



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

League Lines

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2006

414-273-8683

www.milwaukee-voters.org

Calendar

January

- 11 Wed.- 6:00p.m.
Board Meeting
Washington Park Library
2121 N. Sherman Blvd.
Contact: Karen Campbell (414) 774-5944
- 11 Wed.- 6-7:30p.m.
TABOR Educational Forum
Tommy G. Thompson Youth Center
State Fair Park
640 South 84th Street, West Allis
Parking in front of the building
(See Article p. 2)
- 12 Thur. - 5:30 Dinner Meeting
**Milwaukee Elections Issues:
Past & Present**
Susan Edman, Exec. Dir., City of
Milwaukee. Election Commission
Heinemann's - 76th & Bluemound
Contact: Barb Hussin (414)351-0819
(See Articles p. 3)
- 18 Wed. Unit Discussion Meetings
Topic: Local and National League
Program Planning (Bring this bulletin)
- AFTERNOON UNIT
WEST - 1 p.m.
St. Matthew's Church
1615 Wauwatosa Ave.
Contact: Minna Jones (414) 476-5249
- EVENING UNITS
EAST - 6:30p.m.
Shorewood Public Library,
Community Rm. North
Contact: Judith Lindsay (414) 963-9829
Or Louise Petering (414) 351-3617
WEST - 7:30p.m.
Location Varies
Contact: Ruth Snedic (414) 771-7690
- 23 Mon.- 7p.m.
Natural Resource Committee Meeting
Energy, Sewage, Great Lakes Water
Jennifer Runquist's home
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067
- 26 Thur. - 9:00 & 11:00a.m. & 2:00p.m.
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Contact: Fran Swigart (414) 962-8984

- 27 Fri. - 9:00 & 11:00a.m.
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.
(Courtroom unconfirmed)
Contact: Fran Swigart (414) 962-8984
- 30 Mon. - 7:15p.m.
Internat'n'l Relations Committee Meeting
Great Decisions Topic: Turkey
7324 W. Wisconsin Ave., Wauwatosa
Contact: Marianne Steigerwald 476-9272

February

- 4 Sat. - 8:30a.m. - 11:30a.m.
Legislative Breakfast, \$15.00
**Issue: Rich Women/Poor Women:
Strategies for Bridging the Gap**
Alverno College Conference Center
Contact: Elaine Drobny (414) 332-6760
(See Article below)
- 6 Mon. - 7:15p.m.
Internat'n'l Relations Committee Meeting
Great Decisions Topic: Brazil
4215 N. 100th St., #240
Contact: Lucille Bowen (414) 461-7479
- 8 Wed. - 6p.m.
Board Meeting & Bulletin Deadline
Washington Park Library
2121 N. Sherman Blvd.
Contact: Karen Campbell (414) 774-5944
- 13 Mon. - 7:15p.m.
Internat'n'l Relations Committee Meeting
Great Decisions Topic: Human Rights
4215 N. 100th St., #220
Contact: Anne Morrissey (414) 461-1929
- 15 Wed. - Unit Discussion Meetings
Topic: " Voters Rights and Election Issues
- AFTERNOON UNIT
WEST - 1 p.m.
St. Matthew's Church
1615 Wauwatosa Ave.
Contact: Minna Jones (414) 476-5249
- EVENING UNITS
EAST - 6:30p.m.
Shorewood Public Library,
Community Rm. North
Contact: Judith Lindsay (414) 963-9829
or Louise Petering (414) 351-3617

- WEST - 7:30p.m.
Location Varies
Contact: Ruth Snedic (414) 771-7690
- 20 Mon. - 7:15p.m.
Internat'n'l Relations Committee Meeting
Great Decisions Topic: Iran
7012 Milwaukee Ave., Wauwatosa
Contact: Marge Maxwell (414) 476-6380
- 21 **SPRING PRIMARY
!! VOTE!!
ELECTION NIGHT REPORTING**
- 27 Mon. - 7:15p.m.
Internat'n'l Relations Committee Meeting
Great Decisions Topic: Global Health
19225 Bay Thorne Way, Brookfield
Contact: Betty Hinz (262) 792-0991
- 27 Mon. - 7:00p.m.
Natural Resource Committee Meeting
Energy, Sewage, Great Lakes Water
Jennifer Runquist's home
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

Elaine Drobny

All are invited to the 21st annual Catherine Conroy Legislative Breakfast on **Saturday, February 4, 2006**. The event will be held again at Alverno College, 8:30 am to noon.

