



# VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE

April 2007

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## The Cupertino-Sunnyvale VOTER

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## EDSOURCE FORUM

### Money Talks: New Research and Candid Conversations About California School Finance

**Date:** Friday, April 20, 2007

**Time:** Check-in 8:00 a.m.

Program 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

**Place:** Crowne Plaza Cabana, Palo Alto

**Cost:** \$60 for LWV members (fee includes program, info packet, cont'l breakfast, lunch)

*See page 4 for information on speakers and panelists and registration form.*

## LWV BAY AREA CONVENTION

**Date:** Saturday, May 5, 2007

**Time:** 10 a.m. – 12 noon

**Place:** Northbrae Community Church  
941 The Alameda, Berkeley, CA 94708

Contact Elaine Manley if you wish to attend and represent the Cupertino-Sunnyvale League.

## SAVE THE DATE

Saturday June 2, 2007

## Annual Meeting

Sunnyvale Heritage Park

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I find myself contemplating freedom these days. Freedom to tell our legislators what we think about government actions. Freedom to find out about issues, or not, and freedom to vote, or not to vote. Freedom to serve others, or to stay home and tend a family or read a book.

Nominating committee called, putting together the slate to be presented at our Annual Meeting. I said Yes to the question asked, then mused on the fact that it's easier to say Yes when you know you are free to say No.

The League has asked me to serve in various ways over the years, but it has always been clear that it's ok to say No if a Yes doesn't suit my life right now. And sometimes that freedom, that knowledge that no one is going to invoke the specters of guilt or obligation, has allowed me to say Yes when my first pressured response might have been an automatic No.

We are free to choose how we live our lives. Celebrate freedom! Figure out what you're passionate about and do something to move it forward. Is it your city? Go to the City Council meetings. Is it health care? Start looking at the various health care bills and see if you want to join the League in supporting SB840. Is it education? Head on into your local school to volunteer, or show up at school board meetings and bring your views along. Choose your Yesses! And since we have more leverage together than separately, come to LWV events to spend some time with like-minded people who place a priority on a fair, functioning, free society.

*Susan*

## AN INVITATION TO VOLUNTEER

Would you like exposure to how League works? Do you like to know what other things are going on? Consider becoming a member of the League Board. The nominating committee is busy at work filling the various League board positions. There is always room for more members. All it takes is an interest in helping the League help the community and the desire to spend time with interesting people.

To volunteer, contact Jason Spiller, [spillerjason@yahoo.com](mailto:spillerjason@yahoo.com) or 408-245-2588.

### Board Briefs

At its March meeting your board:

- Approved a letter to the Sunnyvale City Council requesting a hearing open to the public about the lifetime health benefits for council members.
- Heard that a program called "Young Suffragists" is being started, to reach school children of all ages. ([www.youngsuffragists.org](http://www.youngsuffragists.org))
- Approved Howard and Hollimon as delegates to state convention. Manley will attend as president. There is one more delegate position available.

### Looking Back

**30 years ago** members took a bus trip to Sacramento to meet legislators, observe committee hearings and tour the capitol.

### Membership News

Thank you for renewing your membership: Peter Botsford, Ann McElroy, Elizabeth Mulford, and Marieann Shovlin.

Thank you for including a contribution with your renewal: Sharon Jenks and LaVerne Prentice.

## CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE TO DEBATE HEALTH CARE REFORM

Health care is at the forefront of issues before the legislature this year. To date, more than 15 health care coverage bills have been introduced. The chief new contenders are bills introduced by Senate President pro Tem Don Perata and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's plan.

**Update on the Kuehl bill.** Senator Sheila Kuehl will reintroduce her single payer bill (SB 840 of 2005-2006), which was vetoed by the Governor last September. According to a staff member, the senator is still "enthusiastic and committed" to the single payer bill and hopes to keep the same bill number for the 2007-2008 legislative session. As chair of the Senate Health Committee, she also will sign on to some bills that are, in effect, competing with SB 840. Kuehl sees the competition as an opportunity to contrast the benefits, costs and savings of SB 840 with those of the new reform proposals.

Kuehl plans to release a set of principles as a guide to judging all health care bills and will provide a comparison of the new reform proposals to SB 840. To date, she has released two essays that comment on some differences between SB 840 and other health care bills or plans. Visit her Web site, [www.sen.ca.gov/kuehl](http://www.sen.ca.gov/kuehl), to read her essays.

**The Perata bill.** Kuehl is a coauthor of Perata's bill, SB 48, that calls for mandated purchase of insurance by both employers and employees. Employers, sole proprietors, and independent contractors would be required to buy commercial insurance or pay into a state trust fund (a "pay or play" model). Workers would pay through mandatory payroll deductions and would have to offer proof of health insurance when they pay their taxes. Undocumented immigrants and the unemployed would not be covered.

Cost estimates for the program are five to seven billion dollars, which would be raised from employers and employees. There is no indication yet of what the employer/employee cost split would be. Perata's plan also seeks an expansion of Medi-Cal and the Healthy Families Program to cover parents and children up to 300 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL); this would need federal approval. His plan would insure an estimated 4.2 million of the 6.6 uninsured Californians.

**The Nunez bill.** Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez has introduced AB 8, designed to provide coverage to almost all Californians with a focus on cost containment and prevention. In this "pay or play" model, coverage would be required for all workers and their dependents in firms with two or more employees; coverage for self-

employed workers would be provided through a purchasing cooperative or reformed private insurance market. Coverage for employees and dependents eligible for Medi-Cal/Healthy Families would be through employer plans, which would be supplemented if necessary.

