

**Status of Issues and Advocacy
LWVIL Issues Committee Specialist Reports
Issues Briefing, February 10, 2018**

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Campaign Finance and Ethics Reform

Paula Lawson

US Supreme Court Rulings have had the effect of exponentially increasing the amount of money that can be used to influence federal elections. The Citizens United v. FEC (Federal Election Commission), January, 2010, ruling found that in the electoral context the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gives corporations, like people, free speech protections and spending money is a form of speech. This allows corporations, unions and other entities to make unlimited “independent expenditures” to influence elections. The April, 2014 decision in McCutcheon v. FEC ruled that, while the total given to each candidate is still limited, individual donors are now able to donate to every candidate of their choosing. The total aggregate limits on contributions are lifted and candidates and parties can collect substantially larger sums from individual donors.

Activity in Illinois

The first legislation in Illinois to place limits on contributions to campaigns in Illinois, PA 96-0832 took effect on January 1, 2011. The legislation placed limits on contributions that individuals, corporations, unions and associations, and PACs can make to candidates and political parties. LWVIL has opposed subsequent legislation in 2012 and 2013 allowing contribution limits to be removed when individual candidates or Independent Expenditure Committees exceed PA 96-0832s limits, permitting candidates to receive unlimited contributions.

Illinois is seeing a trend where it is becoming increasingly easy for campaigns to remove contribution limits. **In the 2016 General Election, 4 of 13 contested State Senate races and 17 of 48 State House races had limits removed. This means that of the 61 contested General Assembly races in November 2016, 34% had contribution limits removed.** In 2014, limits were removed for six House races, and no Senate races. In 2012, limits were removed for just one House race and one Senate race.

Spring 2017

LWVIL signed a Witness Slip supporting SB1424 and also asked members to do so. This bill, the Small Donor Democracy Matching System for Fair Elections Act, would create a small donor campaign contribution matching system for the offices of Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, State Treasurer, Secretary of State, State Senator, and State Representative. The bill passed the Senate but was referred to the House Rules Committee and did not pass.

LWVIL signed a Witness Slip supporting SB2089. This Bill closes a loophole in the Election Code. It requires tax-exempt 501(c)(4), 501(c)(5) and 501(c)(6) organizations,

under the federal Internal Revenue Code defined as political action committees, ballot initiative committees and independent expenditure committees who make contributions to candidates to report their donors. This bill did not pass out of the Senate.

Outlook: The LWVIL will work with our coalition partners on legislation to increase transparency such as requiring Dark Money Groups to Register as Political Committees, requiring Donor Names on Advertisements, reporting the original source of donations, and support Public Financing and Small Donor Matching Systems.

State Redistricting

Paula Lawson & Jane Ballengee

The 1970 Illinois Constitution under Article IV, Section 3 details procedures to be followed in legislative redistricting. Five redistrictings have taken place using these rules. In 1981, 1991, and 2001, because there was no agreement on the proposed maps in either the legislature or the Legislative Redistricting Commission, it was necessary to select a tiebreaker member for the Legislative Redistricting Commission. The selected maps reflected the partisanship of the tiebreaker member's vote. In 2011 the governor and both chambers of the General Assembly were controlled by the same party. The maps drawn with little input from the public favored the party in control.

Activity in Illinois

Independent Map Amendment – Ballot Initiative for 2016

The LWVIL supported efforts to place the Independent Redistricting Amendment initiated in April 2015 on the November 2016 General Election Ballot. This initiative call Independent Maps was guided by a bipartisan board that included a broad range of representation from non-profits and the business community. The proposed amendment to Article IV, Section 3 of the Illinois Constitution would have changed the way the Illinois General Assembly (ILGA) House and Senate districts are drawn after the US Census by providing for an independent commission to draw maps. This was the third attempt to place a Citizens Initiative on the ballot to change the redistricting process for the ILGA after Fair Maps in 2010 and Yes for Independent Maps in 2014.

On May 6, 2016 the bipartisan *Independent Maps* coalition submitted over 570,000 petition signatures to the Illinois State Board of Elections. The ISBE found the validity rate – well in excess of the 290,199 signatures required to place the amendment on the November 8th ballot.

