



League of Women Voters of Washington

Barbara Seitle, President // Marilyn Johnston, Lobby Team Coordinator // Newsletter edited by Laura McCarty

[www.lwvwa.org / advocacy](http://www.lwvwa.org/advocacy)

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ACTION PRIORITY

January 26 - January 31, 2007

"If you have time this week to make only one phone call, choose one of these two..."

SUPPORT incentives for using clean energy

or

SUPPORT reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2020

HB 1303—Encouraging the use of cleaner energy

This bill would provide incentives for replacement of the most polluting diesel engines (especially school buses), provide transitional incentives for development of promising in-state clean fuels and fuel feedstock, reduce fossil fuel consumption by state fleets, provide for development of promising new technologies for displacing petroleum with electricity, AND provide analysis and emission accounting procedures that prepare Washington to respond to global warming impacts.

League Position—LWVUS Energy Position, element 5: "The League supports predominant reliance on renewable resources"

Status—Hearing held January 24 before [House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee](#)

Action—*If your legislator is on this committee, call them by Wednesday, January 31 at 1:30 and ask them to vote for this important bill.*

Contact—Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, antoniapotter@comcast.net

House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee

Brian Sullivan - Chair (D)
Brian Blake - Vice Chair (D)
Joel Kretz - Ranking Minority Member (R)
Mary Lou Dickerson (D)
William "Ike" Eickmeyer (D)
Bill Grant (D)
Steve Hailey (R)
Ruth Kagi (D)
Patricia Lantz (D)
John McCoy (D)
Daniel Newhouse (R)
Ed Orcutt (R)
Chris Strow (R)
Kevin Van De Wege (D)
Judy Warnick (R)

HB 1210—Reducing statewide greenhouse gas emissions

This bill requires that by January 1, 2009, rules be in place that require reporting and verification of statewide greenhouse gas emissions, AND that by January 1, 2020, the annual statewide greenhouse gas emissions level be no more than 1990 level.

League Position—LWVUS Environmental Protection and Pollution Control: "The League supports regulation of pollution sources by control and penalties; inspection and monitoring; full disclosure of pollution data; incentives to accelerate pollution control; vigorous enforcement mechanisms..."; Air Quality: "The League supports measures to reduce transboundary air pollutants..."; and other policies related to climate change

Status—Hearing was held on January 24 before the [House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee](#)

Action—*If your legislator is on this committee, call them by Wednesday, January 31 at 1:30 and ask them to vote for this important bill.*

Contact—Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, antoniapotter@comcast.net

Other ACTION ITEMS

“If you can make another call or two...”

SUPPORT—Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program (WWRP)

The **WWRP** develops sites for wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation including local and state parks, water access, trails, critical wildlife habitat, natural areas, urban wildlife habitat, farmlands, riparian areas, state parks development, and state parks restoration.

League Positions—LWVWA Parks, Open Spaces and Greenbelts

Status—This is a capital budget request of \$70 million in the governor’s budget. There are no related bills for this priority at this time. The environmental priority (www.environmentalpriorities.org) is to increase the funding for the WWRP program to \$100 million for the biennium.

Action—Please contact your legislators urging their support for WWRP funding.

Talking Points:

1. *The state’s population has grown by 25% since the WWRP program began in 1990, another 2 million people are expected in the next 25 years, and habitat and recreational areas need to be preserved to accommodate such growth.*
2. *The funding level has stayed about the same since 1990.*
3. *In 1995 two new funding categories were added (riparian and farmland), and 2007 is the first year for which funds are needed for these categories.*

Contact—Elizabeth Davis, 360-331-4184, elizabethd@whidbey.com

SUPPORT—HB 1024 and SB 5034—Phase Out Toxic Flame Retardants (PBDEs)

These bills phase out the three forms of poly brominated diphenyl ethers (**PBDEs**)—octa, penta, and the most widely used form, deca—over a period of years. PBDEs move into the environment from common household products including computers, TVs, furniture, carpets, curtains, and telephones. Alternative flame retardants are already available, but this bill provides for further study and time for developing additional alternatives as well.

League Positions—LWVWA Toxics in the Home; LWVUS Environmental Protection & Pollution Control, Early Intervention for Children at Risk.

