



VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE

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STUDY OF THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMACT

As a result of action taken by delegates at League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) Convention 2008, the LWVUS was charged to: "Study the advisability of using the National Popular Vote Compact (NVP Compact) among the states as a method for electing the President." The following article is an introduction to this study. The March VOTER will contain pro and con articles on the Compact to prepare members for a consensus meeting in April. In addition to reading these articles, visit the LWVUS website for more information on the NVP Compact.

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Background for the National Popular Vote Compact

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the president by popular vote. Now, League members have the opportunity to consider whether to support the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) as a viable process to achieve that result. The NPV Compact would avoid the need for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College (EC), and would assure that the individual receiving the most votes would become president.

The NPV Compact proposal uses the mechanism of the EC. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual that received the most votes nationwide. Thus, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together. State elections officials in all states participating would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes.

This alternative method of assigning a state's EC votes would take effect only when enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. This 270-vote threshold also corresponds essentially to states representing a majority of the people of the United States.

The plan includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement – conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues and recounts.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The following is an excerpt from the President's Message, February, 1991

“The League of Women Voters is an outgrowth of the women’s suffrage movement. On February 14, 1920, six months before the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, delegates from the national American Women Suffrage Association met for a victory convention in Chicago. With votes for women close at hand they held a jubilant celebration and the last suffrage convention turned into the first convention of the League of Women Voters. In her convention address, the Women’s Suffrage Association President, Carrie Chapman Catt, said, ‘The League of Women Voters is not to dissolve any present organization but to unite all existing organizations of women who believe in its principles. It is not to create sex antagonism but to develop cooperation between men and women, it is not to lure women from partisanship but to combine them in an effort for legislation which will protect coming movements, which we cannot even foretell, from suffering the untoward conditions which have hindered for so long the coming of equal suffrage. Are the women of the United States big enough to see their opportunity?’ I think the answer was then and is now, yes.

That was the beginning of the National League, but California, back then as it is now, was a jump ahead of the rest of the country. In 1911 California was the sixth state to give women the right to vote and in that year the California Civic League was formed for women interested in participating in politics and civic life. In 1921 it became part of the League of Women Voters.

And so since its beginnings 70 (sic) years ago, the League has helped millions of women and men become informed participants in government. It has tackled a diverse range of public policy issues, often involving League members in continuing action over several years or even decades.”

(cont. from page 1)
NVP Compact Background

There are pros and cons to this plan, which are discussed in full in papers found on the LWVUS Web site. Summaries of these papers are also available. League members can learn more about the plan from these sources and consider its ramifications at consensus meetings across the country. Be sure to participate! Who better than the League to be ready to speak to this good-government issue?

To prepare for the consensus meeting, please read the complete version of this paper (available at www.lwv.org) by the LWVUS National Popular Voter Compact Study Committee.

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Board Briefs

At its January meeting your board:

- Considered working with the Registrar of Voters to help with voter registration.
- Learned that the City of Sunnyvale is holding study sessions on public financing of political campaigns.
- Set Saturday, March 21 as the date of the next general meeting.

Looking Back

*Article from the
February 1991 VOTER*

“**10 years ago** the local League held two general meetings. One was on the unratified rights for the District of Columbia and the other meeting looked at California’s water. *(Sometimes it appears we are not making any progress at all. Ed.)*”

Membership News

Thank you for renewing your membership: Elsie Conley, Susan Hough, Bruce Kendall, Judith Pogue, Marieann Shovlin, Leanne and Charles Untulis, and Pete Warburton.

Thanks for including a donation with your dues: Kirsten Holmquist and Norma Medlin.

Welcome new members: Joyce Just, Alex Mennen, and Barbara Pon.

LEAGUE NEWS

National – The League sent a letter to members of the House of Representatives urging them to support reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

State – The League of Women Voters of California filed an amicus curiae (“friend of the court”) brief with the California Supreme Court in the case of *City and County of San Francisco, et al. v. Horton*, which challenges the validity of Proposition 8. The LWVC board approved filing of the amicus brief at its January 11 meeting. Proposition 8, passed by the voters last November, provides that only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California, thus eliminating the right of same-sex couples to marry.

Bay Area - The Bay Area League noted that the Metropolitan Transportation Committee (MTC) has transferred \$91 million in Regional Measure 2 funds from Dumbarton Rail to BART Warm Springs project and the High Speed Rail Project is beginning the Scoping Plan for the San Francisco-San Jose Corridor.

County – The Leagues of Santa Clara County are planning a forum on Education to be held in April. Further information will appear in future VOTERS.

REMINDER - JAN 31 BAY AREA LEAGUE MEETING WATER – CALIFORNIA’S NEW GOLD

Saturday, January 31, 2009

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Registration and refreshments: 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

MetroCenter Auditorium, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland, CA 94607

Price \$30 (\$20 without lunch)

Register online at www.lwvbayarea.org. For more details, call (510) 839-1608 or send an e-mail to editor@bayareamonitor.org. To carpool, contact the editor at lwvcseditor@comcast.com

BUDGET AND NOMINATING COMMITTEES

The work of the budget and nominating committees is beginning. This is an opportunity for members to help the League with a short-term commitment.

The Budget process is usually completed in two or three meetings. Expertise in math is not required, only an interest and understanding of what our local League wants to accomplish in the coming year.

The Nominating Committee is instrumental in selecting League leaders to serve on the board and set the course of the League. Members of the Nominating Committee gain a greater understanding of the work of the League and learn more about the strengths and talents of members.

To serve on one of these committees or for further information, contact the editor at lwvcseditor@comcast.net.

Join the League of Women Voters

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check to LWV Cupertino-Sunnyvale, P.O. Box 2923, Sunnyvale, CA 94087.

____ \$60 Individual member

Name: _____

____ \$90 Two members in a household

Address: _____

____ \$15 Student

____ Contribution \$ _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Checks made out to LWVCS are not tax deductible.

CALENDAR

January

Sat 31 9:00 am **Bay Area League Meeting**
Water: California's New Gold
MetroCenter Auditorium
101 Eighth Street, Oakland 94607

February

Mon 9 7:00 pm **Board Meeting**
Meyering Office
19925 Stevens Creek Blvd. Cupertino

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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FIRST CLASS