

LEGISLATIVE LETTER[®]
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF COLORADO
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January 13, 2012

LL#1:1

FACTS ABOUT THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The mission of the League of Women Voters is to encourage informed and active participation of citizens in government and influence public policy issues through education and advocacy. **It is a non-profit, non-partisan organization. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.**

The League was founded in 1920 as an outgrowth of the long struggle to win voting rights for women in the United States. Membership is open to all citizens of voting age. There are 800 Leagues throughout the U.S. The League of Women Voters of Colorado has over 1500 members in 19 local leagues. They are: Adams County, Jefferson County, Arapahoe County, La Plata County, Archuleta County, Larimer County, Boulder County, Mesa County, Chaffee County, Montezuma County, Montrose County, Denver, Estes Park, Pikes Peak Region, Greeley/Weld County, Pueblo, Gunnison Area, Routt County, and Sterling.

The League is organized around two main functions: **VOTER EDUCATION AND PROGRAM.**

VOTER EDUCATION provides a vital service to the citizens of Colorado. The Education Fund provides the public with factual and unbiased information about ballot issues and candidates to help them in making informed decisions at election time. In addition to encouraging eligible voters to register and vote, the League provides information to help them understand the political process and promote active participation in government. Voter Education efforts are administered by the League of Women Voters Education Fund, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit. Financial support for the voter education area comes from grants, in-kind and financial contributions.

The **PROGRAM** area is separate from Voter Education. The League studies many public policy issues. In this area we may take action in support of or opposition to the issue after thorough study and consensus by our members. The studies include issues related to government, natural resources and social policy. The League takes action at all levels of government on public policy issues. These actions include briefings and workshops to inform our members, lobbying before government bodies, petition drives, publishing information for the general public and the news media, or holding open informational meetings. Program efforts are administered

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by the League of Women Voters of Colorado, a 501 (c) 4 non-profit. Financial support for the program area comes from membership, conferences and special events, contributions, and publications.

Board members and volunteers donate hundreds of hours to the above activities including: writing publications, researching ballot issues, lobbying at the legislature, and answering the voter hotline.

HOW DOES THE LEAGUE ADOPT POLICY POSITIONS?

League Program consists of governmental issues chosen by members for study and ultimate action. These may range from educational activities in the community to legislative lobbying. Study makes action possible by bringing members the knowledge that makes League action uniquely credible and respected. The process gives members an opportunity to examine facts, pro and con arguments, and political realities. Reaching consensus is a technique used traditionally in the League of Women Voters to discuss and arrive at conclusions on issues. Consensus is not a simple majority vote, nor does it mean unanimity. It is the "sense of the group" as expressed through the exchange of ideas and opinions. League action can take place only after consensus or concurrence has been reached and a position formulated.

The League of Women Voters of Colorado determines what legislation to follow and to support or oppose based first and foremost on our program positions. We can support or oppose only topics on which the League has conducted studies and arrived at positions on the local, state and/or national level. The Legislative Action Committee meets biweekly during the legislative session to review pending bills and determine which to follow based on our stated program. Positions of support, oppose or "watch" are arrived at by consensus after reviewing all information available at the time. As bills change, it is sometimes necessary to change positions, and those decisions are also made by consensus of the committee.

ADVOCACY AGENDA 2012

Government	Voting Rights and Enfranchisement Fiscal Stability and Impact on Education and Higher Education
Social Policy	Health Care, Including Reproductive Health Care Juvenile Justice Child Welfare
Environment	Water Quality/Fracking

The Advocacy Agenda reflects the priority issues that will be addressed by League in both legislative and citizen-education activities across Colorado.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF COLORADO

President	Cath Perrone	303.863.0437
Legislative Action Chair	Sally Augden	303.455.5800
Staff Lobbyist	Christine Watson	303.250.1796
Executive Director	Julie Leonard	303.863.0437

LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP IN 2012

SENATE

President of the Senate	Brandon Shaffer
President Pro-Tem	Betty Boyd
Majority Leader	John Morse
Asst. Majority Leader	Lois Tochtrop
Minority Leader	Bill Cadman
Asst. Minority Leader	Mark Scheffel
Majority Caucus Chair	Morgan Carroll
Minority Caucus Chair	Scott Renfroe

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Speaker of the House	Frank McNulty
Speaker Pro-Tem	Kevin Priola
Majority Leader	Amy Stephens
Asst. Majority Leader	Mark Waller
Majority Caucus Chair	Carole Murray
Majority Whip	B.J. Nikkel
Minority Leader	Mark Ferrandino
Asst. Minority Leader	Nancy Todd
Minority Caucus Chair	Lois Court
Minority Whip	Dickie Lee Hullinghorst