Status—The bills (HB 1024 and SB 5034) have moved quickly through their respective committees. In the House, the new **Select Committee on Environmental Health** passed the bill, 6 to 3, in the first week of session. In the Senate, the bill passed the **Water, Energy & Telecommunications Committee** with a 7 to 4 vote. The House bill has fifty-seven co-sponsors, and the Senate bill has twenty-two co-sponsors (!). The bills are in their respective Rules Committees.

Action—If you have not already done so, please contact your representatives and senator urging their support.

Talking Points:

There is growing evidence that PBDEs accumulate in living organisms: PBDEs have been found in air, land, and water; in mothers’ breast milk, orcas, and household dust. These chemicals may cause liver, thyroid, and neurodevelopmental toxicity. Alternative flame retardants are available.

Contact—Elizabeth Davis, 360-331-4184, elizabethd@whidbey.com

SUPPORT—HB 1058—Promoting the sale of alternative fuels

Provides that no one shall prohibit or in any way prevent a motor fuel retailer from offering and selling alternative fuels for self-propelled motor vehicles

League Positions—LWVUS Energy Position, element 5: "The League supports predominant reliance on renewable resources"

Status—Hearing on Friday, February 2, before the **House Commerce and Labor Committee**

Action—If you are a constituent of one of the legislators on the House committee considering this bill, call them and ask them to support the bill.

Contact—Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, antoniapotter@comcast.net

SUPPORT—SHB 1071 and SB 5093—Health insurance coverage for children

The Senate bill has received its first hearing in the Senate Health and Long-Term Care Committee. Also, as anticipated, a majority of the House Health Care and Wellness Committee voted “do pass” on the 1st substitute House bill, which contains some significant changes (see Background) from the original bill.

League Position—LWVWA Health Care: “Ensure universal access for all residents to a comprehensive,

uniform, and affordable set of health services...”, “Provide ‘seamless’ coverage and continuity of care, to the extent possible, regardless of changes in life circumstances...”

Status—House bill passed out of policy committee and was referred to House Appropriations Committee.

Senate bill is in [Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care](#)

Action—Call your legislators on the Senate committee urging support for this bill.

Contact—Ann L. Brand, 206-533-6269, anklbrand@comcast.net

SUPPORT—[2SHB 1095](#) and [SB 5091](#)—**Medicare Part D Co-payment Coverage for Individuals Eligible for Medicaid and Medicare**

This puts into statute the approval that was given by the state legislature one and one-half years ago to offer Medicare Part D co-payment coverage (subject to available funds) to individuals eligible for medical assistance or the medically-needy program and Medicare. The \$14 million required for this program is already part of the “carry-forward” budget, so no fiscal note was requested.

League Position—LWVWA Health Care: “Ensure universal access for all residents to a comprehensive, uniform, and affordable set of health services...” “Provide ‘seamless’ coverage and continuity of care, to the extent possible, regardless of changes in life circumstances...”

Status—This bill passed unanimously in the House. The Senate version will be heard in the [Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care](#).

Action—Call your legislators on the Senate committee urging support for this bill.

Contact—Ann L. Brand, 206-533-6269, anklbrand@comcast.net

SUPPORT—[HB 1160](#)—**“Energy Freedom Program”**

This bill includes activities to promote green highways. It would promote a project that would result in an efficient and adequately-spaced alternative fuel refueling network.

League Position—LWVUS Energy position, elements 3 & 5

Status—Hearing Tuesday, January 30, in the [House Committee on Technology, Energy & Communications](#)

Action—If you are a constituent of any of the committee members, call and ask your legislator to support this bill: Morris, McCoy, Crouse, McCune, Eddy, Ericksen, Hankins, Hudgins, Hurst, Takko, Van De Wege

Contact—Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, antoniapotter@comcast.net

SUPPORT—[HB 1295](#)—**Dividing WRIA 14 into two planning units**

This bill is an act relating to water resource inventory area (WRIA) 14, amending RCW 90.92.060. It would change the existing WRIA planning units boundaries by dividing them into two distinct planning units for funding. HB 1295 addresses WRIA 14 which is on the peninsula and drains into both Puget Sound and Hood Canal. The new planning units 14a and 14b would divide the WRIA into separate drainage units and divide the funds equally between the two. This appears to be a planning operational change that will help coordinate planning with WRIA 16.