A lawsuit the People's Map V. The Illinois State Board of Elections was filed and heard by Cook County Circuit Court Judge Diane Larson. On July 18, 2016 Judge Larsen handed down a ruling that the Independent Map Amendment was unconstitutional.

Independent Maps filed an appeal directly to the Illinois Supreme Court. On July 28th LWVIL as part of a coalition filed an amicus with the Illinois Supreme Court urging it “to allow democracy to prevail and to let the people have their vote” on the amendment. Independent Maps final brief to the Court on August 9th argued the lower court ruling if

not reversed “would eviscerate the constitutional right conferred on the people of Illinois by the 1970 constitution to bypass self-interested legislators and directly propose needed reforms.”

The Independent Map Amendment did not appear on the November 8, 2016 Election Ballot. On Thursday, August 25th the Illinois Supreme Court ruled 4 to 3 affirming the Cook County Circuit Court decision that the proposed amendment failed to meet constitutional requirements. The decision split along party lines.

The Court decision rested on the fact that the job duties of the Auditor General are not stated in Article IV Section 3, the Legislative Article, of the Illinois Constitution. Therefore the proposal was a violation of provision for Constitutional Initiative that limits amendments to structural and procedural subjects contained in Article IV.

The Independent Maps Board decided not to pursue another citizen initiative

Current Efforts

LWVIL is currently working with The *Illinois Redistricting Collaborative* to promote changes to Illinois’ redistricting process. They have developed Redistricting Principles, Strategies to Promote Changes in Redistricting and a Gerrymandering Survey for Gubernatorial Candidates. The group will likely ask State Legislative Candidates to complete a survey on redistricting, sponsor events to educate the public, and work to have the State Legislature place a Constitutional Amendment on the 2018 or 2020 General Election Ballot.

Gill v. Whitford – Partisan Gerrymandering Case

The US Supreme Court heard oral arguments for the Wisconsin gerrymandering case, *Gill v. Whitford* on October 3, 2017. *Gill* examines the constitutionality of the partisan gerrymandering. Whereas the Supreme Court has numerous times interceded and overturned maps on behalf of racial gerrymandering, this is will be the huge test for whether party ID and affiliation merit such scrutiny. The SCOTUS decision on the case is expected between February and June 2018.

Automatic Voter Registration (AVR)

Sharon Alter

Since November 2015, when LWVIL joined the Just Democracy coalition, LWVIL has worked toward passage of automatic voter registration in Illinois.

Although the bill passed in the Illinois General Assembly with bipartisan support in 2016, Governor Rauner’s veto was successful in defeating AVR.

In 2017, a revised AVR bill was introduced (SB1933) by Illinois Senator Andy Manar. It passed unanimously with bipartisan support in both the Illinois House (115-0) and Illinois Senate (55-0) and was signed into law by Governor Rauner in August 2017. LWVIL diligently worked toward passage through the Just Democracy coalition with a

number of TFAs, contacts with legislators and the governor's office plus a number of meetings.

Illinois is now the 10th state (plus Washington, DC) to enact automatic voter registration.

At the November 20, 2017 Illinois State Board of Elections (ISBE) hearing, LWWIL submitted written testimony both electronically and verbally in person on the implementation of AVR in Illinois. Specifically, LWWIL voiced strong support for timely implementation beginning in 2018.

At that hearing, the ISBE chair noted the unanimous bipartisan passage of SB1933 in both the Illinois House and Illinois Senate.

Reproductive Health

Janet Craft & Margaret O'Hara

PUBLIC POLICY ON REPRODUCTIVE CHOICES - Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

President Trump and Congressional Republicans vowed to repeal the Affordable Care Act as a first order of business in 2017. The ACA required Reproductive Health services including contraception, resulting in a Supreme Court case. A group of religious non-profits challenged employer provision of contraceptives. A divided court returned the case to lower courts for resolution. In May President Trump ended the impasse by issuing an Executive Order exempting religious employers from providing contraception. The appointment of Judge Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court eliminated the even numbered court, opening speculation on future rulings on reproductive health.