CAPITAL DIRECTORY

Information Center/Bill Room	303.866.3055
Governor's Office	303.866.2471
Joint Budget Committee	303.866.2061
Legislative Council	303.866. 3521
Legislative Legal Services	303.866.2045
Reviser of Statutes	303.866.2045
House Members—both parties	303.866.2904
Democratic Senators	303.866.4865
Republican Senators	303.866.4866
State Planning & Budgeting	303.866.3317

Toll-free number from outside Metro area

Governor	800.238.7215
Senate	800. 473.8136
House	800.811.7647

Legislative Home Page:

www.leg.state.co.us/

View House or Senate Floor action on
Comcast Channel 165.

2012 HOUSE COMMITTEES OF REFERENCE

AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, & NATURAL RESOURCES

Representatives Sonnenberg (Chair); Baumgardner, (Vice-Chair); Brown, Coram, Fischer, Jones, Looper, McKinley, Ryden, Scott, Vaad, Vigil, Wilson

Staff: Lauren Ris
Mon., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 0107)
Wed., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 0107)

APPROPRIATIONS

Representatives Becker (Chair); Gerou, (Vice-Chair); DelGrosso, Ferrandino, B. Gardner, Hullinghorst, A. Kerr, Levy, Looper, Pabon, Solano, Sonnenberg, Vaad

Staff: Craig Harper
Fri., 7:30-9:00 (LSB-A)
Other times as announced

ECONOMIC & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Representatives: Liston (Chair); Swalm (Vice-Chair); Balmer, D. Gardner, Holbert, Miklosi, Priola, Soper, Swerdfeger, Szabo, Tyler, Williams, Wilson

Staff: Christie Lee
Tuesday, All Day (Rm. 0112)
Thurs. 1:30-6:00 (Rm 0112)

EDUCATION

Representatives Massey (Chair); Beezley (Vice-Chair); Hamner, Holbert, Joshi, A. Kerr, Murray, Peniston, Ramirez, Schafer, Solano, Summers, Todd

Staff: Kristen Johnson
Mon., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 0112)
Wed. Adj.-Noon (Rm. 0112)

FINANCE

Representatives DelGrosso (Chair); Swerdfeger (Vice-Chair); Acree, Beezley, Conti, Duran, Hullinghorst, Joshi, Kagan, Kefalas, Labuda, Pabon, Swalm

Staff: Ron Kirk
Wed., 1:30-6:00 (LSB-A)
Thurs., 1:30-6:00 (LSB-A)

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

Representatives Summers (Chair); Acree (Vice-Chair); Bradford, Brown, Fields, Joshi, Kefalas, J. Kerr, Massey, McCann, Peniston, Schafer, Young

Staff: Amanda King
Tuesday, All Day (LSB-A)
Thurs., 1:30-6:00 (LSB-A)

JUDICIARY

Representatives B. Gardner (Chair); Barker (Vice-Chair); DelGrosso, Duran, Kagan, Lee, Nikkel, Pabon, Ryden, Sonnenberg, Waller

Staff: Jessika Shipley
Tuesday, All Day (Rm. 0107)
Thurs., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 0107)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Representatives: Bradford (Chair); Szabo (Vice-Chair); Balmer, Conti, Fields, B. Gardner, Labuda, Lee, Pace, Soper, Swerdfeger

Staff: Raegan Robb
Mon., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 0111)
Wed., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 0111)

STATE, VETERANS, & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Representatives J. Kerr (Chair); Coram (Vice-Chair); Baumgardner, Casso, Court, Duran, Liston, Todd, Waller

Staff: Bo Pogue
Wed., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 0112)
Thurs., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 0112)

TRANSPORTATION

Representatives Vaad (Chair); Looper (Vice-Chair); Barker, Brown, Fischer, Hamner, Jones, Priola, Ramirez, Scott, Tyler, Williams, Young

Staff: Kelli Kelty
Wed., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 0107)
Thurs., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 0107)

2012 SENATE COMMITTEES OF REFERENCE

AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES & ENERGY

Senators Schwartz (Chair); Jahn (Vice-Chair); Brophy, Giron, Grantham, Guzman, Harvey

Staff: David Beaujon
Wed., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 353)
Thurs., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 353)

APPROPRIATIONS

Senators Steadman (Chair); Hodge (Vice-Chair); Bacon, Giron, Grantham, Harvey, Heath, K. King, Lambert, Nicholson

Staff: Patrick Brodhead
Fri., 7:30-9:00 (Rm. 356)
Other times as announced.

