

## Status of Issues since the 2017 Convention

### REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT:

#### **LWVUS position: Election Process / Campaign Finance – Paula Lawson, Elizabeth Lindquist Issues/Legislation**

The most recent focus in this area has been to work for legislation that would create a small donor matching system to finance campaigns for candidates for the Illinois General Assembly. Small donor matching systems allow candidates to collect small contributions which are matched by state funds allowing candidates to have a viable campaign without needing to court large donors. This system has the potential to reduce the influence of money in politics, and open the door for a more grassroots and diverse pool of candidates to run for office.

Illinois passed legislation to place limits on contributions that can be made to candidates and political parties effective January 1, 2011. However, subsequent legislation has passed allowing contribution limits to be removed when individual candidates or Independent Expenditure Committees exceed certain limits, permitting candidates to receive unlimited contributions.

#### **League Action**

- TFAs were sent asking members to file witness slips as Proponents of HB5531 and SB1424, a Fair Elections Bill. This bill would create a small door campaign contribution matching system for candidates for State Constitutional Offices and State Senator and State Representative.
- LWVIL signed a Witness Slip supporting SB2089. The Legislation would close a loophole in the Election Code by requiring tax-exempt organizations, under the Internal Revenue code defined as political action committees, ballot initiative committees and independent expenditure committees who make contributions to candidates to report their donors.

#### **Anticipated Issues During 2019**

LWVIL is a member of the Just Democracy Coalition Working Group on Money in Politics. The group is focusing on developing a proposal for a public campaign finance program for Chicago City Council Candidates. A state small donor matching bill will likely be reintroduced in the Illinois General Assembly in January.

#### **LWVUS position: Election Process /Selection of the President / Electoral College Abolition - Rosemary Heilemann, et.al.**

##### **Issue:**

The League of Women Voters of the United States has had a position to abolish the electoral college system for electing the President and Vice-President of the U.S. since 1970. The League has testified in Congress, updated the position, and provided other support numerous times since then without success. (See Impact on Issues <https://www.lwv.org/impact-issues>)

##### **League Action:**

The LWVIL Electoral College committee was formed at the LWVIL Convention of June, 2016 and includes representatives from numerous local Leagues. A “Will of Convention” motion was passed to direct LWVIL to support action on the electoral college position at the following year’s LWVUS National Convention in Chicago.

In the year between the state convention and the national convention, the committee prepared a powerpoint presentation and began making presentations in various communities. We also established a MailChimp account and sent information to all the Leagues in the U.S. about our efforts and solicited their support, by way of the program planning process, for the LWWUS national convention. The LWW Wilmette offered to house the presentation and support materials on their website <https://www.lwwilmette.org/electoral-college-reform.html> and the LWW Deerfield is the U.S. mail location: P.O. Box 124, Deerfield, IL 60015. The committee opened a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/abolishelectoralcollegelww/> and has an email address: [address: lwvabolishelectoral@gmail.com](mailto:lwvabolishelectoral@gmail.com). We also recruited additional members for the committee from other local Leagues, and LWWIL invited us serve on the LWWIL Issues and Advocacy Committee.

With appreciation to Leagues from all over the U.S., we were able to pass the following resolution at the LWWUS National Convention.

**Resolution That Was Adopted at the Biennial Convention of the League of Women Voters of the United States on July 1, 2018 in Chicago IL**

**Whereas:** The League of Women Voters of the United States has had a position regarding the selection of the President and Vice-President of the United States since 1970 and this position supports a popular vote system and the abolition of the electoral college system, and

**Whereas:** The 2018-2020 recommended LWWUS program focus is The Campaign for Making Democracy Work®, which includes a free, fair, and accessible electoral system for all eligible voters by focusing on Voting Rights, Improving Elections, Campaign Finance/Money in Politics, and Redistricting, and

**Whereas:** The existing LWWUS position on The Selection of the President is directly related to these topics included in the Campaign for Making Democracy Work®, and

**Whereas:** The method for the selection of the President has become an issue of much public discussion and concern in recent times and has generated interest among the public and among members of the League of Women Voters, and

**Whereas:** The LWWUS reminds us that our adopted national position on the Selection of the President calls for uniform national voting qualifications and procedures at all necessary levels to achieve a consistent nationwide electoral policy and infrastructure and that the abolition of the Electoral College is essential to achieve this standard without delay.