League Activity 2017

HB 40: LWWIL worked with the Reproductive Health and Access Coalition to pass. The law removed a trigger in 1975 Illinois abortion law should Roe v Wade be struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court; permits abortion funding for Medicaid and state employees. After bill passed both houses in May, a motion to reconsider was filed, a procedural maneuver to allow time for further advocacy. Although the Governor had indicated he would veto the bill, he ultimately signed it into law, prompting strong opposition

SB1564 Healthcare Right of Conscience Act became law July 2016: amends Illinois Health Care Right of Conscience Act to ensure a patient's right to medically accurate and complete information, including a referral even though a provider has religious or moral objections. The next month the U.S. District Court ruled against enforcement of the law due to start January 1, 2017. More litigation followed, allowing a Rockford clinic temporary relief from the law's provisions. Currently five lawsuits are pending and a complaint filed with the DHHS Office of Civil Rights on behalf of a clinic in Sterling, IL.

LWWIL monitored the following bills restricting abortion. None came to a vote.

HB282 amends 1975 Abortion law; HB283 medically unnecessary ultrasound and waiting period for surgical or medication abortion, data filed without confidentiality; HB4108 reinstates trigger provision were Roe vs. Wade struck down, criminalizing abortion, bans state funding; HB4114, SB2241 defines an unborn child from conception as having US Constitutional rights, no exceptions for rape, incest, women's health, bans DHS grants and referrals for abortion; HB78 eliminates funding for abortions.

Outlook:

- 1) Expect continued efforts in Illinois, nationally to limit or ban abortion.
- 2) Potential change in Supreme Court rulings for Reproductive Health with full complement of 9 justices.
- 3) Weakening of the ACA and Medicaid by executive action, and new Tax law.
- 4) Proposed structural changes to Medicaid (e.g. block grant): detrimental to IL because of state's precarious financial status and 3 million Illinois citizens enrolled.
Medicaid covers 50% of IL births, 75% family planning services.

(See also Social Policy: Health Care)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Air Quality & Energy

Laura Kratz & Di Niesman

2017 Action: State League activity in these areas was limited this past year as two recent major events began to manifest themselves: (1) passage of the Illinois Future Energy Jobs Bill (FEJA) in late 2016 and (2) Donald J. Trump took office as President of the United States in January 2017. With activity focused on these two areas, very few bills pertaining to air quality and energy made it out of committee during the Illinois legislative session in 2017.

Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA)

Illinois began the first steps toward implementing this sweeping legislation this year with most of this work being done by agencies such as the IL Commerce Commission and IL Power Agency rather than in the state Legislature. Frameworks are being established, new regulatory requirements are being considered, grant programs to fund jobs training and renewable energy projects are beginning.

One of these key components is electrical grid modernization, a concept that has been in the works in IL for the past 10 years as the "smart grid". Today, much the focus is on the digital technology that will enable decentralized power generation and distribution as well as greater consumer choice and control.

Last spring both houses passed resolutions calling for an Environmental Justice Agenda for the state to protect FEJA funds and to ensure that the provisions and rewards of FEJA are shared by diverse populations throughout the state with specific goals that *...create clean energy jobs that are accessible to all, address gender inequities and income disparities as we move toward a green economy, reduce recidivism rates while curbing climate change, and shape policy that addresses the adverse and*

disproportionate impacts of climate change upon communities of color and economically disadvantaged communities.”

Federal Government and a New Administration in Washington

Meanwhile, the President has been in office for a year and has made significant changes to federal departments including appointing fossil fuel energy supporters to head key agencies, issuing Executive Orders to review and rescind regulations, and withdrawing the US from the international climate agreement, the Paris Accords.

Again, League action has been limited to the first steps of what appears to be a long process, much of which is outside of the legislative sphere, as responsibility for environmental protection is handed over to the states. LWVIL actively participated in public marches and protests such as the March for Science and Earth Day.

Going Forward

Environmental protection remains an issue focus for the League and we hope several of the proposals brought forth in the last legislative session will return this year including a proposal to study the environmental impact of O'Hare Airport and the continued efforts to block so-called “clean coal” initiatives.