League Positions—LWVWA Water Management

Status—Passed out of House Select Committee on Puget Sound after public hearing January 26, now in House Rules Committee.

Action—Effective action from members would be to call their legislators on [House Rules Committee](#) and remind them of the League’s water positions and the importance of adequate funding for planning, management, and enforcement of water quality and water quantity rules already in place.

Contact—Denise Smith, 425-392-9339, groundwatersmith@msn.com

SUPPORT—[HB 1297](#) and [SB 5297](#)—**“Healthy Youth Act”**

These bills require that sexual education programs in the schools provide medically and scientifically accurate information using guidelines developed by the Washington State Department of Health and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

League Position—LWVWA Reproductive Rights

Status—HB 1297 is scheduled for a public hearing on January 25 at 10 a.m. in the [House Committee on Health Care and Wellness](#).

Action—Please contact your legislator and ask for their support.

Contact—Wayne Martin, 425-746-9960, docmartin934@aol.com

SUPPORT—HB 1301—Air quality demonstration projects

This bill would require the Washington State Department of Ecology to aid in the development of projects designed to demonstrate to the public available options for preserving the state's natural resources through enhanced air quality;

League Positions—LWVWA Air Quality

Status—Hearing Tuesday, January 30, in the **House Committee on Technology, Energy & Communications**

Action—If you are a constituent of one of the legislators on the House committee considering this bill, call them and ask them to support the bill.

Contact—Toni Potter, 206-365-8949, antoniapotter@comcast.net

SUPPORT—SB 5305—Extending Medicaid coverage for foster youth

This bill would extend eligibility for Medicaid or Medical Assistance for youth that were in foster care on their 18th birthday, up to age 21, irrespective of continuing placement in foster care. (More under “Background”)

League Positions—LWVWA Health Care: “Ensure universal access for all residents to a comprehensive, uniform, and affordable set of health services...” “Provide ‘seamless’ coverage and continuity of care, to the extent possible, regardless of changes in life circumstances...”

Status—This bill has been heard in the **Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care.**

Action—Call your legislators on the Senate committee urging support for this bill.

Contact—Ann L. Brand, 206-533-6269, anklbrand@comcast.net

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**ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND**

**Election Reform**

Several important election bills have been filed since January 8, the first day of the current session:

- HB 1225 would revise how the partisan primary consolidated ballot is counted. If the voter fails to select a major party affiliation, but votes only for candidates of one party, the votes would be counted. Referred to State Government & Tribal Affairs.
- HB 1473/SB 5530 would restore the right to vote to ex-felons who are no longer in total confinement in the custody of the department of corrections or the federal bureau of prisons. In the House, referred to State Government & Tribal Affairs. The Senate bill was referred to Government Operations & Elections.
- HB 1530 would mandate a primary election voters’ pamphlet be published and distributed by the Secretary of State’s office. Voters pamphlets would be produced for the primary of each even-numbered year and for every general election. Referred to State Government & Tribal Affairs.
- SB 5196 would eliminate a primary election for nonpartisan offices in which only one or two candidates file for election. Referred to Government Operations & Elections.
- HJR 4201 and SJR 8202 would amend the Constitution to provide for a simple majority of voters voting to authorize a school levy. The House bill was referred to the Education Committee and heard on January 19. The Senate bill was referred to the Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee.
- HB 1528 (requested by the Secretary of State) would allow a person with a valid Washington state driver’s license or state ID card to submit a voter registration application electronically on the Secretary of State’s web site. The Secretary of State’s office would obtain a digital copy of the signature from the Washington State Department of Licensing. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs.

For information on other election bills, search by subject or bill number on the legislature’s website: [leg.wa.gov](http://leg.wa.gov).

