

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN FRANCISCO



THE VOTER

THE VOTER MARCH 2006

REMEMBERING LEAGUE LEADERS *A SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP EVENT*

*You are cordially invited to
attend a special League event hosted
by Ruth Cowan
(President of LWVSF 1986-87)*

*Sunday, April 2nd
2:00-4:00 pm*

*Dessert, coffee and tea will be served.
Please plan to come and enjoy the
company of new and long-time
League leaders.*

*RSVP to attend by calling (415)989-8683
or email lwvsf@lwvsf.org.*

DID YOU KNOW?

- On February 14, the LWVUS celebrated its 86th birthday
- Heather Sterner has served for four years as the LWVSF representative on the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force
- Voter Service Chair Suzanne Stassevitch is the LWVSF representative on the Ballot Simplification Committee

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UPCOMING FORUM: TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST

In May, the League of Women Voters of San Francisco, SPUR, and Access SF Cable Channel 29 will host a broadcast forum, *Telecommunications in the Public Interest*, to help nonprofit organizations prepare for changes in the way they communicate with their audiences. As use of the "old media" of newspapers and magazines declines, nonprofits may lose their audiences if they do not learn to use the media people find most appealing today. Blogs, podcasting, streaming video, and RSS feeds present new opportunities for nonprofits to inform and activate citizens about the issues affecting our community. The forum will explore:

- Which changes in technology will be most useful for non-profits?
- How will government policy affect nonprofit's ability to communicate?
- How can a nonprofit overcome barriers to take advantage of new technologies?

A panel of experts moderated by Nicole Sawaya, General Manager of KALW, will discuss this issue in front of an invited audience of representatives from the nonprofit community. Speakers include Professor Miriam Smith, San Francisco State University, an expert on the financial and policy issues of telecommunications.

The forum will be held at 4:00-6:00 on Tuesday, May 9, at Access SF, Channel 29. The formal program will be followed by a reception to allow networking among members of the nonprofit community. The session will last for one hour and will be taped for cable casting on Channel 29 and made available on DVD and as streaming video on the League of Women Voter's website and SPUR's website. Audio files will be given to local radio stations for broadcast and will be available on these websites for downloading to portable devices. A print version of the session will be published in the SPUR Newsletter. The forum will serve not only as a discussion of multiple channels of information dissemination, but also a demonstration of these techniques.

League members who would like to be a part of the audience for this forum are invited to contact Virginia Grandi at (415) 989-8683 or vgrandi@lwvsf.org. Space is limited and is likely to be filled quickly.

NATIONAL LEAGUE CONVENTION "MEETING IN THE MIDDLE"

The purpose of the convention is to: adopt the national program for 2006-2008, elect officers and directors and a nominating committee, adopt the LWVUS budget for fiscal year 2006-2008, and vote on proposed amendments to the LWVUS bylaws.

47th National Convention

June 10-13, 2006

At the Hilton Hotel, Minneapolis, Minnesota

To register or attend, please contact the League at lwvsf@lwvsf.org or call (415) 989-8683 for more information. You can also find lots of information online at www.lwv.org in the member section of the website.

CALL TO LWV CALIFORNIA LEADERSHIP COUNCIL


“EFFECTIVE LEADERS - EFFECTIVE LEAGUES” MAY 6 & 7

The bright lights of the League are called to the big city of Sacramento for Leadership Council of 2006. Members are invited and encouraged to attend, especially if you have interest in working with one of the Voter Service Committees this year, or want to enhance your own skills in a topic area.

Established and emerging League leaders alike will benefit from **Effective Leaders-Effective Leagues**, a two day conference that offers leadership development lessons, advocacy and voter service training, and even League basics. While the official business of **Effective Leaders- Effective Leagues** is to adopt the LWVC budget for the coming fiscal year, dynamic workshops and a compelling speaker line up featuring LWV United States President Kay Maxwell are the real highlights of this exciting conference. Learning, listening and leadership development at Leadership Council 2006 will be interspersed with opportunities to laugh and lighten up with League leaders from throughout the state.

Find out more information and register online at www.lwvc.org.

Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza, 300 J Street, Sacramento CA

<p>Saturday Session I 1 Hour</p>	<p>Presidential Powwow (A) Old and new Presidents will learn how to balance these roles and manage a successful League.</p>	<p>Emerging Leaders Enclave (B) This workshop will supply rising League leaders with the tools, vocabulary and insight needed to play a pivotal role in League governance, program and activities.</p>	
<p>Saturday Session II 1.5 Hours</p>	<p>It's about Time (and Paper) (C)- Having problems finding enough time in the day? Learn from Gail Dryden, former LWVC President how to exercise control over all the material that inundates League Leaders.</p>	<p>Using the Media to Push Reform (D) Despite the rising use of the Internet, Californians still rely primarily on television and newspapers for election and public policy information. Learn how to establish relationships within the media to promote reform in your community.</p>	<p>Publishing Pros & Cons for Local Elections (E) Experienced project managers, writers and researchers explain the ins and outs of publishing and promoting Pros & Cons Guides for local elections.</p>
<p>Sunday Session III 1.5 Hours</p>	<p>How to Run a Local Election (F) Did you know that CA law mandates community groups use the services of a third party inspector for elections? Find out how to turn this into an active activity for the LWV.</p>	<p>Act Green! (G) We'll use advocating for sustainable communities as our model as League members learn how to develop, promote and lead advocacy campaigns in their communities.</p>	<p>Attracting and Retaining League Members (H) Learn practical methods to attract and retain members of all ages, economic status and cultural backgrounds.</p>

For more information, call Marni Forcht at (888) 870-8683.

JUNE AND NOVEMBER ELECTIONS: CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are what drives the League's voter education programs that reach over 250,000 San Franciscans each election. Volunteers are needed in the following areas.

- **Pros & Cons Guide-** Learn to research local ballot measures, compile data on the arguments for and against each measure, then write a concise, non-biased descriptive, easy to read summary for print in the guide.
- **Pro/Con Discussion with Access 29-** Be a moderator for a televised discussion with the proponent and opponents of the local ballot issues which will be cable cast on Channel 29 and SFGTV, Cable Channel 26. The discussions highlight key points of the measure to help voters gain more perspective on the local ballot issues.
- **Smartvoter.org-** The tool which reaches 50,000 distinct voters each election, the smartvoter.org website needs you to contact candidates and ensure their candidate profile and biography are uploaded on the site. The League needs help to follow up with questions from the public.
- **Speakers Bureau-** Visit all types of community and neighborhood groups and give a verbal presentation on the pros and cons of the local issues, including a brief discussion about Ranked Choice Voting and Absentee and early voting. Training is provided. You will learn about the local issues and can reach out to voters who are the least likely to be involved.
- **November Election 2006–Candidate Forums-** If you are interested in helping coordinate, plan, or assist in producing the multiple candidate forums the League will do, please contact us as we are beginning now to get organized for our overall strategy.
- **Public Relations-** Do you have connections that can help the League's non-partisan voter education programs reach more voters? Are you interested in working with community groups to encourage a collaborate approach to future community forums and more? Help the League get visible and reach more voters.
- **Membership Committee-** The membership committee needs a core group of people to help create membership events and work on recruitment and retention.

To volunteer, please contact the League today at (415) 989-8683 or email lwvsf@lwvsf.org. Refer to the calendar section of this newsletter for important upcoming training dates.

ENERGY STUDY CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LWVC ENERGY POSITION UPDATE STUDY

We hope you will join our local League in reaching consensus and advising the state League on updating its position on Energy. Members of our local League have been reviewing study materials from the state League and developing processes for member participation in this timely and important study.

If you have questions regarding the Energy Study, please contact the League at (415)989.8683.

BACKGROUND

Over the past two years, the LWVC Energy Update Study Committee has posted a series of four short papers designed to acquaint members, as well as the public, about the ways in which the electricity system in California functions. The articles point out the system weaknesses and strengths and the ways in which it is governed. The complete Energy Study Guide and those articles are on the LWVC website LWV California www.lwvc.org/lwvonly—for Members.

HISTORY OF LWVC POSITION (EXCERPTED FROM THE LWVC ENERGY UPDATE STUDY GUIDE)

Following the deregulation of California's electric system that resulted from passage of Assembly Bill 1890 in 1996, the League of Women Voters of California's (LWVC) interest in the topic of energy grew steadily. Since 1997, League committees have explored the implications of that legislation, and Energy was chosen as a League Issue for Emphasis in 2001.