Water

Krista Grimm

League Activity

An Illinois Department of Natural Resources Coastal Management Grant funded the acquisition of two watershed demonstration models for a public education project in 2017. Twenty volunteers were trained to use the models. The models were used for public outreach at numerous community events and League meetings throughout the Illinois coastal zone. They were also used last summer on the Chicago River Walk by staff of the McCormick Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum. In total, over 2,000 people were engaged in learning about sources of water pollution and how to reduce such pollution at 24 separate events. The models will continue to be used for education in future years as well.

LWVIL's main focus with regard to state water policy was supporting legislation that would ban asphalt sealcoats that contain coal tar sealant. Organic compounds in these sealants are toxic to human, animal, and aquatic ecosystem health. Congratulations to the LWV Evanston for their successful support of a City of Evanston ban on the toxic sealants enacted in July. Other local Leagues are also advocating for bans of coal tar sealants in their own municipalities and other governmental units.

Two federal issues commanded attention in 2017. The first was budgetary: LWVIL advocated for maintaining the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) program at \$300 million, the same level it had been funded at in recent years. The administration eliminated the program in its proposed budget. After outcry from League members and many others in the region, full funding was restored in the budget by and was approved by the House and the Senate appropriation committees. The federal budget process

continues at the time of submission of this report. We also supported adequate and increased funding for other federal water infrastructure programs.

The rescission and recodification of the Waters of the U.S. Rule under the Clean Water Act was the second federal water issue that LWVIL addressed. The 2015 rule, supported by the League, clarified which waters are subject to Clean Water Act regulations. The administration seeks to extend the date the rule goes into effect by two years so it will have more time to consider a replacement rule. The League opposed the rescission of the current rule.

Legislative Activity:

- Issued a TFA in March supporting HB 2958, a Coal Tar Ban. In May, the proposed legislation was amended to allow non-home-rule municipalities to adopt local bans on coal tar sealants. LWVIL sent out a second TFA supporting the amended bill, and also provided a template for a Letter to the Editor to local Leagues. The bill failed to pass for the third year.
- Issued a TFA supporting federal FY2018 GLRI funding at \$300 million. A Letter to the Editor template was sent to the local Leagues in April.
- Signed on to a letter in September initiated by the Healing Our Waters Coalition opposing the repeal of the Clean Water Rule.

Outlook

In 2017, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released its study and tentative recommendation of how to prevent Asian carp and other invasive species from using the Illinois Sanitary and Ship Canal to spread between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River watersheds. The tentative plan is a multiprong approach that includes construction of a third electric barrier at the Brandon Road locks. The proposed completion of the project is in 2028. The LWV Lake Michigan Region submitted comments criticizing the plan as too little, too late, but recommending installation of the parts of the plan that can be implemented quickly as interim measures. The Army Corps is in the process of reviewing comments from the public and should issue a final plan by 2019.

The current administration in Washington continues to issue directives that negatively impact our water resources and to eliminate protective regulations at a rapid pace. Funding for the U.S. EPA and other agencies that administer water programs has been cut. The cuts at the federal level will likely result in reduced funding that is passed through to Illinois agencies that maintain and protect our lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater.

SOCIAL POLICIES

Criminal Justice

Janet Kittlaus

Legislation supported by the League in 2017 with TFA and/or witness slips:

HB0303 (PA100-0512) Civil Asset Forfeiture Law Reform

HB0375 (PA100-0247) Crisis Intervention Team training required for probation officers

HB0514 (PA100-0282) immediate sealing of a record if result is acquittal or dismissal

HB0698 (PA100-0283) business skills are taught in prison to enable successful reentry into society

HB2373 (PA100-0284) expands record sealing eligibility

HB2738 (PA100-0030) video visitation to enable those in prison to maintain relationships

HB3712 (PA100-0198) allows access to tablets for education and to visit loved ones

SB1688 (PA100-0286) improves occupational licensing opportunities

SB1781 (PA100-0287) expungement or sealing fee waiver pilot extended

Other developments in Criminal Justice

Cook County and Lake County have been more aggressive in identifying individuals wrongfully convicted in their jurisdictions. At least 22 men have been exonerated in Cook County during 2017; from 2010 to the present, eight men wrongfully convicted in Lake County have been exonerated.