The topic is "**Rich Women/Poor Women: Strategies for Bridging the Gap**". This annual event, co-sponsored by LWV-MC and the Wisconsin Women's Network, brings together over 100 attendees with legislators from southeast Wisconsin for stimulating discussion about current womens' issues. As it is a great networking opportunity, please bring a friend. The breakfast is open to the public. **Registration is \$15.00. For further information, or to volunteer to help with the program, call Elaine Drobny 414-332-6760, or John Abelt 414-228-8392.**

JANUARY UNIT DISCUSSIONS: PROGRAM PLANNING

Barb Hussin, Program

Program planning at January Unit Discussion Meetings is your opportunity to put into action those oft-heard words ... "League ought to do something about..." Participate in the January grassroots discussions that determine what we Leaguers will study locally and nationally.

In June, 2006 the League's national convention will be in Minneapolis and part of the agenda will be the important work of selecting a program for the 2006-2008 biennium. Currently the LWVUS is in a comprehensive multi-year effort to strengthen and renew democracy as its top program priority. The legislative priorities are: Election Reform, Campaign Finance Reform, Civil Liberties and Non-partisan Redistricting.

The information provided by the national office does not include any program recommendations. A review of current national positions is available in the national publication *Impact on Issues* as well as on the national website. A listing of national positions will be available to aid discussion at the unit meetings.

The following statement was sent from the national League:

"Program - governmental issues chosen for study and action - is an essential element of League and, because it is so important, has traditionally originated with the membership through the program planning process. It is important for Leagues to participate in this process. Unfortunately, grassroots participation in this process has steadily declined over time. As a result, we are seeing program planning at the state and local level increasingly being replaced by program planning on the convention floor, which traditionally accounts for only 1.3 percent of the membership. In 2004, only 29 percent of local and state Leagues participated in LWVUS program planning, making it difficult for the LWVUS Board to determine the extent of interest on specific issues for study and action."

In order to encourage the process, a LWVUS Program Planning discussion list is available to engage members in conversation about issues of national interest prior to the March deadline for program submissions. If you are interested in subscribing send an e-mail to: subscribe-lwv-programplanning@lists.lwv.org.

Our League will be discussing local program options.

February Units

At the last convention the LWVWI recommended a review of our state voting and election positions. This timely topic will be the subject of our discussion at the February units.

The state committee has prepared information on voters rights, our current positions as well as areas not covered by those current positions for local review and recommendation. This will be a wonderful follow-up to the January 12 meeting with Susan Edman, Exec. Dir. Milwaukee Election Commission.

This information will be distributed at the January 12th dinner meeting and January unit meetings---another good reason not to miss these events!

MEMBERSHIP

Mary Stefaniak, Co-Chair

Welcome new member, Marie Kidder from Oak Creek. We hope you will join us at some of the activities listed in this League Lines and the Calendar Planner.

The Membership and Action Committees are updating member information. **Ruth Snedic needs your email addresses in order to send out calls for action on pending legislation. If you have not included it on your membership renewal form, please call her at (414) 771-7690 or email rjrsnedic@milwpc.com.** If in doubt, check your listing in the new Directory.

The new National League website contains a wealth of information on League issues as well as the opportunity to sign up for Action Alerts. If you are not into letter writing, these alerts are a fast and easy way to communicate with your congressmen. A click of the mouse is all it takes. You will receive a message stating the League position and you can add a personal message if you wish.

The October issue of the National Voter describes how you may use the new and improved, user-friendly website, www.lwv.org. Members must now register to set up a personal account using their email address and a personal password. If you have not provided us with your email address, you will need to register by entering your League ID number (found above your name on the National Voter address label).

After you register, the system will send you an email with instructions on how to access the LWV online system. Log on and follow links to the Wisconsin and Milwaukee County Leagues. That's it! Happy browsing.

THE TROUBLE WITH TABOR

WI Council on Children and Families

The League of Women Voters invites you to attend the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families brief, educational forum on TABOR (the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights) and its potential impact on the quality of life you your community -- and on children and families in Wisconsin. See the Calendar page in this bulletin for date, time and place.

