting pollworkers were League members and spouses: Andrew Bliss (ESGV) at Monterey Park, Tom Hauge (Pasadena) at Jackie Robinson Park in Pasadena, and Whittier members Eleanor Wright, Beverly Walker, Dev Rivera, and Margo Reeg at the Braille Institute. Redondo Beach Library, Beverly Hills City Hall, Los Angeles Public Library, and Pasadena served 800-1000 people per day in the final days. Braille Institute had nearly 100 people in line at the 4:30 closing on the last

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day making a total of 620 that day.

Despite the fact that two of the League's measures, Proposition 69--DNA Samples won and Proposition 72--Health Care Coverage failed, we can be proud of the turnout and of the voter education Leagues accomplished.

Heartfelt thanks to all League members in the County who helped make this election a huge success.

*Margo Reeg  
President*

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## **SOCIAL POLICY**

Hearings by commissioners for the California Performance Review have recently concluded. Final reports and recommendations will now be developed and presented to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The CPR contains sweeping recommendations for the reorganization of state government, anchored by consolidating existing agencies and departments into 11 "mega-agencies," including the proposed Department of Health and Human Services. If fully implemented, the CPR estimates state savings of almost \$32 billion during its first five years. The Legislative Analyst projects that the savings, "attributable to state actions," would be \$10 to \$15 billion. Depending on which changes are being implemented, action will be required by Governor Schwarzenegger, the Legislature, the federal government and, in the case of state constitutional changes, the electorate.

Soon after the August 3 release of the CPR, the California Budget Project prepared an overview - "Soup to Nuts: An Analysis of Selected Recommendations of the California Performance Review" - of the five-volume report. Excerpts importantly related to League concerns, especially within social policy, follow:

The CPR ... makes a number of significant policy proposals that appear to have merit, but which require evaluation and, potentially, modification before being implemented.... Examples include:

\* ... 'Realigning' the funding and program responsibility for various health and human services programs. Specifically, the proposal would shift entire responsibility for the Medically Indigent Adult Program and the In-Home Supportive Services Program to the state. The proposal would also shift entire responsibility for Medi-Cal mental health services and Child Welfare Services to the counties. There may be some merit in realigning certain programs. However, key details, such as funding mechanisms and changes to service delivery, require careful evaluation.

Most of the major policy proposals of the CPR demand considerable scrutiny. Many would significantly change the delivery of services and/or have a major impact on program beneficiaries. Examples include:

\* Eliminating the 58 county boards of education, county offices of education, and county superintendents of education in favor of a regional governance structure for K-12. This proposal would consolidate the current 58 districts into 11 regions of similar size....

\* Changing the enrollment birth date for entering kindergarten from December 2 to September 1. [Within the LAO's more conservative five-years savings projection of \$10 to \$15 billion, "... nearly one-half of the savings would be attributable to" changing the kindergarten enrollment date.] The CPR argues that slightly older children perform more successfully both in kindergarten and in the future. However, a one-size-fits-all approach may not work for some children. In addition, increasing the age at which children can enter public kindergarten could raise the cost of child care for some working parents....

Other CPR proposals have been considered and rejected in prior budget and policy debates. Examples ... include:

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\* Eliminating the Homeowners and Renters Property Tax Assistance Program, a program that provides tax relief to low-income seniors and people with disabilities, for savings of \$696.5 million over five years. At the same time, the CPR recommends new tax breaks for businesses.

\* Reducing the reimbursement rates for child care providers who are exempt from state licensure from 90 percent to 50 percent of the regional market rate. The reimbursement rate would increase to 60 percent for providers who complete health and safety training....

\* Weakening California's environmental regulations [with probable negative health consequences], including: eliminating regulations that currently restrict unlimited oil refining; weakening California's pesticide regulation laws, which are stronger than federal law....

\* Modifying the requirement that 75 percent of community college faculty be full-time instructors....

The CPR report includes a number of proposals to permit the 'contracting out' of state services and administrative activities, without providing evidence that private contractors would improve the efficiency or effectiveness of service delivery. These proposals include:

\* Consolidating and contracting out the eligibility functions of the Medi-Cal, CalWORKs, and Food Stamps programs, for annual General Fund savings of \$453.1 million and a reduction of 16,921 county workers who currently perform the eligibility functions for these programs. The state would have to seek federal waivers to allow non-public employees to conduct the eligibility function in the Medi-Cal and Food Stamps Programs. The proposal provides no evidence that contracting out eligibility functions would generate the level of assumed savings.

The proposal compares the eligibility costs in the three programs to lower costs in the Healthy Families Program, which contracts out the eligibility

function. However, this comparison is misleading because the Medi-Cal, CalWORKs, and Food Stamps programs have more complex eligibility rules than the Healthy Families programs.... The proposal could also affect service delivery. In CalWORKs, for example, county welfare departments also provide case management and employment services for participants. Separating the eligibility function could affect how counties deliver CalWORKs services.