In May, The Illinois Supreme Court issued a Policy Statement On Pretrial Services; in late October, the League signed on in support of a letter from the Cook County Public Defender to the members of the Illinois Supreme Court Rules Committee to adopt a new rule to eliminate wealth-based pretrial detention.

The Chicago neighborhood of North Lawndale is host to the first restorative justice court in Illinois. Problem-solving courts are expanding in Illinois.

Pathway to Enterprise for Returning Citizens (PERC) program was introduced early in November by Governor Bruce Rauner. In its pilot phase, 125 people returning from IDOC to the South and West Sides of Chicago will be coached on how to run a business.

SB 1238 (PA 100-0088), signed into law in August, requires every judicial circuit to have a veterans treatment court starting January 1, 2018.

Looking ahead

Failing to pass this session were bills for the abolition of cash bail, further licensing reform, and more sealing and expungement. These efforts probably will be coming back. Despite the good legislation passed, 2017 was disappointing because many of the important recommendations of the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing were not made into law. (see [Commission's recommendations](#))

[9,10,11,14,15,16,19,24](#).) Among other things, these recommendations would reduce the number of prison admissions by changing sentencing guidelines, allow more judicial discretion, reclassify sentences for all drug offenses, change the mandatory felony classification increase for certain drug crimes, allow more credit to those required to serve 75%, 85%, or 100% in order to reduce these required sentences. Passage of these recommendations will be politically difficult but essential if the Governor's goal of reducing prison population by 25% from 49,000 to 36,750 by 2025 is to be achieved.

Juvenile Justice

Janet Kittlaus

Legislation supported by the League in 2017 with TFA and/or witness slips:

HB2987 (PA100-0141) ensures that homeless youth or youth in foster care or who are court-involved have a chance to get the jobs and internships in state agencies that they are qualified for and need

HB3165 (PA100-0157) requires that training of juvenile personnel include restorative justice courses

HB3817 (PA100-0285) expands automatic expungement and strengthens confidentiality of juvenile records

HB3903 (PA100-0204) prohibits detention or criminal processing on school grounds

Important Legislation failed to pass in 2017

HB 678 detention hearing shall be no later than the morning after the juvenile arrived in placement, including weekends and holidays. A child detained for any length of time can be life-altering.

HB2515/SB2073 creates a new process for persons who had received life sentences as juveniles

HB 2619 raises the age of pre-trial detention from 10 to 13 to be consistent with the age of post-trial imprisonment

HB 2628 begins misdemeanor cases of young adults (age 18-21) in juvenile court

HB3142 colleges may not ask about criminal records during admissions (League supported)

HB 3645 ensures all juveniles under 18 receive due process hearing in juvenile court

SB 1265 minors under the age of 18 (rather than 15) have a right to a lawyer.

Looking ahead

It is to be hoped that brain science will have a greater impact on juvenile justice policy. Research on the adolescent brain indicates that the juvenile brain is still maturing in the teen years and reasoning and judgment are developing well into the early to mid 20s.

The **restorative justice court** noted above in the criminal justice section is aimed at emerging adults up to the age of 26. In Germany, a 25-year-old offender might be housed with juveniles and not with the adult offender population. The failed bills noted above are important; yet they are baby steps toward a more humane juvenile justice system.

Death Penalty Abolition

Janet Kittlaus

The League was an active participant in the efforts during 2010 to abolish the death penalty. This goal was achieved in early 2011 when legislation passed the House on January 6, the Senate on January 11, and was signed into law on March 9.

Although Abolition is now law in Illinois, the League will continue to monitor any attempts to reinstate capital punishment.

Education Funding Jean Pierce, Claire McIntyre, & Nancy Brandt

Issues:

After years of advocacy for adequate and equitable school funding in the state, a bill was passed which has the potential for equitable funding. Whether funding will be adequate will depend on revenue bills in the coming years.

However, passing a bill for Evidence-based funding came at a price – a compromise bill, which LWWIL opposed, permits tax credits for donations to private school scholarships while providing for evidence-based funding.

In 2017, funding of 80% of school districts in Illinois was below adequacy, according to Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) data interpretations of the new evidence-based model. ISBE estimated that in the next 10 years, a total of \$6.5 Billion will be needed to bring all districts to adequacy.