BUSINESS, LABOR, & TECHNOLOGY

Senators Tochtrop (Chair); Aguilar (Vice-Chair); Harvey, Jahn, Mitchell, White, Williams

Staff: David De Novellis
Mon., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 354)
Tues. Adj.-Noon (Rm. 354)
Wed., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 354)

EDUCATION

Senators Bacon (Chair); Hudak (Vice-Chair); Heath, Johnston, K. King, Nicholson, Renfroe, Spence

Staff: Jennifer Thomsen
Wed., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 354)
Thurs., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 354)

FINANCE

Senators Johnston (Chair); Giron (Vice-Chair); Brophy, Guzman, Jahn, K. King, Scheffel

Staff: Rachel Kurtz-Phelan
Tues., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 354)
Thurs., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 354)

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Senators Boyd (Chair); Newell (Vice-Chair); Aguilar, Carroll, Foster, Lundberg, Mitchell, Roberts, White

Staff: Elizabeth Burger
Wed., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 356)
Thurs., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 356)

JUDICIARY

Senators Carroll (Chair); Guzman (Vice-Chair); Giron, S. King, Lundberg, Newell, Nicholson, Roberts, Scheffel

Staff: Hillary Smith
Tues., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 356)
Wed., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 356)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Senators Foster (Chair); Nicholson (Vice-Chair); Aguilar, Neville, Roberts

Staff: Erin Vanderberg
Tues., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 352)
Thurs., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 352)

STATE, VETERANS, & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senators Heath (Chair); Bacon (Vice-Chair); Boyd, Grantham, Neville

Staff: Julia Jackson
Tues., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 353)
Wed., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 353)

TRANSPORTATION

Senators Hudak (Chair); Williams (Vice-Chair); S. King, Renfroe, Schwartz, Spence, Tochtrop

Staff: Kori Donaldson
Tues., 1:30-6:00 (Rm. 352)
Thurs., Adj.-Noon (Rm. 352)

DEADLINE SCHEDULE FOR THE 2012 COLORADO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

January 11	General Assembly convenes.
January 27	Final deadline for introduction of Senate bills.
February 1	Final deadline for introduction of House bills, except the long appropriation bill.
February 9	Deadline for House committees of reference to report House bills introduced on or before the 6 th legislative day.
February 16	Deadline for Senate committees of reference to report Senate bills.
February 23	Deadline for House committees of reference to report remaining House bills.
February 29	Deadline for final passage of Senate bills in the Senate .* Deadline for final passage of House bills in the House .*
March 23	Deadline for committees of reference to report bills originating in the other house.
March 26	Deadline for introduction of the Long Bill in the House .
March 30	Deadline for final passage of the Long Bill in the House .
April 2	Deadline for final passage in the Senate of House bills.*
April 6	Deadline for final passage of the Long Bill in the Senate .
April 9	Deadline for final passage in the House of all Senate bills.*
April 13	Deadline for adoption of the conference committee report on the Long Bill . Deadline for Appropriations Committee in house of introduction to report bills referred to Appropriations Committee.
April 19	Deadline to introduce resolutions that do not create interim studies.
April 20	Deadline for final passage in house of introduction of all bills referred to the Appropriations Committee in that house. Deadline for final passage for any bill prescribing a substantial portion of the total funding for public schools.
April 26	Deadline for committees of reference in second house to report bills referred to the Appropriations Committee in that house.
April 30	Deadline for Appropriations Committee in second house to report bills referred to it.
May 3	Deadline for final passage in second house of all bills referred its Appropriations Committee.
May 9	Adjournment sine die.

* All bills in the Appropriations Committee in either house on the day of the asterisked deadline are excluded from the final passage deadline until April 20.

GOVERNMENT

ELECTIONS

INFORMATION ON INITIATIVE PETITIONS

NEW **HB 1076 Additional Voluntary Info on Initiative Petitions (Rep. Court) (watch)** seeks to **permit** those who sign petitions to add contact information (email address or phone number) to the petition when they sign it. This information would be voluntary and not required for the signature to be considered valid for purposes of signature collection. This would be clearly stated. The purpose would be to allow initiative proponents and petition signers who are also supporters of the issue to connect more easily.

League's positions on the initiative process do not address petition information to this degree, and so we have no basis on which to support or oppose the measure. Although the bill is clear that the petitions would include statements that the phone or email contact information is voluntary, we will watch this bill in case amendments further on change the nature of the bill.