During the 2001-2003 biennium, League committee members became aware of the profound impact of the effort to introduce competition into what had been a regulated monopoly system, one in which exclusive service areas were granted and a single company provided generation, transmission and distribution of power for each area. At their recommendation, delegates to the 2003 LWVC convention called for a study to update our existing state Energy position.

The LWVC's existing Energy position was last revised in 1980. It strongly supports conservation, efficiency and renewable sources of energy. But the public policy problems associated with a new electric system having both state regulation and a free market--a hybrid system--are different in kind and in magnitude from those addressed before. Major shifts in regulatory roles and jurisdictions have come about, with new and greater demands placed on the system infrastructure. Generating electricity is now a competitive business. The state's three major investor-owned utilities were required to sell most of their generating units to out-of-state utilities and merchant generators. Policy makers are grappling with the complexities of managing the resulting system. Hence the urgency of updating our position.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

After studying the background material included here, as well as additional information from the state League, respond to the consensus questions. Then, mail, Fax, or email the completed form to the League office by **Tuesday, March 14th. (It is not necessary, by the way, to respond to every question; just complete the form as your time and interest and informed opinions permit.)** Board members Allyson Washburn and Fran Finney will review your responses to determine the level of consensus among members for each of the questions and present their findings to the full Board, which will complete the final review of the LWVSF consensus before sending it off to the state Energy Update Study Committee.

Your involvement in this important process does not have to end here. Once the state Leagues updated position is in hand, we can use it locally to help ensure that San Francisco's electric energy supply is reliable and affordable for years to come.

CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

Adopted by the LWVC board of directors July 10, 2005

Terms in ALL CAPS are defined in the Glossary of Terms on page 9 and 10.

1) Values: What values should be considered in electric policy decision-making in the coming decade?

Please indicate which of the following values you consider:

1) vital, 2) very important, 3) somewhat important, 4) not very important. (No more than two 1s and two 2s)

	1	2	3	4
a) Reasonable rates	___	___	___	___
b) Customer choice of provider	___	___	___	___
c) Environmental protection	___	___	___	___
d) Reliability of service	___	___	___	___
e) Transparency and efficiency of government	___	___	___	___
f) Social equity and environmental justice	___	___	___	___
g) Encouraging a strong industrial base	___	___	___	___

**2) Factors for consideration: In planning for acquisition of new electric resources, what factors merit consideration?
(Same 1-4 scale, and no more than two 1s and two 2s, as above)**

	1	2	3	4
a) The diversity/mix of resources	___	___	___	___
b) Impacts on greenhouse gas emissions	___	___	___	___
c) Level of support for BASE-LOAD power requirements	___	___	___	___
d) Availability at times of PEAK POWER demand	___	___	___	___
e) Dispersed (<10 MW CAPACITY) generation	___	___	___	___
f) In-state vs. out-of-state generation	___	___	___	___
g) Impacts on the transmission grid	___	___	___	___
h) Potential sites for terrorist activity	___	___	___	___
i) LIFE CYCLE COSTS	___	___	___	___
j) Other [please specify]	___	___	___	___

ENERGY STUDY CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

3) Should **INVESTOR-OWNED** and **MUNICIPAL UTILITIES** in the state be expected to adhere to the same standards for **RENEWABLE RESOURCES** development, demand-side management procurements, and reserve requirements?

Yes: _____ No: _____

4) Since sites for power generation facilities and rights-of-way corridors are part of the statewide energy planning process, can you envision a process that would ensure that land be available for future energy development?

a) Should land-use planning for future infrastructure development be an essential element in state energy policy?

Yes: _____ No: _____

b) Should there be a requirement that a pre-CEQA assessment be conducted prior to designation or banking of particular lands?

Yes: _____ No: _____

c) What roles should the public have in terms of regional energy planning?

Yes: _____ No: _____

d) What roles and responsibilities should local governments have in regional energy planning?

Yes: _____ No: _____

5) We would like you to consider the impacts of **CUSTOMER CHOICE** and **DIRECT ACCESS** on electric **SYSTEM RELIABILITY** and customer rates. Specifically:

What would you be willing to pay for customer choice? _____

b) When direct-access customers leave the regulated utility system, the remaining core customers must pick up additional embedded costs. Should departing customers be required to pay their fair share of embedded costs?

c) Should an additional charge be imposed on departing customers, recognizing that there could be a negative effect on the integrated system?

d) What conditions should be imposed on customers that have left the regulated utility system if they wish to return to service by the utility?