A survey from the Illinois State Board of Education reports that of the 1,006 unfilled teacher positions in the state, 74% are in majority-minority school districts while 81% are in districts where the majority of students are low-income.

League Activity:

- Jan-Feb. 2017: Opposed voucher schools through a letter and witness slips
- April, 2017:
 - TFA supporting preventing the Charter School Commission from reversing local school board decisions. (passed both Houses in Dec.)
 - TFA supporting Civic Education in Middle School (stuck in committee)
 - TFA supporting preventing new charter schools from being approved in neighborhoods where traditional public schools were closed recently (stuck in committee)
 - TFA supporting preventing the misuse of federal funds designed for the classroom.(Public Act)
- June, 2017: The LWWIL Convention approved a Higher Education Funding position
- Spring and Summer, 2017: Successfully supported Evidence-Based funding for schools.

Outlook:

1) Increasingly more funding of education IF the Evidence-Based Funding Law is to be adequately funded. The Evidence-Based Funding law requires that - within just 10 years - every Illinois school district will have the resources needed "to ensure the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capacities...." While an additional \$361 M was allocated for schools in 2017, the school budget will need to be increased every year by \$650 M beginning in 2018 and each year for the next 10, based on ISBE figures.

As in the past, we will continue to

i. Monitor legislation to determine whether equitable funding is tied to additional revenue. This legislation must not transfer money from current line items.

ii. Fight against calls for lowering property taxes, which are the principal source of support for public schools.

iii. Argue for additional revenue, a fair budget, and a graduated rate income tax.

2) Loss of school revenue from other

3) Charter School funding: With charter school sympathizers leading the Illinois State Board of Education as well as the state and federal government, we anticipate a need to remain vigilant that funding decisions do not discriminate against traditional public schools.

4) Higher education funding in Illinois still remains woefully inadequate. With our new position, the League can now advocate for increased funding.

Fiscal Policy

Kathy Nesburg

In July 2017, the Illinois General Assembly voted to make permanent the income tax rate for individuals at 4.95% and for corporations at 7%, effective immediately. The General Assembly also passed a budget for FY2018 and overrode the Governor's vetoes of the tax increase and the budget implementation bill on a bi-partisan basis. The Income Tax Proceed Bonds Act became law and allowed the state to issue up to \$6 Billion in bonds to pay for general fund expenses or state employees' group health insurance costs that were incurred before July 1, 2017.

So, Illinois has a budget and some new revenue. It has paid some old bills. This allows Illinois to avoid junk bond status.

The tax increase revenues and the FY 2018 budget are not enough to repair the damage done during more than two years without a budget and without the revenues which were lost when the temporary income tax passed in 2011 was allowed to lapse. The damage includes:

- The deficit increased to \$16 Billion.

- The cost of debt service (interest payments) increased.
- Federal funds could not be dispersed without a budget.
- Social service and health care providers were forced to cut staff and service.
- Intended recipients of these services were under-served or lost services.
- School districts were covered by a partial budget for General State Aid. Some of those payments were late. Payments for categorical spending such as special education and transportation were delayed or not made. School districts had to find other sources of funds or make cuts.
- Pensions were not fully funded.
- Higher education sustained severe cuts. Students left Illinois.

The League worked to educate its members and the public about these complicated problems. The League advocated for adequate revenues for the state, for education, and for health and human services. The state's fiscal problems were the subject of plenary sessions at Issues Briefings, in Time for Action requests, questions for legislators at legislative interviews and articles in the E-News. League members did their part and communicated with their elected officials. The League also worked in coalition with the Responsible Budget Coalition, which advocates for adequate revenues for education and health and human services.

Health Care

Janet Craft & Margaret O'Hara

LWVUS Social Policy Position on Health Care: Support for a basic level of quality care at an affordable cost for all US residents.

President Trump and Congressional Republicans vowed to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2017 as a first order of business.

The Urban Institute reported repeal of the ACA would mean an estimated 1.2 million people in Illinois would lose health insurance by 2019. Illinois has 3 million on Medicaid including 700,000 on ACA Expanded Medicaid covering disabled, seniors, low-income adults and families with children, rural and children's hospitals. The prospect of changes to Medicaid structure, as block grants, would put Illinois in a precarious position given the dire financial status. Moderate-income families in the ACA Marketplace would risk losing cost sharing subsidies, an average deduction of 61%.