[CBP concludes that the] CPR's recommendations are too varied and broad to warrant action as a whole. Prior to seeking legislative review, the Administration should:

\* Identify recommendations that would generate little, if any, controversy. These should be reviewed by the public and the Legislature and implemented as warranted.

\* Separate major proposals that are primarily structural (e.g., reorganizing agencies and departments) from those that are primarily policy-related (e.g., reinstating the Manufacturers' Investment Tax Credit or changing the kindergarten start date) and submit proposals as individual bills for legislative consideration.

\* Expand the number of public hearings on the CPR's recommendations and hold individual hearings on major policy proposals, allowing sufficient time for public review to promote informed debate.

*Sally Rivera*  
*LWV/LAC Social Policy Chair*

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## **VOTERS SERVICE**

### **Unlock the Vote**

Final Results of the inmate registration project participated in by LWV Los Angeles County and

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## LWV Los Angeles Voter Service

As of 10/22/04, the **total registration count** for inmates comes to **109**. The breakdown is as follows:

English: 73  
 Japanese: 14  
 Korean: 12  
 Spanish: 5  
 Tagalog: 5  
 Chinese: 0  
 Vietnamese: 0

*Daphne Lake*

*LWV/LAC Voters Service Chair*

*Jean Thomson*

*LWVLA Voters Service*

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## **LWVC Executive Director**

Jill Kaiser Newcom is delighted to be returning to Sacramento as Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of California. Born in Chicago, raised in Atlanta, Jill calls the State of California her true home. She moved to Sacramento in 1997, but left briefly in June 2003 to take a self-guided trip through South America. After a year of learning Spanish, trekking through glorious Andean countryside, and exploring the rich history of this diverse southern continent, Jill is ready to focus her attentions on California issues.

Prior to her tour of South America, Jill was Executive Director of the Arts & Business Council of Sacramento. Enriching quality of life through arts and business partnerships is the mission of the Arts & Business Council. Jill is credited with leading the nonprofit organization through a period of tremendous growth that significantly broadened its mission, added and revitalized programs and established the Arts & Business Council as a key resource for arts-related issues in the Sacramento re-

gion.

Jill also served as Vice President of Community Development at the Sacramento Metro Chamber from 1998 to 2003, where she developed innovative new membership benefits, solidified the Metro Chamber's interest in the arts as a community development tool through the Regional Arts Initiative, and helped to produce such well-known events as Perspectives.

Before joining the Sacramento Metro Chamber, Jill was a State of California Executive Fellow at the California Arts Council.

Jill's formal education will certainly benefit her in her position as League of Women Voters of California Executive Director. She obtained a BA in Political Economy and Philosophy from Newcomb College of Tulane University, one of the few remaining women's coordinate colleges in the United States. During her studies at Tulane University, she was elected President of the Associated Student Body, making her only the third woman in the school's history to hold that position. She also possesses an MSc in Public Administration and Public Policy from the London School of Economics & Political Science. She became a Harry S. Truman Scholar, thereby committing herself to a career in the public service, in the spring of 1993.

It goes without saying that Jill enjoys travel. But she also enjoys reading, backpacking, snowboarding and playing chess. She is an active volunteer in the Sacramento community, lending her time and energies to animal welfare groups and arts organizations. Jill is an alumna of Leadership Sacramento and a spirited advocate for the Sacramento region and the Golden State.



League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County

Be a part of the process instead of the  
processed!

First Committee Meeting  
UNINCORPORATED LOS ANGELES  
COUNTY LAND USE STUDY

At the Los Angeles Music Center  
in the Courtyard

between the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion & the Mark Taper Forum  
(Look for the LWV Blue Flag)  
135 N. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles



Saturday, November 13, 2004  
10 to 12 AM

(Should the weather be inclement we will walk over to the  
Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels cafeteria).

For information call, write, fax or e-mail:

Lola Ungar, 310-375-7410, 3903 Bluff Street, Torrance, CA 90505  
fax: 310-375-0444, e-mail: skyhawk172@socal.rr.com

At their meeting on September 14, 2004, the LWV/LAC Board approved the following SCOPE for the Study: **To assess the feasibility and impact of land development in Los Angeles County's unincorporated areas.**

**November 2004**

**League of Women Voters  
of Los Angeles County**

**Margo Reeg, President**  
**Chris Carson, Editor**  
*carsonlww@earthlink.net*

**We're on the Web!!**  
**<http://lacilo.ca.lwvnet.org>**

**Calendar**

November 9—LWV/LAC  
Board Meeting, LWVLA Of-  
fice

November 25—Happy  
Thanksgiving!!

December 1—WPC Meeting,  
LWVLA Office

December 14—LWV/LAC  
Board Meeting

Happy Holidays!!

January 5—WPC Meeting,  
LWVLA Office

January 11—LWV.LAC  
Board Meeting

January 29—League Day,  
Land Use, Rio Hondo CC

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*For information, contact [carsonlww@earthlink.net](mailto:carsonlww@earthlink.net)*