**Therefore May It Be Resolved That:** The 2018 Convention of the League of Women Voters of the United States urgently reaffirms its long-held position that the Electoral College should be abolished

Since the national convention, we have continued to make presentations as far as Freeport, IL, Manistee, MI, and Arlington, VA! We also developed a shorter version for use at shorter meetings, such as Rotary and Optimist Clubs. We have continued to communicate with our national mailing list and we have received endorsement of the contents of our presentation and of our efforts from nationally-recognized Constitutional authorities.

**Legislation:**

Now that we have the full support of our state and national Leagues, our next step is to contact and work with our members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate to propose and pass a constitutional amendment in Congress, which requires  $\frac{2}{3}$  of both houses.

Then, using our contacts in all the states, we begin the hard work of ratifying the Constitutional Amendment in  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the states. This is our mission going forward. It will require continuation of our public education work as well as lobbying at the national and state levels.

## **LWVUS position: Citizen Rights / Reproductive Choices - Janet S. Craft and Margaret O'Hara**

### **Issues**

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 but 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 shortly eliminated the even numbered court, opening speculation on future reproductive health rulings. In October 2018 Brett Kavanaugh was confirmed to fill the vacancy by retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy. Kavanaugh brings to the Court a record of opposition to the ACA, abortion and contraception, solidifying the Court's conservative tilt.

### **Legislation**

- HB 40 Removed trigger in 1975 IL Abortion law should Roe v Wade be struck down by
  - U. S. Supreme Court; permits abortion funding for Medicaid and state employees.
- 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 provider has religious or moral objections.

Update 2018: The next month the U.S. District Court ruled against enforcement of the law to start January 1, 2017. Litigation has continued, allowing a Rockford clinic relief from the law's provisions.

- Multiple bills **restricting abortion**, including a trigger provision were Roe Wade struck down, abortion would be criminalized in IL.

### **League Activity**

- TFA HB40 LWVIL with the Reproductive Health and Access Coalition worked to pass. Although the Governor indicated he would veto, bill ultimately signed it into law 11/17
- LWVUS Statement on President Trump's Assault on Women's Right to Contraception 10/6/17: "...decision to dismantle vital health coverage for nearly 62 m women is misguided and discriminatory, direct assault on a woman's right to make her own health care choices."
- LWVIL member of Reproductive Health Access Coalition – ongoing connection by Issue Specialists including 10/18 Long Range Planning Meeting. With passage of HB40 Illinois now seen as model of Reproductive Rights advocacy and access by neighboring states.

### **Anticipated Issues During 2019**

- Expect continued efforts in Illinois, nationally to limit or ban abortion, contraception.
- Supreme Court adverse rulings on Reproductive Health with new Court.
- Weakening of the ACA and Medicaid by federal executive action (Medicaid covers 50% of IL births, 75% family planning services)
- HHS promotion of "natural family" planning with diversion of Title X funds;

## **LWVIL position: Government Consolidation - Jane Ballengee**

### **Issues/Legislation:**

LWVIL is part of a government consolidation coalition, Transform Illinois, which accomplished two objectives in the past year:

- Reviewing and recommending changes to the Annual Financial Reports (AFR) submitted to the Illinois Comptroller. This is important because the information is utilized for the evaluation and comparison in determining if consolidation or sharing of government services is financially beneficial.
- Created a Local Efficiency Assessment Planning project (LEAP) which is accessible to the public to assist in comparison and evaluation.

The coalition successfully advocated for

- SB2543, Mosquito Abatement District Consolidation, which meets the criteria listed in the LWVIL position. 8/10/2018 Public Act 100-0793
- SB3/HB3135 Amends the Local Government Reduction and Efficiency Division of the Counties Code. Provides that the Division applies to all counties (previously only applied to DuPage, Lake, and McHenry counties).

### **League Activity**

A TFA invited Leagues to help disseminate the AFR survey. With their help, 120 responses were collected from Government Finance Officers, Auditor/Audit Firms, Researchers, and others.