**Contact:** Betty Sullivan, 206-682-5240, [jaybetty2@msn.com](mailto:jaybetty2@msn.com)

**Health Insurance Coverage for Children**

The House Bill 1071 that passed out of policy committee included significant changes from the original bill submitted to that committee:

- The income eligibility standard for children under age 19 would be increased on January 1, 2009 to 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

- On July 1, 2008, families with household incomes over 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level would be offered the opportunity to purchase health care coverage without a subsidy. This opportunity would be extended to families with incomes over 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level on January 1, 2009.
- A statement was deleted that said that health care coverage for children under this program is not an entitlement, except for Medicaid eligible children.
- The Department of Social and Health Services would be required to contract with community-based organization and government entities to support outreach efforts.
- School districts would have to include school nurses or other school personnel on the school health advisory committees to be established under the provisions of this bill.
- Standards for healthy food and beverages would apply during school hours or for school-sponsored activities.
- A Select Interim Legislative Task Force on school health reform would be created and would report its findings and recommendations to the legislature by October 2008.

**Contact:** Ann L. Brand, 206-533-6269, [anklbrand@comcast.net](mailto:anklbrand@comcast.net)

### Health Insurance Coverage for Foster Youth

The Department of Social and Health Services provides programs for youth in foster care generally through age 18, unless the youth is in school or in treatment. In addition to foster care placement services, the Department may provide medical coverage through Medicaid or the Medical Assistance Program. However, upon reaching the age of 18, eligibility for Medicaid or Medical Assistance is not available for young adults between the ages of 18 and 21 who “age out” of the foster care system. A bill in the legislature (SB 5305) would extend eligibility for Medicaid or Medical Assistance for youth that were in foster care on their 18th birthday, up to age 21, irrespective of continuing placement in foster care.

**Contact:** Ann L. Brand, 206-533-6269, [anklbrand@comcast.net](mailto:anklbrand@comcast.net)

### Rainy Day Fund

In the House both the Democrats and Republicans have introduced bills amending the state Constitution to establish a “rainy day” fund in the state treasury. HB 1090 and HJR 4202, the Democrat bills, provide for putting 1% of estimated general state revenues annually into the fund. HB 1467 and HJR 4207, the Republican bills, provide for putting 3% annually into the fund. There are also differences in how the fund is to be used. The four bills are the subject of a January 25 hearing in House Appropriations.

**Contact:** Barbara Bush, 425-349-5184, [omi.bush@verizon.net](mailto:omi.bush@verizon.net)

### Tax Exemptions

Roughly thirty bills providing tax preferences of one sort or another have been introduced so far this session. The House Finance Committee this week held a work session and hearing on the work of the Citizen Commission for Performance Measurement of Tax Preferences – a new commission established by the last legislature – and a proposal to establish a ten-year tax exemption review schedule. The LWVWA position is that “any tax exemption proposal should be carefully evaluated for purpose, benefit, and cost; and all tax exemptions should be periodically reviewed.”

**Contact:** Barbara Bush, 425-349-5184, [omi.bush@verizon.net](mailto:omi.bush@verizon.net)

### Sex Education

Surveys of teenagers have found that about 30% are sexually active at age 15, more than 50% at age 18, and over 80% by age 21. Abstinence programs have no long term effect on these numbers. However, teens receiving abstinence-only messages are less likely to use contraceptives than are their peers. This puts them at greater risk of unwanted pregnancies and STDs. Condoms and other contraceptives provide excellent protection against unwanted pregnancies if the individuals use them and if they use them correctly. Condoms provide excellent prevention from gonorrhea, Chlamydia, and HIV if the condoms are used and used correctly. The “condom controversy” does not exist. The following medical organizations have recommended that condoms and other contraceptives be readily available in high schools: the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Society of Adolescence Medicine, and that bastion of liberal thought the American Medical Association. Documentation can be obtained from me at as soon as I get my computer working.

**Contact:** Wayne Martin, 425-746-9960, [docmartin934@aol.com](mailto:docmartin934@aol.com)

## Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs)

SB 5074 (Relating to watershed planning; and amending RCW 90.82.060) is similar to HB 1295 (An act relating to water resource inventory area 14, amending RCW 90.92.060) in intent: to change existing WRIA planning units boundaries by dividing them into two distinct planning units for funding. Whereas the new planning units 14a and 14b created by HB 1295 will divide the WRIA into separate drainage units and divide the funds equally between the two (a planning operational change that will help coordinate planning), SB 5074 deals with WRIA 29, the White Salmon sub-basin, in a similar way but recommends that WRIA 29a receive all the WRIA funding and WRIA 29b receive one-half of the funding for a new WRIA. The reasons for this additional funding should be clarified before support is given to SB 5074.