2017 Bills to Repeal ACA

1) House American Health Care Act: Introduced 3/20; 5/4 Passed as Amended 217- 213; 13 Republicans opposed

Provisions: eliminates ACA individual and employer mandates, lowers deficit by cutting Medicaid, would result in 24 million people eventually losing coverage, increases premiums for older adults, women and persons with pre-existing conditions, guts essential health benefits as maternity care, prescription drugs and mental health care.

2) Senate Better Care Reconciliation Act 2017: Failed to pass 7/28 49-51 Senators Collins, Murkowski, McCain opposed

LWVUS Statement called the bill worse than the house version and “not worthy of this great nation. This a nasty bill that will hurt millions of Americans.” It essentially defunds Medicaid, gives tax breaks to the wealthiest individuals and large corporations.

3) Senate Graham/Cassidy Amendment introduced 9/13 failed to come to vote
Provisions: Repeals the structure and architecture of the ACA and replaces it with a block grant given annually to the states.

League Activity 2017

LWVIL joined Protect Our Care Illinois (PoCIL), a Coalition of advocacy and social service groups to lobby for “no repeal of ACA without adequate replacement.” Letters were sent to Leagues in Congressional Districts with representatives supporting repeal. Members were asked to engage with them during the February recess through personal meetings, rallies and social media.

Leagues organized Q and A Public Forums in the 14th District (Hultgren) and 16th (Kinzinger), two of seven IL representatives who supported straight repeal of the ACA. Rep. Roskam (6th District) refused to participate in a public meeting organized by Leagues in his District.

May

TFA : Contact targeted U.S. Representatives to commit to a bill that is an acceptable and genuine replacement for ACA. Also call Governor Rauner asking him to reinforce with IL Congressional Delegation the dire effects that a repeal without adequate replacement would have on Illinois financial status.

June

TFA: Contact Governor to send a strong message to members of U.S. Congress, particularly the Illinois delegation, to refrain from voting for cuts to Medicaid benefits.

Leaders Update: Advocacy information and strategies for local league on potential Senate bill.

Testimony: House Appropriations Human Services Committee 6/20

Margaret O’Hara, LWVIL Health Care Issue Specialist, testified on a panel of nurses in support of HR 445 opposing the American Health Care Act. She cited experience with the financial devastation and lack of appropriate care suffered by patients with preexisting conditions and inadequate insurance. The panel called out the Governor on no cuts to Medicaid.

July

TFA: Contact Governor Rauner to publicly oppose cuts to Medicaid in any legislation to repeal, replace or modify ACA.

Sign on to organizational letter to Governor to oppose ACA repeal.

August

Drive For Our Lives national bus tour stop in Chicago for Press Conference and Rally by Health Coalition partners.

September

TFA: Contact Governor to oppose Graham-Cassidy proposal.

Sign on to organizational letter to Illinois Congressional Delegation to renew CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program) that covers 325,000 IL children; expires 9/30.

October

Sign on to letter to letter to Illinois Congressional Delegation to renew CHIP and Maternal Infant Home Visiting Program; added to Facebook and Twitter.

Sign on to letter to Medicare and Medical Services opposing ACA healthcare.gov weekend shutdowns for maintenance and shortened enrollment period.

Outlook:

- 1) LWVIL will continue health care advocacy with PoCIL.
- 2) Further efforts to weaken ACA and Medicaid by executive action and new Tax law.
- 3) Proposed structural changes to Medicaid (e.g. Block Grant) detrimental to IL because of state's precarious financial status and the 3 million enrollees.
- 4) Monitor outcome of Republican agreement with Sen. Susan Collins: legislation to stabilize ACA markets will be passed, a condition of her voting for tax law.

(See also LWVUS Representative Government Positions: PUBLIC POLICY ON REPRODUCTIVE CHOICES)

Immigration Report

Kim Reed

The LWV supports and has continued to support **Dreamers, DACA and the DREAM Act**, sending out action alerts asking League members to contact their Congressional representatives to demand a clean Dream Act.