6) At present there is some debate regarding the roles of state government in planning, owning, regulating and managing the electric power system.

a) Given that much of the generation is now owned by out-of-state companies, what roles can and should the state play in the regulation and management of an electricity market?

b) What could be changed to make planning and regulation a more transparent process?

c) The League has supported competent regulation at the state level to meet projected state energy needs, as well as to protect health and safety and the environment. What should the state's responsibilities and jurisdiction be in terms of the siting and the rate structures of facilities not owned by the investor-owned utilities, including proposed liquefied natural gas facilities?

ENERGY STUDY CONSENSUS QUESTIONS CONTINUED

- 7) Would there be advantages in having a single California Energy Agency with responsibility for energy planning, policy, facility permitting, operational integrity and regulation?

Yes: _____ No: _____

Please list some advantages and disadvantages. What other alternatives exist if California is to have an effective planning and regulatory process for the energy sector?

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

- 8) The water sector—conveyance, treatment, end-use and irrigation pumping—is California’s largest consumer of electric power, and the demands of the water sector for on-peak power are expected to double over the coming decade. What specific improvements in conservation, efficiency and forecasting could be carried out by water users to foster more effective use of both our water resources and our energy resources?

COMMENTS:

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Question 1

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- SB 15 (Escutia) would extend from 10 days to 30 the period for comment on alternate decisions (decisions significantly different from the original proposals) published by members of the PUC. The CPUC has been using the alternate decision process, thereby short-circuiting interest-group participation in the decision-making process.

Question 2

BASE-LOAD- The minimum amount of power that a utility or distribution company must make available to its customers, or the amount of power required to meet minimum demands based on reasonable expectations of customer requirements.

PEAK POWER- The maximum demand for electric power during a stated period. A producer may also use this term to refer to the maximum demand for power that determines the generating capacity needed by that producer.

CAPACITY- The rated continuous load-carrying ability, frequently expressed in megawatts (MW), of generation, transmission or other electrical components.

LIFE CYCLE COST- The total cost of building, operating, maintaining and decommissioning a facility over its life span. Includes all costs, such as fabricating and transporting the materials to build the plant, and at the end transporting the remnants for disposal.

Question 3

INVESTOR OWNED UTILITY- Utility company that is owned by private shareholders. Through privately owned, such companies are often referred to as public utilities because they serve the public with essential goods or services. The major electric IOUs in California are Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), Southern California Edison (SCE) and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) plus the smaller non-California-based utilities Pacific Power and Light (PP&L) and Sierra Pacific. All IOU operations in California are regulated by the PUC.

MUNICIPAL UTILITY (MUNI): A utility owned by and subject to the jurisdiction of a municipality, as opposed to state or federal authority.

RENEWABLE RESOURCES: Also known as Green energy, a generic term for any type of energy which is considered to have lower environmental impact than fossil fuel-produced energy. The actual definition of green power is relative, and depends largely on where the term is applied and by whom. For example, Texas defines efficient natural gas generation as green power. In California, green power is usually considered to be wind, solar, geothermal, biomass or hydroelectric with capacity of less than 30 MW. The term heavily overlaps and is generally interchangeable with "renewable energy."

Question 5

CUSTOMER CHOICE- The opportunity for retail consumers to purchase electricity or services from non-utility entities, also known as Direct Access.

DIRECT ACCESS-The opportunity for retail consumers to purchase electricity or services from non-utilities entities, also known as Customer Choice. Direct access was suspended by the CPUC in 2001. Electricity consumers were given the option to purchase their electricity competitively at prices determined solely between them and an alternative electric supplier. Or they could continue buying electricity from the local utility at prices regulated by the CPUC. Either way, the local utility continued to distribute the electricity at prices set by the CPUC. The local utility also continued to maintain the power lines and restore service following the outage.

More information from Designing an Energy Portfolio, The League and Energy

The deregulation legislation of 1996 allowed utility customers to leave their utility and to contract directly with merchant generators for power. A significant number of industrial and large commercial customers did just that at a time when wholesale energy prices looked attractive. But in 2000-2001 when wholesale power prices sky-rocketed, these same customers sought to return to service with the utilities to obtain power at the regulated retail rates. The direct access policy presents a dilemma for utilities, as they likely will have to serve as the default provider if a merchant generator fails.