Some state legislators are pressing for passage of an amendment to Wisconsin's Constitution, the so-called "Taxpayer Bill of Rights," that threatens the quality of our schools, child protective services, care for seniors, universities and technical schools, parks, libraries, roads and the quality of life in our state.

- Learn more about how TABOR takes politicians off the hook for the tough decisions that we elect them to make.
- Hear from people in your community about how this policy would impact you, your family and your neighbors.
- Find out why the people of Colorado stopped this failed policy in a recent referendum.
- Record a video message about your concerns -- and let elected leaders and others know what you value and want to preserve and protect.

continued from pg. 2

The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, a non-partisan, non-profit organization that provides education, research and advocacy for the well being of children and families in our state. Questions? Call (608) 206-1518 for more information or visit our website at www.wccf.org.

MILWAUKEE ELECTIONS

Kit Halloran O'Meara

The following materials will prepare you for the January 12th Dinner Meeting at Heinemann's when Milwaukee's new executive director of the Election Commission, Sue Edman, will speak. Prior to her appointment but after the November 2004 election put the spotlight on the conduct of the election here, Mayor Tom Barrett formed an Election Task Force to study the city's election system and make recommendations for improvement. The summary below will provide you with basic information and no doubt raise questions in your mind. Bring those questions to the Dinner Meeting on January 12.

The 50 page official report covers the recommendations that emerged from months of study, discussions, public meetings, and deliberations in four main areas:

- voter registration
- absentee ballots
- polling locations
- poll workers

In each of these areas they reviewed the current law and system, how it has been working (both problems and successes), and recommendations for improvement. The recommendations included both those that could be done internally and those requiring state legislative change.

Voter Registration

The task force identified the purposes of the voter registration system as: getting a complete and accurate list of eligible voters before & after election day, ensuring against fraud, and facilitating the voting of those who are eligible. The task force limited its work to issues of registration both before Election Day and at the polls. It did not address issues relating to the actual mechanics of voting. Nor did it really explore issues about getting the greatest number of eligible voters registered.

The problems identified included insufficient staffing and equipment, lack of set procedures and thoroughly trained registrars, the large number of registrations including illegible & incomplete ones, statutory deadlines that limited purging & updating and did not allow for verification postcards.

The recommendations in this area were complicated by the prospect of the Statewide Voter Registration system mandated to be in place by January 2006. In light of announced delays to the statewide implementation, questions about Milwaukee's and Milwaukee County's progress with that list should be asked. What alternate plans does Milwaukee have for February? April? What role is there for voter registration activities by the League and other similar organizations?

Several themes run through the task force findings:

- Need for improved software for address verification (current standard is that the address is "plausible")
- Need for more trained staffing and more equipment
- Increased training for, and possible limitations on, deputy registrars
- Changes in deadlines
- Need for procedures and staffing to reduce the pressures of election day registrations (clearly everything would be tidier if there were no same day registrations)
- Importance of address verification postcards both before and after election day

Absentee Ballots

The task force considered: the qualifications to vote absentee, the application process, and the absentee voting process. They looked for processes and procedures that are overly restrictive and that could be simplified to make absentee voting more accessible and efficient.

Heavy demand clogged the system in November 2004. 24,400 people requested absentee ballots; 18,851 ballots were returned. Much more than in 2000 when 10,712 absentee ballots cast. Problems ranged from a brand new Absentee Ballot Coordinator, extraordinarily crowded conditions for requesting, casting and counting the ballots, ballots arriving late, delivery problems to the polling locations that were already crowded, staffing and space.

Recommendations of the task force included advancing statutory due dates, allow processing of absentee ballots centrally (and in a space at least 3 times current space, ideally outside of election

continued on pg. 4

SECOND ANNUAL DINNER MEETING: MILWAUKEE ELECTION ISSUES-PAST & PRESENT

January is typically our coldest and grayest month but we learned last year that League members can turn this to an advantage. A dinner meeting, in the company of fellow Leaguers and guests, followed with a speaker on a subject of our interest, certainly banishes winter blahs.

This year we are fortunate to have **Susan Edman, Executive Director of the Milwaukee Election Commission** speak to us on the past election problems in Milwaukee and the solutions to those problems. After her talk there will be a short time for questions.