**Contact:** Denise D Smith, 425-392-9339, [groundwatersmith@msn.com](mailto:groundwatersmith@msn.com)

## Rainwater Collection

HB 1423 (An act relating to small rainwater collection facilities; and amending RCW 90.03.250) and HB1424 (An act relating to rainwater collection facilities; and adding a new section to chapter 90.03 RCW) are rain water collection bills similar to those that have been in the legislature in some form for several years. These bills seek to address the issue of rain barrels and other such facilities in the Water Code Permit process, either by inclusion or exemption. The issue is divided by quantity: HB 1423 talks about rain/runoff systems which store less than 5,000 gal and is put to beneficial use on the property, and HB 1424 talks about larger quantities. This is an important set of bills to watch.

**Contact:** Denise D Smith, 425-392-9339, [groundwatersmith@msn.com](mailto:groundwatersmith@msn.com)

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FOR REFERENCE

Key Session Dates

The 60th Washington State Legislature opened its long session on Monday, January 8. The 2007 legislative session in Olympia runs from January 8 to April 22. Every day (including Saturday, Sunday, and holidays) is counted in the 105-day session. The Lobby Team will meet regularly during the session to talk with the League lobbyist, Lonnie Johns-Brown, and to decide on priority action for the upcoming week.

Jan. 8 – First day of regular session

Jan. 19 – LWVWA Lobby Day

Feb. 28 – Last day for any bill to be considered in **policy** committee of its “house of origin” (House for HB, or Senate for SB)

Mar. 5 – Last day for any bill to be considered in **fiscal** committee of its “house of origin”

Mar. 14 – Last day for bills to be considered on the floor of their “house of origin” (5 p.m.)

Mar. 30 – Last day for bills to be considered in a **policy** committee of the opposite house (Senate for HB, or House for HB)

Apr. 2 – Last day for bills to be considered in a **fiscal** committee of the opposite house

Apr. 13 – Last day for bills to be considered on the floor of the opposite house (5 p.m.) except initiatives and alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implementing budgets, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session.

Apr. 22 – Last day of regular session

CONTACT LISTS

Portfolios / Lobby Team – www.lwvwa.org/about/officers.html

Legislators – www.lwvwa.org/advocacy/newsletters/Legislators.pdf

Legislative Committees – www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/committeelisting.aspx

Representation by legislative district – www.lwvwa.org/advocacy/newsletters/DistrictReps.pdf

LEAGUE POSITIONS

LWVWA positions – www.lwvwa.org/advocacy/prog_in_action05-07.html

RESOURCES

League action website – lwvwa.org/advocacy

House Floor Activity as it happens – flooractivityext.leg.wa.gov/default.aspx?chamber=3

Senate Floor Activity as it happens – flooractivityext.leg.wa.gov

Public hearings as they happen – twv.org

Bill information – text, analysis, status, committee action – apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo

Bill room (legislative information center) – **360-786-7573**

State budget information – www.ofm.wa.gov

Governor’s website – governor.wa.gov

Washington state’s official website – access.wa.gov

Speaking to a Legislator

Visit, write to, call, or email the legislator directly (see contact list for legislators). Or, use the toll-free Legislative Hotline available weekdays from 8:00 am - 8:00 pm, and Saturdays from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm:

800-562-6000 / TTY: 800-635-9993

Legislative hotline operators will send your message to one of your legislators, all three of your legislators, the governor and lieutenant governor, or all of these, as you request. Language translation services are also available. Person placing the call needs to know enough English to understand “Please Wait” and to report the language needed.

Addressing a Letter to a Legislator

Representative _____ Senator _____

P.O. Box 40600 P.O. Box 404[leg district]

Olympia, WA 98504-0600 Olympia, WA 98504-04[leg district]

Visiting Your Legislators

Citizens are welcome to visit their legislators in Olympia on any day during the session. Making an appointment first is prudent but not always required. Later in the session, town hall meetings back in the legislators’ home districts are good opportunities for talking to

your legislators. Lobby day events provide organized support for visits.