### **Anticipated Issues During 2019**

All new legislators should be educated on the criteria of the League for government consolidation and these would best occur in their local offices.

## **LWVIL position: State Election Laws/Redistricting – Paula Lawson, Jane Ballengee**

### **Issues/Legislation**

The major focus for the 2018 Spring Legislative Session was to have the Illinois General Assembly pass a Constitutional Amendment to provide for the drawing of state legislative and congressional districts by an Independent Commission. In the IL Senate 39 of the 59 members signed on as co-sponsors of SJRCA26 and in the House 28 of 118 members signed on as co-sponsors of HJRCA43. The bills were not called for a vote. An amendment if passed would have been placed on the November 2018 Election Ballot for voter approval.

Under the current process in the 1970 Illinois Constitution because there was no agreement on the proposed maps in either the legislature or the Legislative Redistricting Commission in 3 of 5 redistricting cycles, it was necessary to select a tiebreaker member for the Legislative Redistricting Commission. The resulting legislative maps reflected the partisanship of the tiebreaker member's vote. Legislative races have become increasingly uncompetitive. In 1982 among 177 legislative seats there were 30 uncontested races and in 2012 there were 101 uncontested races.

There were three attempts by Illinois Voters in 2010, 2014 and 2016 to place a Citizen's Initiative on the ballot to provide for an Independent Commission to draw legislative districts. The last attempt garnered enough signatures on petitions but was ruled unconstitutional by the Illinois Supreme Court.

### **League Action**

- LWVIL Joined the Illinois Redistricting Collaborative to develop Redistricting Principles and Strategies to effect change to the redistricting process by the IL General Assembly.
- LWVIL signed onto surveys sent to gubernatorial and state legislative candidates concerning their support of changes to the redistricting process.
- A March 2018 Leaders Update asked Local Leagues to sign on as co-sponsors to HJRCA43 and also included a packet of information on the proposed amendment and talking points.
- At Lobby Day in Springfield, April 28, 2018, LWVIL President, Bonnie Cox, spoke in support of the Fair Maps Amendment at a Press Conference and at a Subject Matter Hearing before the Senate Executive's subcommittee on Special Issues.
- A TFA on April 17<sup>th</sup> asked League members to call their State Senators to support and co-sponsor SJRCA26, the Senate Redistricting Amendment and State Representatives to support and co-sponsor HJRCA43, the House Redistricting Amendment. Members were also asked to file Witness Slips as a Proponent of SJRCA26 before the Subcommittee on Special Issues Hearing.
- A second TFA on April 20<sup>th</sup> asked League members to call Senate President Cullerton for a full vote in the Senate on SJRCA26 and to Call State Senators uncommitted on the Redistricting Amendment.

### **Anticipated Issues During 2019**

LWVIL will continue to work to get the Illinois Legislature to approve a Constitutional Amendment to be placed on a General Election Ballot to provide for an Independent Redistricting Commission to draw legislative and congressional maps.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

**LWVUS positions: Environmental Protection / Pollution Control / Air Quality and Energy;**

**LWVIL position: Pesticides - Laura Kratz & Di Niesman**

### Issues/Legislation

2018 saw very little legislative activity following the passage of the comprehensive Future Energy Jobs Act at the end of 2016. While the Illinois Commerce Commission and the Illinois Power Agency have both been busy setting into place the components needed to implement this sweeping legislation, only a few bills tweaking the FEJA came up. Meanwhile, environmental groups around the state have been organizing to prepare for the next round of environmental advocacy in Illinois. Members of the Clean Energy Jobs Coalition have regrouped and reorganized into the Illinois Climate Action Table, conducting listening and learning meetings state-wide, to develop future action plans and foci that will have broad public support. Whether LWVIL joins this group or works side by side with them remains to be determined.

The major area of concern for this portfolio comes from the federal government with the sweeping regulatory rollbacks put into place by the President since taking office two years ago.

### League Action

#### Air Quality & Energy

We monitored three key bills that refine the Future Energy Jobs Act; all passed easily and were signed into law by the Governor.