Please bring a guest and join us on Thursday, January 12 at Heinemann's Restaurant on 76th & Bluemound at 5:30 pm. From I-94, take the 68th/70th Street Exit to Bluemound; go west to 76th St. Heinemann's is on the southwest corner of the intersection. The menu continues to be simple and reasonable: A cup of soup of your choice, chicken salad sandwich w/pasta and beverage, for a total of \$10 (tip included). **For reservations please call Barb Hussin (414-351-0819) by January 11.**

commission office), and more , trained staff. Questions might include whether it is our desire to see an early voting system.

Polling Locations

Currently there are 202 polling sites for 314 wards in the city of Milwaukee. They are located in public schools, private sites, city/county parks, public housing developments, fire stations, school/county recreation buildings, libraries and other public buildings. There is always trouble locating sites. Schools (103 sites) and fire stations (9 sites) have raised protests about chaos and security. Many of the current sites are not adequately accessible. Layout and space are problems also. The increased number of observers and keeping them separate from voters but able to hear the process challenges both space and staff.

The task force wonders if fewer, more capacious sites might be an answer. Negotiations with MPS and the fire department should be done thoughtfully and sensitively. Accessibility surveys need to be completed; federal and state funding for accessibility should be sought. Training should be offered in set-up; the chief inspector makes the final decision on the spot. Improve communication with the election office and provide a rest, eating area for workers. Large maps should be near the entrance to each site.

Poll Workers

The problems the task force found with the poll workers are no secret to most anyone who voted in Milwaukee: not enough workers, poor recruitment, training, hours, compensation, working conditions and equipment/materials. The task force made varied and imaginative recommendations that included:

- staffing plan and expense budget that would vary for large and small elections
- coordinate and separate volunteer efforts and election official tasks
- public relations and recruitment plan with businesses, community groups, festivals, universities, MPS, etc. to generate new poll workers
- consider split shifts to attract more young professionals & retain current workers
- establish city policy requiring city managers to assist with election day activities
- review compensation structure
- train workers in smaller groups with an opportunity for interaction and possible mock elections, check other best practices
- account for longer/more frequent training in compensation
- evaluate everybody after an election providing opportunity for feedback
- have city attorney and state elections board review training materials

Questions might include what can we Leaguers do to help.

What role is there for the League of Women Voters? Be sure to come January 12th with YOUR questions for Susan Edman!

If your district is not on this list, contact your district administrator and push for implementation such a program.

ACTION

The LWVUS asks you to join the League's free online activist community and receive action alerts on important issues by email. Our online activists have sent more than 85,000 email messages to the 109th Congress! You too can make a difference by signing up today. Go to the LWVUS Web site at www.lwv.org and click Take Action to sign up for the Grassroots Lobby Corps and make your voice heard! Because our strength lies in our numbers, we encourage you to ask friends, family, neighbors and co-workers to join you as online activists with the League.

Action by the Milwaukee County League

Ruth Snedic

National

The House and Senate each passed bills to reauthorize the USA Patriot Act. The two bills have to be reconciled as the House version added extraneous measures and expanded the Act (we believe unnecessarily) making most of the Act permanent without regard to oversight. We were asked to lobby our congress people and senators on this reauthorization urging them to support the language of the Senate bill as opposed to the more restrictive House version. Thank you all for responding to the Action Alert we issued for this.

The LWVUS also issued an alert to stop a New Campaign Finance Loophole. Senate leaders had slipped a new fundraising loophole into the Transportation, Treasury, HUD and General Government Appropriations bill. The rider would have allowed unlimited amount of funds from Leadership Political Action Committees to be transferred to national party committees, which could then spend the funds on the Members' campaigns. That allowed a new loophole, evading the limits (\$15,000) that Congress enacted to protect citizens against corruption and the appearance of corruption in government.

State

We have lobbied yet again opposing the Voter ID bill and the ever present Concealed Carry Weapons bill - both keep popping up every session. We will continue to oppose these bills. To that end, the League of Women Voters will be holding press conferences around the State to announce our opposition to this. Ruth Snedic, Barb Hussin, Rosemary Bigelow and Natalie Kleman attended a Dec. 5th Press Conference organized by WAVE; Ruth once again spoke against Concealed Carry on behalf of the League. Mayor Barrett described the legislation as yet another unfunded state mandate. WUWM reported in general about "groups against" CC and quoted Dist. Attorney McCann.