In addition to the January 12, 2018 LWV Action Alert to pass a clean Dream Act, here are some additional League actions:

- LWVUS signed onto a joint letter to then President-elect Donald Trump on January 18, 2017 urging him to keep the DACA program in place. This letter, on letterhead of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, was signed by 110 groups, including the LWV.
- Soon after, League president Chris Carson came out with a statement opposing the deportation of non-criminal undocumented immigrants, in response to President Trump's immigration ban.
- Then again, on Sept. 5, Chris Carson issued a statement on the Trump Administration's DACA Reversal.
- On Sept. 7, the LWV once again joined the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and signed a letter with over 180 organizations in the call for Congress to immediately pass the DREAM Act without amendment.

- On Sept. 14, LWV President Chris Carson sent a letter to members of the House of Representatives again requesting Congress pass a Clean Dream Act. The LWV Lobby Corps followed up with visits to members of the House. LWVIL President, Bonnie Cox, received an update on these visits to the Illinois delegation.
- On Dec. 12, 2017, LWVIL sent out a TFA on the issue, requesting League members contact their members of the US House of Representatives to pass a clean Dream Act.

Because of the travel bans and the reversal of DACA, immigrants, especially those who are undocumented, continue to live in fear of detention, deportation, and family separation. Many good government groups and immigrant-friendly organizations are providing “Know Your Rights” trainings and assisting these populations in putting together family and estate plans in anticipation of separation (temporary custody for children, etc.). Schools are seeing an increased rate of absenteeism from these populations as a result of these fears. ICE raids and detentions are increasing.

In response to Trump’s actions, the Illinois General Assembly passed **The Illinois Trust Act**, a bill to protect and build trust between law enforcement agencies and immigrant communities by limiting local police involvement in federal immigration enforcement. The bill was signed into law by Governor Rauner on Aug. 28, 2017. LWVIL supported this bill.

In April 2017, the Chicago City Council approved a **Municipal ID** program. This identification card benefits individuals who either cannot or have difficulty obtaining government-issued documents, including immigrants, homeless persons, persons with disabilities, returning citizens, and transgender individuals. Chicago’s **Welcoming City Ordinance** already limits access of immigration status information and interactions with immigration enforcement.

In November 2017, a federal judge permanently blocked the Trump’s Executive Order to cut funding to **sanctuary cities**. Chicago is a sanctuary city, and is one of 5 cities and 2 counties in IL to claim that status.

Outlook: It is difficult to know what to expect in the current political climate. The future is uncertain for DACA recipients and other undocumented in IL and in the US. The deadline to address DACA is March 5, 2018. The DACA issue held up the Congressional Budget process, but then was sidelined until after the budget is addressed. Refugee families are also facing uncertainties, especially those who still have relatives in the countries identified in the so-called “Muslim Ban.” Additionally, there has been a rise in hate crimes against immigrants, refugees, and people of color, which is extremely disconcerting.

What you can do: Contact US Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth. Thank them for their past support and ask them to continue to fight for Dreamers. Contact your

Congressional representatives and ask them to support Dreamers and a clean Dream Act.

SOCIAL POLICY

Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)

Sharon Alter

For a number of years, LWVIL has been part of a coalition supporting ratification of the ERA in the Illinois General Assembly.

In May 2014, the Illinois Senate ratified the ERA by the required 3/5 majority. However, no vote was taken in 2014 in the Illinois House because it was uncertain whether there was a 3/5 majority House support.

In February 2017, Illinois Senator Heather Steans, as the lead Senate ERA sponsor, introduced the ERA as SJRCA0004 for ratification. It was adopted by the Illinois Senate Executive Committee, but was never scheduled for a Senate floor vote. Without a Senate vote, the ERA never came to the Illinois House for consideration.

In an attempt to move the ERA out of the Senate and into the House with a positive 3/5 majority House vote, LWVIL in 2017 worked in coalition with a number of organizations, initiated a number of TFAs and contacted key targeted legislators.

LWVIL will continue to work toward passage of SJRCA0004 in 2018 which is the state of Illinois' bicentennial year celebration.