- Solar Pollinators – Directs the University of Illinois Dept. of Entomology to create a set of standards to define pollinator-friendly solar projects to be used by solar energy projects in the state to define themselves as “pollinator friendly” habitats.
- Solar Project Uniform Assessments – Creates uniform standards for county assessors across the state to use when assessing value of solar energy projects.
- Solar Agricultural Impact Mitigation Act– Similar to the AIM Act already on the books for wind energy, this measure sets standards for solar energy projects that protect agricultural interests.

#### Pesticides:

LWVIL voiced opposition to a provision in the Federal Farm Bill that pre-empts local authority to regulate pesticides and gives all authority to the states.

### Anticipated Issues During the 2019 Session

- Federal Deregulation and Reliance on the Individual States for Environmental Protection  
One of the most alarming actions during the past two year has been the widespread dismantling of federal environmental regulations, transferring responsibilities to the individual states. The Administration claims that federal regulation is an unnecessary “burden” to businesses.
- Pre - Emption of State and Local Regulations: We have also begun to see the federal government demand that states with high regulatory standards lower them to the same levels as other states, a push for the lowest common denominator as the regulatory standard.
- Transportation Infrastructure: There has been a fair amount of talk in the press anticipating this item on the next Illinois legislative agenda, especially with a new Governor coming into office in 2019.
- LWVUS Resolutions Adopted at 2018 Convention: In addition to the LWVIL environmental program, we have two new program tools that we will use in our advocacy in Illinois going forward:

**Climate Test:** *The League of Women Voters supports a set of climate assessment criteria that ensures that energy policies align with current climate science. These criteria require that the latest climate science be used to evaluate proposed energy policies and major projects in light of the globally-agreed-upon goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees C, as affirmed in the UN COP 21 Paris agreement.*

**Price on Carbon:** *The League of Women Voters stands united with, and in support of, efforts to price carbon emissions, whether cap-and-trade, carbon tax/fee, or another viable pricing mechanism. The League does not have a position on how the revenue generated is to be used. We do not espouse any single method of pricing carbon over another. We will evaluate all proposed methods based on their effectiveness to abate emissions and whether the method can be successfully implemented.*

## **SOCIAL POLICY**

### **LWVUS position: Health Care - Janet S Craft, Margaret O'Hara**

#### **Issues/Legislation**

In 2017 President Trump and Congressional Republicans vowed to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Repeated efforts, including the Graham/Cassidy Amendment, which would have replaced the ACA structure, with annual block grants to states, failed to come to a vote.

Enrollment in ACA Exchanges for 2018 were down just 3.7%” despite uncertainty generated by President’s executive orders to cut subsidies, shorter enrollment periods, decreased marketing. By 2018 midterm election citizen support rose for ACA provisions, especially coverage for pre-existing conditions and States’ Medicaid Expansion initiatives. More plans, lower premiums on ACA exchange markets for 2019; no insurers left IL market, one new.

#### **Other Issues and Legislation**

- CHIP (Children’s Health Insurance Program (funding lapse; 6 year extension 1/2018)
- SB2332, HB4297 No Tobacco Products under 21
- HB4165 HA 1 Do No Harm Healthcare Act: General Assembly scrutiny federal waivers
- SB 3015 SA 2&3 Stock Asthma Medication in Schools Bill
- HB 2624 SA3 Short Term Limited Duration Health Insurance Act – consumer protections
- HB 4900 Generic Drug Pricing Fairness Bill

#### **League Actions**

- LWVIL & over 70 organizations: signed letter to Governor opposing Medicaid work requirement.
- LWVIL joined Protect Our Care IL(POCIL) : No repeal ACA without adequate replacement
- TFA Governor: message to IL CD Delegation no cuts to Medicaid 7/2017
- Leaders Updates: Advocacy information, strategies for local leagues
- Testimony: House Appropriations Human Services Committee 6/20/17  
Margaret O’Hara, LWVIL Health Care Issue Specialist, testified on a panel of nurses supporting HR445 opposing American Health Care Act
- TFA to Governor: oppose Graham-Cassidy Amendment 9/2017
- Sign on letter IL Congressional Delegation: renew CHIP, Maternal Infant visits 10/2017
- LWVIL supported bill passed into law: SB 3015 SA2&3 Stock Asthma Med in Schools
- LWVIL supported bill vetoed by Governor SB 2332,HB4297 No Tobacco Products under 21
- LWVIL supported bills vetoed by Governor & advocated with POCIL for override:  
HB2624 SA3 Short Term Limited Health Ins. Act; HB4165HA1 Do No Harm Healthcare
- LWVIL Witness slip HB900 Generic Drug Pricing Fairness Bill, pro 444, oppose 6 (Industry); passed House; in Senate Assignments 4/19/18