The following statement was presented on behalf of our League in the autumn.

The League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County urges you to oppose AB 763. Legalizing the carrying of concealed weapons does not make citizens or members of law enforcement safer.

Indeed, in the light of the safety concerns by law enforcement officials who oppose this legislation we are astonished that elected representatives continue to support this bill.

This is not an issue of the right to bear arms or right to hunt. This legislation quite simply, allows people to carry and hide weapons from the view of others.

The League believes that carrying and discharging deadly weapons while protecting the public is the duty of trained police and other safety officers. Wisconsin has never allowed the carrying of concealed weapons and we have a low and declining crime rate. There is no hard evidence to suggest that concealed weapons lower the crime rate, and certainly anecdotes and stories are unreliable reasons for legislations.

We urge you to oppose AB 673. Guns can be used for hunting, for marksmanship or collecting, but lets keep those weapons accounted for as they are now; that protects all of us.

County

County Budget, Courts and Justice –This fall Barbara Hussin of our Milwaukee County League spoke on our behalf to the county supervisors at budget hearings regarding jail population and court cutbacks. We have long supported Mental Health Release Planning, AODA Release Planning, the Failure to Appear Project as well as others under the court's direction. Barb's statement follows.

In 1989 the League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County and the Benedict Center participated in a joint Court Monitoring Project that explored the relationship between jail crowding and the operations of the Milwaukee County Circuit Courts. Since that time, The League has appeared at budget hearings to express concern and/or support for fiscal policies relating to the jail and court system. This evening we speak to both, concerns and support, for some of the 2006 budget provisions.

We are somewhat relieved that the Finance Committee has restored a large part of the court budget that had been cut by the County Executive but there is still a shortfall in the court budget. We are concerned about the impact on compliance with the Christensen decree regarding jail population caps. The County is also facing a lawsuit for damages regarding earlier violations of that decree. What is the potential for further violations if the court is lacking enough judicial commissioners to move defendants expeditiously? If confinement conditions are compromised, the jail population exceeds the lawsuit limit, Milwaukee County could be subject to further fines and penalties and that is going to come out of general tax funds.

During budget discussion there was a call for an efficiency study of the courts. That certainly may be useful, but we would suggest that an even greater need is for the County, with all the players in the justice system, to develop a long range plan for addressing the jail population issue. Our jail population is

currently in compliance with the Christensen decree, but the House of Corrections now holds more pretrial inmates than the jail. We are holding large numbers of pretrial misdemeanants, is this the best use of jail space? If we don't develop a jail population system, this county may continue to face lawsuits.

The League has long supported jail diversion programs and we strongly support the current and successful programs such as Mental Health Release Planning, AODA Release Planning, Failure to Appear Project as well as the others under the court's direction. In addition to those, we believe the Community Justice Resource Center has proven to be a safe, effective program while saving significant money for the County. The opening of the South Side Justice Center will expand the opportunity for further savings. The League of Women Voters supports inclusion of these programs in the budget and we believe programs such as these will need to be part of a long range plan to control and lower the jail population. We urge you to begin the planning process. Thank you for the opportunity to express our views on the 2006 budget.

For League, Louise Petering, in a letter to the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, urged the newspaper to establish a Milwaukee County Page to provide citizens with information they need regarding the actions of the County government. The MJS did not respond.

You can sign up for direct Milwaukee County League Action Alerts as outlined in the membership report by Mary Stefaniak. Many times these Alerts need immediate action and we don't have time to even get telephone info to our members. The email lobby is very timely.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS Great Decisions 2006

Marianne Steigerwald, Chair

The Great Decisions Series takes place earlier this year, namely weekly on Tuesday evenings beginning January 24th through March 14th. Registration for each program begins at 6:30 p.m. The programs run from 7:00-8:30p.m. in the UWM Student Union – Union Ballroom, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd. Topics are shown on the calendar page of this bulletin. On Monday after each Tuesday program the International Relations Committee meets to discuss the program. You can also find that information on the calendar page.