The bill has been assigned to the State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee.

Christine Watson 303.250.1796

PLAIN LANGUAGE ON BALLOTS

NEW **HB 1024 Plain Language for Ballot Issues (Rep. Szabo) (support)** The statutes already require that, to the extent possible, all bills and amendments to bills shall be written in plain, nontechnical language and in a clear and coherent manner using words with common and everyday meaning understandable to the average reader. This bill would extend the requirement to those who prepare or propose a ballot title for a statewide referred measure or amendment to the ballot title. Unclear and misleading titles on ballot issues are a common complaint from voters, and this will help with initiative titles, where there is a review from

legislative staff experts, but no requirement to take their advice.

Carol Tone 303377.3746

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

COULD THIS BE THE YEAR TO AUTHORIZE CIVIL UNIONS?

NEW As promised in the days leading up to the opening of the General Assembly, **Sen. Steadman** has introduced **SB 002 Civil Unions (support)**. The bill is similar to the one introduced last year, in that it enumerates specific rights and responsibilities that any couple agrees to in entering a civil union, and provides for a legal process by which government authorities certify a civil union. It is notable that civil unions are available to any two unmarried adults, regardless of gender.

League has long supported equal civil rights for all. In particular, League supports equal civil status of unions (or "marriage") to all couples, differentiating that civil status from a religious right of marriage, which is the purview of religious beliefs and traditions.

The bill has been assigned to the Judiciary Committee.

Christine Watson 303.250.1796

NATURAL RESOURCES

WATER

CONSOLIDATION OF CASH FUNDS

NEW **Sen. Hodge and Rep. Swerdfeger** have introduced SB-9, **Consolidate Div Water Resources Funds (support)**. This bill, which is coming from the Water Resources Review Committee, proposes that a new fund be created by consolidating the water data bank fund, division of water resources ground water management cash

fund, groundwater publication fund, gravel pit lakes augmentation fund, and the well enforcement cash fund. This is a means for efficiency within the Department of Natural Resources and the State engineer's office. Any money collected would go into one fund and would remain in the fund for further distribution. Within the Department of Natural Resources there would be oversight of this fund, and economic efficiencies are necessary at this time. It has been assigned to Senate Agriculture Committee and will be heard on January 26.

PROHIBITING NUMERIC CRITERIA FOR NUTRIENTS

NEW Sen. S. King has introduced SB-17, **Prohibit Water Quality Standards Regs Nutrients (oppose)**. A long term committee has been working to establish numeric criteria for nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus, in reaching water quality standards. The bill would prohibit setting numeric standards for these two important sources of water pollution. The EPA, which has a list of criteria for all water and wastewater systems to comply with, has not come up with criteria, but is working with states on establishing the criteria. To prohibit the WQCC from establishing numeric criteria for nitrogen and phosphorus would severely impact the ability to obtain good water quality in the state's water bodies. The bill has been assigned to Senate Agriculture Committee. No hearing date is calendared.

USE OF GRAYWATER

NEW Rep. Fischer and Sen. Nicholson have introduced HB-1003, **Authorize Graywater Use (support)**. In a semi-arid state, there is continual need to look at water conservation and future water usage. This is another attempt to address the use of graywater, which is defined as wastewater from sources other than toilets, urinals, kitchen sinks, nonlaundry utility sinks and dishwashers collected within a residential, commercial, or industrial building that meets certain standards to be established by the water quality control commission. Once the WQCC established standards, graywater could only be allowed for uses

spelled out by the water sources' well permits and water rights. Also, the use of graywater could not cause injury. This is a very controversial subject, but one many areas are looking at to expand water resources. This bill has been assigned to House State Affairs, but no date has been calendared.

All reported by Jeannette Hillery, 303.494.7718

SOCIAL POLICY

CHILDREN'S ISSUES

CHILD FATALITY REVIEW TEAM TO GAIN NEW RESPONSIBILITY

NEW SB 33 Child Fatality Reviews (Sen. Guzman; Rep. Massey) (support) requires that the Department of Human Services Child Fatality Review Team review not only child abuse deaths (current law) but also child abuse near fatalities and incidents of egregious abuse or neglect. For too long, the focus has been only on the deaths of children, and the very serious incidents of abuse that nearly killed children or left them severely damaged have not received the attention and review that they deserve. This bill changes that. It also brings Colorado into compliance with the Federal "Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act" which requires states to allow public disclosure of information about a child abuse or neglect case that resulted in either death or near fatality.

The bill is scheduled for hearing in Senate Health and Human Services on January 18.