SYSTEM RELIABILITY-Refers to the adequacy and security of electric transmission networks and/or generation facilities. Adequacy measures the ability to provide sufficient power.

BACKGROUND-

The role of the public in determining the direction of California's electricity system is taking on increased importance. Consumer response as to choice of servers, demand-side management and efficiency measures of many kinds is being factored into utilities resource plans. Photovoltaic installations are encouraged by net-metering, performance based rates and subsidies. (Subsidies are rebates that are based on the manufacturer's rated system capacity, the kilowatts, not the actual amount of energy produced, the kilowatt hours. Performance-based rates take into account the amount of energy produced, and the time of day that it is produced, as well as corollary values, such as mitigating environmental impacts and stabilizing the voltage of the distribution system).

Question 6

BACKGROUND-INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF ENERGY & WATER-The role of the public in determining the direction of California's electricity system is taking on increased importance. Consumer response as to choice of servers, demand-side management and efficiency measures of many kinds is being factored into utilities resource plans. Photovoltaic installations are encouraged by net-metering, performance based rates and subsidies. (Subsidies are rebates that are based on the manufacturer's rated system capacity, the kilowatts, not the actual amount of energy produced, the kilowatt hours. Performance-based rates take into account the amount of energy produced, and the time of day that it is produced, as well as corollary values, such as mitigating environmental impacts and stabilizing the voltage of the distribution system).

Question 8

BACKGROUND: Interrelations of Energy and Water, Energy Study Update Guide

Great amounts of energy are required to provide clean water to Californians, and to treat that water after it is used. The California Energy Commission (CEC) estimates that the energy needed to distribute, treat, heat, cool or pressurize the water used by Californians is nearly 20 percent of the total consumed in California- more consumption than any other use of energy in the state. Nor is this all: Electricity use by the water sector could nearly double by 2015, far outpacing population growth. Some of this involves the large amounts of natural gas used to heat water. Irrigation pumping is generally not metered, but this use alone may require as much as 4,500 MW of generation capacity-and it is concentrated during the peak power months. In turn, most thermal power plants use large amounts of water for cooling and may pollute the water so used.

From Potential Solutions, current agreements/regulations, Energy Study Update Guide

The best way to reduce water-related energy costs is to reduce water use. Mentioned above, this vital point bears repeating. For reduced water use to come about, it is clear that better integration of energy and water policy and planning is needed at all levels, federal to local. Specific areas that should be addressed can be summarized as follows:

Water Resource planning

- A) Provide consistent data on the energy-intensity of water supply systems and assure that the data are available to planners
- B) Include energy-intensity in the planning and analysis of conveyance and water end-use projects
- C) Include energy use in water resource planning
- D) Account for water resources in energy planning (e.g., use of steam for enhanced oil recovery, water to cool thermal power plants)

Water conservation

- A) Require that all water use be measured, including groundwater and wastewater
- B) Encourage water pricing policies that reflect the true cost of water
- C) Improve compliance with existing water conservation agreements (e.g., the Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Water Conservation in California)
- D) Provide incentives/disincentives and public awareness to encourage water conservation.

WWW.LWVSF.ORG

Visit us on the web or call the office at (415)989.8683 for details on any of these events.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- March 9, Young Women’s Health Conference
- March 10, Women’s Economic Power Day (www.lifemoxie.com)
- Sunday, April 2, *League Leaders Membership Event*
- April 8, Taping for Pro/Con Discussions, Access 29
- April 20, Speakers Bureau training in LWVSF office, 6pm
- May 6,7 Leadership Council, League of Women Voters of California, Downtown Holiday Inn, Sacramento
- May 8, Early Voting begins at City Hall
- May 9, Taping of the Technology Forum at Access 29
- May 22, Last day to register to vote
- May 30, Last day to get absentee ballot
- June 6, 2006 **PRIMARY ELECTION**
- June 9-11, National League Convention, Minneapolis
- June 17, Annual Meeting, details pending

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN FRANCISCO

582 Market Street, Suite 615
 San Francisco, CA 94104
 T: (415)989-VOTE F: (415)989-8685 Email:lwvsf@lwvsf.org

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