Admission for the eight-Lecture Series is as follows: General Public Fee: \$70 (includes Great Decisions Book, \$15 value); Basic Institute Member Series Fee: \$35 (Also includes Great Decisions book); Individual Programs: \$8 General Public, \$4 IWA Basic Members; UWM Faculty/Staff, Students and IWA Premium Members Free

To Register: Visit www.iwa.uwm.edu or call: 414-229-3220

NATURAL RESOURCES

Pesticide Notification Registry Deadline

Louise Petering, NR member

If you would like to be notified of pesticide applications in your neighborhood so you can avoid exposure, be sure to file an application form with the Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection by February 1. You may phone the **Registry Program Coordinator at (608) 224-4616** or google the Department website, click on the Pesticide Notification Program, and complete the application online.

Energy Unit Discussion Feedback

Jennifer Runquist, NR Chair & Louise Petering

At the May 2005 LWV WI Convention in Janesville, delegates approved a 2-year study about "Energy." The call was for a comprehensive study that would include issues of concern for Wisconsin as a whole. One goal of the first year of the study is to develop 7 issue papers that will form a reliable base of current information on each of the topics. These were discussed at the November unit meetings. Members were asked to state what they understood about each topic and to ask questions to clarify the meaning of each. Here is what members thought and asked about each topic!!

Climate Change/Energy Policy - Global warming is understood to be related to average warming of the entire planet, but not warming in every part of the planet; by using less energy and using that energy more efficiently there would be less effect on the atmosphere/climate. Policy should include both incentives (carrots - like tax incentives) and disincentives (sticks - excess profits taxes, or lower depreciation allowances on capital equipment; excess profits taxes would be directed to conservation and sustainable energy production). Fuel efficiency must be part of energy policy and the regulatory framework. Concern over use of "climate change." We want to change the topic to ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT/ENERGY POLICY. More research should be supported in the area of CO2 emissions, global warming and climate change. As far as local environmental effects caused by various types of power generation, these can often be clearly seen. For example, SO2 and mercury release from coal plants causes acid rain and health effects. The need to release heat by nuclear plants causing them to be situated by lakes can have local thermal environmental effects. In addition there will be global effects from transmission of the pollutant through the biosphere but tracking it is more difficult. Use of fuels to generate power often causes pollution (air, water, thermal, nuclear waste) and has health

impacts, all of which we need to clearly understand. In our energy policy we need to advocate for energy generation methods and technologies which do not have the negative side effects that many of our current energy generation systems exhibit. Increasing energy efficiency, conservation, and "clean" fuels and technologies all are part of such an energy policy.

Supply and Demand (S & D) – Need, wants, and demands need to be distinguished from one another. Incentives to save and disincentives to waste energy should be applied. Hotels should reuse towels and sheets for guests staying more than one day. How real is supply and demand? Is information about S & D "planted?" Are energy assessments by producers and transmitters reliable? Education and advertising should be directed to conservation with the goal of saving money and our environment. (FOR ELECTRICITY). There are peaks in demand. Energy needs to be supplied when it is needed. Certain sources of energy, such as wind and solar, are not always available. Natural gas and coal can be stored and are generally available, so they are very important energy resources for meeting demand. In our society it is very important to always have enough electricity as we are completely dependent on it for many daily tasks. There is a great deal of coal in the USA that can provide for our electrical demand. We should consider seriously the necessary steps to provide electricity using "clean" coal technology. Demand growth can be tricky to predict, as communities can at times grow more quickly or slowly.

Regulatory Framework – This is vague; we don't know exactly who regulates what and how this relates to state and federal legislation and the PSC. The regulatory framework should promote cooperative efforts within the region to implement energy policy. Fuel efficiency and conservation need to be part of the regulatory framework. Transparency is a must. How is electricity generation and transmission regulated at this point? (We need a FACT Sheet) What are the goals of the PSC regarding the regulations it utilizes? We question the fairness of inverse pricing (electricity becomes cheaper the more you use it). Also the desire to understand all the aspects of a homeowner's electricity bill was mentioned.

Production and Transmission - More information is requested on this topic. Production refers to producing electricity, while transmission refers to sending it along wires to user destinations. Where is energy produced, how far does it get transmitted, where to build power plants, what are the effects of producing power in the area where it is produced? Health issues are a real concern. So are aesthetics (many rural areas don't like power lines). Recently production and

transmission were required to be separated by the federal govt. so that each company generating electricity would not build its own lines, but rather all companies could use common transmission lines. Evidently there are not enough of the common transmission lines to provide for the “ideal” system; WI has transmission line capacity problems. In transmission there are resistance factors so that energy is lost as it moves through the lines. That is the reason why generation plants are built in the vicinity of electricity users, rather than close to coal fields, for example. Corridors for transmission lines and transportation are planned. Is this good from a safety (terrorist) point of view? How successful has the model been in which transmission lines are shared intrastate and interstate? Does this really increase reliability and decrease cost?