Carla Bennett 303.757.2930

HEALTH CARE

FEDERAL WAIVER FOR MEDICAID

NEW SB 032 Medicaid Reform Seek Federal Waiver (Sen. Brophy) (oppose) This bill would require the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing to seek a federal waiver to allow increased flexibility and efficiency in the management of the state Medicaid program and the Child Basic Health Plan (CHIP).

The state would have the authorization to determine eligibility categories and income levels. An asset test for eligibility would be established by the state. (Currently there is no asset testing for these programs.) The state would also establish cost sharing and premiums. People would be encouraged to maintain employer-sponsored health insurance. The waiver would allow the state department to negotiate for capped federal reimbursements with provisions for adjustments due to population changes. The general assembly would be informed of the waiver request with the necessary changes identified.

We are concerned that this bill would lower the standards guaranteeing the basic level of health care for those who are covered by Medicaid and CHIP. We support possible administrative cost savings. However, maintaining a high level of health care services should be the first goal of the program.

The bill has been assigned to the Health and Human Services Committee.

Marion Colliander 303.322.3926.

HIGHER EDUCATION

UPDATED PROPOSAL FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT TUITION

NEW SB 15 Creating Optional Category of Higher Education Tuition by Sens. Giron & Johnston, Rep. Duran (support) is the third proposal in the last four years that would enable undocumented students to attend institutions of higher education in Colorado for in-state tuition. It does so by creating a new category of student tuition at a higher rate than in-state (no College Opportunity Fund or COF), but a lower rate than out-of-state tuition.

Students who meet the following qualifications would be eligible for the new category of tuition called **Standard Rate Tuition**: have attended a high school in the state of Colorado for at least 3 years; graduated; and been admitted to an institution of higher education within one academic year following graduating or earning a GED (General Education Development) diploma.

Students applying for standard rate tuition who do not have documents of lawful immigration status must attest that they are requesting such documentation or that they have applied for lawful status (or will as soon as eligible).

A student paying the **Standard Rate Tuition** would pay the student's share of in-state tuition plus an equal amount of college opportunity fund stipend awarded to in-state tuition students. Passage of this initiative will enable eligible students who would not otherwise be able to afford post-secondary education at an out-of-state rate to have the opportunity to do so.

Higher education institutions would also benefit from additional tuition they would not receive if these students were unable to pay out-of-state tuition and therefore did not attend at all. However, a provision in this year's bill allows institutions of higher education to opt out of creating this new category. No fiscal note is available at this time.

The League has supported this legislation in the past based on our position in favor of giving "all qualified students the opportunity to attend post-secondary education and that successful participation should be facilitated by a variety of resources." The Higher Education Access Alliance (HEAA), of which the LWVCO is a member, is a primary supporter and advocate for the bill.

Barbara Whinery 970.353.6731

INCOME ASSISTANCE

EXTEND FUNDING FOR LOW-INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE

NEW HB 1028 Continue Low-income Energy-related Assistance (Rep. Gerou; Sen. Steadman) (support) extends funding for three low-income energy assistance funds through FY 2018-19. These funds help low-income households pay their heating and cooling bills and make their residences more energy efficient, with the monies coming from the severance tax trust fund, as they have since 2005.

The bill has been assigned to the Finance Committee.

Julie Leonard 720.384.8421

STATUS SHEET

The Status Sheet is a constantly updated list of bills being followed by Legislative Action Committee members.

New bills are in **boldface**.

S=Support O=Oppose SIP=Support in Part OIP=Oppose in Part W=Watch or Monitor

POLICY AREA	S/H	BILL #	BILL TITLE	S/O	PAGE	STATUS
Children's Issues	SB	33	Child Fatality Reviews	S	8	S-HHS
Elections	HB	1024	Plain Language For Ballot Titles	S	7	H-SVM
Elections	HB	1076	Additional Voluntary Info On Initiative Petitions	W	7	H-SVM
Equal Opportunity	SB	2	Civil Unions	S	7	S-Jud
Health Care	SB	32	Medicaid Reform Seek Federal Waiver	O	8	S-HHS
Higher Education	SB	15	Creating Optional Category Of Higher Ed Tuition	S	9	S-Ed
Income Assistance	HB	1028	Continue Low-income Energy Related Assistance	S	9	H-Fin
Water	SB	9	Consolidate Div Water Resources Funds	S	7	S-Ag
Water	SB	17	Prohibit Water Quality Standards Regs Nutrients	W	8	S-Ag
Water	HB	1003	Authorize Graywater Use	W	8	H-SVM