#### **Anticipated Issues during 2019**

- (LWVIL will continue state and federal health care advocacy with POCIL)
- Efforts to weaken ACA and Medicaid by Trump administration, as no insurance mandate
- Potential effects of shift in US House Majority on health care
- Potential handling of new IL Governor’s administration on backlog unpaid bills, Medicaid Managed Care

## LWVUS and LWVIL positions: Criminal Justice – Janet Kittlaus

### Issues/Legislation supported by LWVIL:

Activity since May includes these bills enacted into law:

- **HB4741 (PA100-0677)** allows more visits to IDOC inmates, strengthening family and friend ties.
- **HB5341 (PA100-0776)** allows petitioners to seal and expunge their records even if they have outstanding financial obligations imposed by a court, law enforcement agency, a municipal, State, county, or other unit of local government. Expungement and sealing records helps the returning citizen to more easily access employment, thus enabling him/her to deal with financial obligations.
- **HB5494 (PA100-0692)** allows victims of trafficking to immediately seal their record if they can show that they were victims at the time of the offence.
- **SB3388 (PA100-0999)** expands eligibility for Adult Redeploy Illinois so that all probation-eligible offenders are eligible for ARI. This is so important because offenders deemed “violent” now have access to resources that will address their issues and reduce the chances of recidivism.
- **SB3503 (PA100-0947)** requires courthouses to make a lactation room or area available for nursing parents so that they are not blocked from serving as attorneys, jurors, and witnesses in Illinois civil and criminal proceedings
- **SB3023 (PA100-1025)** authorizes law enforcement to partner with addiction treatment and community orgs/members to create deflection programs that connect people to treatment as an alter-native to arrest. Deflection means that a person will not enter the criminal justice system at all!

These bills received an amendatory veto from the Governor:

- **HB4469** requires that pre-trial detainees be able to vote, and provides to citizens released from IDOC information about their voting rights.
- **HB5104** eliminates the \$5 medical co-pay inmates must pay to see a doctor or nurse and restricts to 10% the upcharge prisons may reap on commissary sales. It abolishes the practice of garnishing wages earned by inmates on work assignments to defray the cost of their incarceration.

### League Action: LWVIL:

- submitted witness slips supporting **HB5341 HFA 4**.
- signed on to a fact sheet supporting **HB5341**.
- sent TFAs asking the Governor to sign **HB5341 and SB3388**.
- sent TFA, asking the Governor not to amendatorily veto **HB4469**.
- sent TFAs asking the GA to overturn the Governor’s amendatory vetoes of **HB4469 and HB5104**.
- sent a LTE, responding to Governor Rauner’s amendatory veto of gun legislation which included a return of the death penalty.

### Anticipated Issues during the 2019 Legislative Session

- Changing sentencing laws will be a challenge.
- More barriers to employment will probably be eliminated.
- On the local level, there should be progress: counties can now take advantage of the ARI expansion; sentencing can be modified by prosecutorial discretion without changes in the law; more deflection from arrest can occur if police receive more comprehensive training (which depends on local resources.) IDOC numbers will decline if offenders are kept out of the criminal justice system altogether. Opting to use more diversion programs will also keep numbers incarcerated declining.

## **LWVIL position: Juvenile Justice – Janet Kittlaus**

### **Issues/Legislation supported by LWVIL in 2018:**

- **SB1265 LOST in a vote in the Senate**—would have required legal counsel for juveniles under the age of 18 (now under age of 15) throughout custodial interrogation.
- **HB3142** Higher Education Ban the Box. For admissions, prohibits public colleges and universities from asking about or considering a record. Passed the House, was on 3<sup>rd</sup> reading in Senate but was re-referred to Assignments when GA adjourned.
- **HB4208 received an amendatory veto from the Governor.** HB4208 would create an optional grant program for school districts that wish to reallocate funding for school-based law enforcement personnel toward restorative justice programs and personnel such as school psychologists, social workers, and related specialists.
- **HB4581** establishes a multi-year approach to raise the age of Juvenile Court for misdemeanors. After January 1, 2021 delinquent minor includes anyone who commits a misdemeanor offense on or before their 21st birthday. HB4581 got as far as 3<sup>rd</sup> reading in the House but failed to advance any further.