Fuel Sources: Conventional/Renewable – Conventional fuel sources include fossil fuels (oil, coal, gas), hydro, and nuclear. Renewable includes wind, solar, manure, hydro, and geothermal. How each of these sources works (basic principles of energy production) how much each costs, and environmental effects of each (including the materials used to produce the equipment that produces the energy) need development and clarification. Gas has been touted as the best “clean” fuel but the price is unstable and the fuel is currently too expensive. Coal is an option but we want a “clean” coal technology. “Clean” coal will be expensive but if we used ROI (return on investment) and cradle to grave and external costs in our analysis of all generation methods, would the cost of clean coal technologies be so expensive? We want to increase the amount of renewable energy we have available (wind, solar, biomass) but we also need to understand the true limitations of these energy fuels. Individuals can develop homes that depend largely on renewables. Incentives for this could be worthwhile if an analysis shows that the actions of many individuals would add up to a reasonable lowering of demand for energy generators. It was pointed out that at present, this kind of “unique energy independent” home might be hard to sell. Also it was pointed out that features that make a home less energy dependent add costs to the home, which buyers are often unwilling to pay, especially when they will not be in the home long term.

Conservation/Fuel Efficiencies – Conservation is understood as using less energy; it is desirable. The difference between conservation and efficiency needs to be clarified. Tougher CAFÉ standards are needed to conserve fossil fuels. More PR needs to be done relative to conservation – ways to save on fuels. The efficiency of power plants needs to be clarified (i.e., how much energy is in each Mole of fuel and much energy do the various generating technologies actually

deliver as electricity along transmission lines). Also, how much energy is used to get each fuel to the power plant. Advocacy for conservation is very important because we are wasting a lot of energy (leaving lights on, computers on, appliances and electronics plugged which draw current, etc.). We need to find out and publicize those situations where entities such as schools and businesses have found big cost savings by analyzing their energy use and developed energy & cost saving practices. As far as fuel efficiencies we know that many of our old plants and systems are not very energy efficient. We need to consider upgrading to more efficient energy generation facilities and utilize more energy efficient appliances, lights, etc.

Federal and State Legislation – Legislation is one thing; follow-through on that legislation is another. Public input needs to be part of not only the hearing process, but also part of deliberations at the legislative drafting table. Transparency is a must. There are concerns about “pork” in legislation. Also, the question of federal law trumping state law is a concern, especially when federal law or policy results in less enforcement and regulatory commitment – and that results in costly health and environmental problems. We need a fact sheet for the federal and state legislation that affects electricity generation and transmission. We can look at the legislation from a policy point of view, as well as from an enforcement and reasonableness point of view. Does this legislation succeed in its goals and do we still consider these goals important?

***Remember to reduce, reuse and recycle to conserve.
Go to: www.grrn.org and www.rbrc.org
to help you recycle.***

**League of Women Voters Milwaukee County
League Lines Team**

Louise Petering: Editor
Barb Hussin: Assistant Editor and proofing
Kerry Thomas: Layout and design
Mary Stefaniak: Mailing

Send submissions to: l.petering@att.net

Join the League Today!

Become a member of the League of Women Voters and help *Make Democracy Work!*

Dues [Circle One]: \$60 Individual \$75 Household (2 or more individuals) \$25 Student \$25 Limited Income
\$100 Sustaining (supports \$25 memberships) \$160 Centennial (supports action & activities)

Name _____ Home Phone (____) _____

Address _____ Work Phone (____) _____

City _____ WI Zip _____ e-mail _____

Involvement [Check One]: Active ____ or Supporting ____ Interests _____

Please Note: Please circle your preferred means of contact and mail this form with your check to the **League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County, P.O. Box 100785, Milwaukee, WI 53210**. Thank You. (Non-tax deductible contributions may be made to the LWV Milwaukee County. For a tax deductible gift to the LWV Milwaukee County, write a separate check, minimum \$50, payable to the LWV Education Fund. Mail contributions to the membership dues address above.)



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