### **Issues/Legislation opposed by LWVIL in 2018:**

- **SB2339** presumed detention for juveniles charged with possession of a stolen motor vehicle or vehicular hijacking. This bill advanced to the House, was amended and passed; however, the bill was successfully stalled and referred to Assignments when it was returned to the Senate.
- **SB2581** would increase the time a minor spends in temporary custody from 40 to 48 hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and court designated holidays, and allows video detention hearings. Both of these changes were likely to increase the number of children in detention. This bill passed the Senate but did not advance in the House.

### **League Action: LWVIL**

- filed witness slip supporting **HB3142**.
- filed witness slip opposing **SB2339 and SB2581**
- sent TFA asking the Governor to sign **HB4208**
- sent TFA asking the GA to overturn the Governor's amendatory vetoes of **HB4208**

### **Anticipated Issues during the 2019 Legislative Session**

- It was a difficult year for positive juvenile justice legislation. A positive step was taken by the Cook County Board of Commissioners in September when it adopted an ordinance to prohibit the detention of children under the age of 13. It is the first county in Illinois to do so. We hope that the above legislation will be introduced in the next session.
- All of the failed bills above will no doubt come back in the new session.
- It is hoped that legislators will continue to work toward including merging adults (18-25) adults into a developmentally appropriate justice system recognizing that they are not fully culpable for their actions.

## **LWVUS and LWVIL positions: Gun Violence Prevention – Mary Klonowski**

### **Issues/Legislation**

In 2017 the emphasis was on SB1657, the Gun Dealer Licensing Bill. After lobbying and having discussions with legislators the Bill was revised in 2018 to address the concerns of some of the legislators. It was reintroduced as SB337, the Combating Illegal Gun Trafficking Act. It retained some of the key elements of the Gun Dealer Licensing Act: employees must undergo background checks, background check training for all employees doing gun transactions, gun dealer inspections for compliance by the IL Department of Financial and Professional Regulations AND by law enforcement, shop must be 500 feet or more from a school, the owner must have a complete inventory of stock and have records of every purchaser's Firearms Owner Identification Card (FOID). The revised sections capped the licensing fees at \$1000 over 5 years and extended the time for installing surveillance cameras.

SB337 was passed with bipartisan support. However, the Governor indicated he would veto it. The bill was not sent to the Governor because the support was not sufficient to override the veto.

### **League Action**

- LWVIL working as a partner with the IL Coalition for Gun Violence Prevention participated in a petition campaign urging the Governor to sign the bill. 50,000 signatures were collected. Strategies may require reintroducing the bill in 2019 with a commitment from the Governor-elect to sign it.
- TFA's and witness slips were sent to advocate for SB 337, HB 1465 (raises the minimum age for purchase to 21), HB 1467 (banning bump stocks) and HB0772 (Firearms Restraining Order) which were all passed and signed into law. At the federal level, TFA's were sent out opposing use of Education Funds to arm teachers, opposing online distribution of plans to produce 3-D guns.
- Promoted and participated in the 'Wear Orange' Day and the March for our Lives.
- LWVIL spearheaded the statewide effort to defeat the adoption of Resolution #2 at the IL Assoc. of School Boards annual conference. Resolution #2 would allow the arming of teachers in IL.
- A TFA, Fact sheets, statements to school board, Letters to the Editor were all developed and shared with partner organizations in the IL Coalition for Gun Violence Prevention.

### **2019 Legislative Session**

- Reworking of SB337, promote programs on Gun Violence as a Public Health Crisis, Develop plans to coordinate actions with local School Boards on relevant legislation.

## **LWVUS and LWVIL positions: Immigration– Kim Reed**

### **Issues/Legislation**

The current administration continues with its hardline anti-immigrant focus, attacking sanctuary cities and states, demonizing immigrants at the border, conducting ICE raids, and changing immigration policies. Here are just some of the issues:

- Dreamers, DACA, & the DREAM Act
- Citizenship Question on the 2020 Census
- Travel Bans, Restrictions on Asylum Seekers and limiting the number of refugees & immigrants allowed into the US
- Separation of families, detention of children, detention of families
- Flores Settlement Agreement
- Public Charge Rule
- Deployment of US Troops at the border

In response to the administration's actions, in 2017, the Illinois General Assembly passed **The Illinois Trust Act**, which limits local police involvement in federal immigration enforcement. Governor Rauner signed this bill into law on Aug. 28, 2017. LWVIL supported this bill.

### **League Action**

- The LWV has continued to support **Dreamers, DACA and the DREAM Act**.
- TFAs went out asking members to submit comments opposing a citizenship question on the 2020 Census. LWVIL President Bonnie Cox sent a letter under her name.
- LWVIL supported immigration bills in Springfield this past session. All passed out of the General Assembly. Rauner vetoed: SB35 Immigration Safe Zones Act, SB34 VOICES Act (Supports Domestic Violence and Trafficking Survivors), and SB 3103, the Immigration Tenant Protection Act, which protects tenants in rental properties from threats based on their perceived immigration status. Rauner did sign into law: SB3488 Anti-Registry Act (Resist Registry Programs Targeting Ethnic and Religious Groups) and SB 3109, which removes eligibility requirements related to immigration status from many professional licenses.
- LWVIL hosted a caucus at the **LWVUS Convention**.
- Both LWVIL and LWVUS participated in the **Keep Families Together March**.
- LWVIL sent out TFAs asking for public comment in regard to the Flores Settlement Agreement and the Public Charge Rule.
- IL local League presidents and members assisted ICIRR in getting commitments from legislators to support an override vote on SB34 The VOICES Act.
- Across the state, local Leagues have been holding public programs on immigration.

### **Anticipated Issues during the 2019 Legislative Session**

LWVIL will continue to support those bills that were vetoed by the Governor and didn't get override votes. It is anticipated that the environment for passage of these bills will be friendly under the new governor. In regard to immigration in the US, it is difficult to know what to expect under the current administration.

## **LWVUS and LWVIL Positions: Education – Nancy Brandt, Ann Courter, Claire McIntyre, Jean Pierce**

### **Issues/Legislation**

The major focus in summer, 2017, was passage of an Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) bill (SB1947) potentially providing more adequate and equitable funding than the previous system. The EBF Model focuses on the needs of individual students. It increases funding to high need, low property wealth districts while maintaining funding for others. The downside: SB1947 permitted private citizens to take an income tax credit up to \$750 K for donating up to \$1 M to a fund managed by private organizations and dedicated to private school scholarships. With this system, the state stands to lose \$75M in revenue.

While passage of SB 1947 was a significant win, it will not fix Illinois' school funding discrepancies immediately. After the infusion of \$650 M into education funding in FY 2018 and 2019, still 83% of school districts in the state do not have enough resources to provide an adequate education. Illinois needs at least \$7 Billion more to fully fund schools. This could take up to 20 years.

Other legislation:

- SB 2892 increasing full time teachers' base salary to \$40,000
- HB5175 preventing the appointed Charter School Commission from overriding elected boards.
- National proposal to use education funding to put guns in schools

Issues identified by the Illinois State Board of Education:

- Fewer than one quarter of children in Illinois were prepared for kindergarten-- despite increased funding for Early Childhood Education since 2000, in stark contrast to decreases in funding for K-12 and higher education.
- ISBE has also reported teacher shortages – particularly in downstate districts.

### **League Action**

Evidence-Based Funding:

- Public education sessions and press conferences advocating for passage of an EBF bill.
- Time for Action (TFA) requests for support of EBF bills SB1 and SB1947
- LWVIL President Bonnie Cox recorded a robo-call asking citizens to urge their representatives around the state to override the Governor's veto of SB1,
- TFA opposing inclusion of the tax credit provision in SB1947

Other advocacy:

- TFAs in support of HB5175 limiting the powers of the Charter School Commission
- TFA opposing the use of education funding to put guns in schools

The League does not support SB2892: a minimum teacher salary is good, but It's an unfunded mandate.

A Google Group of League members from throughout the state is being created to help with advocacy.

### **Anticipated Issues during the 2019 Legislative Session**

- LWVIL will advocate for increased sources of funding to accommodate budget increases for EBF as well as property tax relief for low income/high property tax districts
- LWVIL will oppose a property tax freeze which would undercut new dollars for schools
- LWVIL will support bills preventing Charter School Commission from overriding school boards
- The League will support efforts to increase the number of well-prepared teachers
- The League will support efforts to increase funding for higher education.
- The League will oppose unfunded mandates.

## **LWVUS and LWVIL Positions: Fiscal Policy– Kathy Nesburg**

### **Issues/Legislation**

The State of Illinois did not have a budget for two and one-half years from 2015 through 2017. During this time, Illinois was unable to spend federal funds because it needed a budget to do so. It spent more money than it received. Payments to schools and health care and social service providers were late or not made. Higher education sustained severe cuts. The deficit grew to \$16 Billion. The state's credit ratings dropped.

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%. The budget for FY 2018 was adopted and, the following year, the budget for FY2019 was adopted. These compromise budgets were not enough to repair the damage done during the budget impasse, but they allowed the state some stability. The budgets still had higher expenditures than revenues so the deficit continued to grow. The state did issues bonds to pay some of the state's debt which resulted in lower interest payments.

### **League Action**

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 on programs at Issues Briefings, in Time for Action requests, questions for legislators at legislative interviews and articles in the E-News. League members 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.

### **Anticipated Issues during the 2019 Legislative Session**

LWVIL will advocate for a constitutional amendment to allow a graduated rate income tax (GRIT), also called the Fair Tax. The question must be placed on the ballot by the General Assembly to be voted on at the next General Election. This proposal would allow incomes to be taxed at graduated rates so that taxpayers with higher incomes would pay at a higher rate while those with lower incomes would pay at a lower rate.

LWVIL will advocate for the state to deal with its outstanding debt by issuing bonds to pay the debt holders.

LWVIL will advocate for increased sources of funding for K-12 education, for higher education, for social services, for health care and for criminal justice.

LWVIL will advocate for the following proposals to raise revenues:

- Raise the income tax rates
- Expand the sales tax to include more services.
- Tax retirement income.
- Impose a tax on financial transactions.

## **LWVUS and LWVIL positions on Social Policy – Jan Kay**

League of Women Voters of Illinois is highly recommending members read the present positions in both LWVIL and LWVUS levels. One of the strongest parts of each position under Social Policies is that early action to be taken as the highest preventative mechanism for healthier children and adults in need. Our actions in each area are very much related to one another in positive outcomes.

LWVIL monitored legislation in the following areas:

### 1. Children Issues

Family violence legislation that became Law

HB 4796 Expanded the list of protected persons

HB 2354 Provision for requesting an emergency lethal violence order of protection

### 2. Employment Issues

Legislation which did not become law

HB 2771 Requires Paid sick leave passed House

### 3. Housing Issues

Legislation which became law:

SB 2996 Clarifies the meaning of Blood Lead Level

HB 4951 Security Deposit – Lease Costs

SB 3081 Public Housing – Waiting List

### 4. The U.S legislation, H R 2 , the Senate Farm Bill is, far better than the version in the house. For instance, there is an amendment adopted in the House which would impose a lifetime ban on SNAP for citizens convicted of certain violent felonies. It would also impact the families of formerly incarcerated individuals in that their income would still count toward household income which determines the benefit allowed which especially their children.

## **Anticipated Issues during 2019 Legislative Session**

Employment issues for likely to be addressed in legislative work: 1. Preventing employers from asking about previous wages 2. One Fair Wage 3. Fair Scheduling 4. Paid Family and Medical Leave 5. Fully funding of the Monetary Award Program for students in higher education [MAP] 6. Strengthen Protections against Workplace Harassment

Affordable housing: Homelessness in many IL communities increases due to the lack of affordable housing.

The minimum wage needs to support workers who currently work at two or three jobs in order to have enough income to pay the rent or mortgage, transportation needs, child care needs.