All employees who are offered coverage at work would be required to accept the coverage for themselves and their dependents if their fair share of the costs (premium plus out-of-pocket costs) does not exceed a reasonable percentage of their income. Employees whose employers pay into the state's purchasing program would pay a defined percentage of their income. Employees at or below 300 percent of the FPL would be subsidized by the state and the Medi-Cal/Healthy Families programs.

The first step in this phased plan would be to cover all California children in households with incomes up to 300 percent of FPL. Accessibility is expected to increase overall as a result of insurance market reform that would include simplified medical underwriting, restructuring California's high-risk pool, and availability of uniform benefit packages.

**Governor Schwarzenegger's plan.** Governor Schwarzenegger states that achieving his vision for health care reform requires integrating prevention, health promotion and wellness; coverage for all Californians; and affordability and cost containment.

To achieve coverage for all Californians, the Governor's action steps include requiring all uninsured individuals to have a minimum level of coverage (individual mandate); providing affordable coverage for low-income individuals; requiring insurers to issue health insurance regardless of pre-existing conditions, etc.; increasing Medi-Cal rates of payment to providers, hospitals and health plans; and facilitating and enforcing the individual mandate. Financing would be achieved through requiring payments from employers with 10 or more employees who choose not to offer health coverage; requiring payments from hospitals and physicians; redirecting a portion of the existing funding for medically indigent care; and additional federal reimbursements.

To achieve affordability and cost containment, the Governor's plan calls for Health Savings Accounts; requiring health plans, insurers and hospitals to spend at least 85 percent of health care dollars on patient care; reducing regulatory barriers; reducing the cost for delivering HMO products to employers and individuals; and advancing the adoption of Health Information Technology.

Julie Rajan, *Social Policy Director*, [social\\_policy@lwvc.org](mailto:social_policy@lwvc.org)  
Barbara Storey, *Health Care Program Director*, [bs\\_lwv004@cox.net](mailto:bs_lwv004@cox.net)

**REGISTER NOW! 30<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL EDSOURCE FORUM**  
**Money Talks: New Research and Candid**  
**Conversations About California School Finance**

*Don't miss* your chance to hear context for the current school finance system debates in Sacramento; results of California's landmark school finance adequacy, equity, and efficiency research studies from the project's coordinator; and a lively panel of education and policy leaders react to the new research findings and talk candidly about the possibilities and politics of school finance reform in California.

**Morning**

**Keynote—How We Got Where We Are: California School Finance Since 1970**

**John Mockler**, school finance state policy advisor and chief architect of Proposition 98

**New Research Key Findings: *Getting Down to Facts* School Finance Project**

**Susanna Loeb**, Associate Professor at Stanford University specializing in economics of education and Coordinator, *Getting Down to Facts* project

**Afternoon**

**What Do Californians Want? Results from a Collaborative Interview Project**

**Scott Plotkin**, Executive Director, California School Boards Association, will present the results of 100+ interviews reflecting differing perspectives about what's wrong and right with California's school funding system. He'll join the following for thoughtful discussion and questions from the audience:

**Candid Conversation: The Politics and Possibilities for School Finance Reform in CA**

**Christopher Cabaldon**, President, EdVoice

**Lynne Faulks**, Legislative Manager, California Teachers Association (CTA)

**Lawrence O. Picus**, Professor, USC Rossier School of Education and school finance consultant

**Richard Simpson**, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Speaker of the Assembly, State of California

**Forum and Panel Moderator:**

**Christopher Cross**, Chairman, Cross & Joftus, LLC, an education consulting firm

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**2007 EDSOURCE FORUM REGISTRATION FORM**

Palo Alto \_\_\_ E-mail confirmation? \_\_\_ Vegetarian lunch? \_\_\_

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Checks payable to EdSource PO# \_\_\_\_\_

MasterCard \_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_ Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name\* \_\_\_\_\_ Title\* \_\_\_\_\_

Organization\* \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

\*will appear on name tag

More information & online registration: [www.edsource.org](http://www.edsource.org)  
520 San Antonio Rd., Ste. 200, Mtn. View, CA 94040 • 650-917-9481 • FX 650-917-9482 • [edsource@edsource.org](mailto:edsource@edsource.org)

## LEAGUE NEWS

**National** – League President Mary G. Wilson this week applauded the introduction of important bipartisan public financing legislation in the Senate by Senators Durbin (D IL) and Specter (R PA). The legislation would improve the federal election process by allowing qualified candidates to receive campaign funds from the Senate Fair Elections Fund instead of relying upon money from private interests.

**State** – The state League issued the first call to Convention 2007 to be held in Bakersfield May 18-20. Workshops include Neighborhood Association Election Training, Using the Web to Reach Your Community, Alternative Board Structures, Health System Reform, Voter Education Tools, Abolishing the Death Penalty, and Managing Change. The afternoon before convention there will be a field trip to the Kern County Water Agency.

**County** – The five Leagues in Santa Clara County are promoting Education as an Issue for Education and Advocacy at the State League Convention.

## VOTING RIGHTS CASE VICTORY

On December 21, 2006 the Court of Appeal of the State of California handed down its decision in a case brought by the League of Women Voters of California and other voting rights groups and individual petitioners involving the right to vote of those serving time in a county jail sentence as a condition of felony probation. The decision revolved around proper interpretation of the wording of article II, section 4, of the State Constitution. The Court ruled in the League's favor, saying that those persons confined in local jail as a condition of probation for a felony or in cases where a trial court has imposed a lesser penalty than imprisonment in state prison do have the right to vote. The Court's opinion can be found at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/opinions/documents/A114988.PDF](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/opinions/documents/A114988.PDF). We hope members will read it carefully.

## THE ONECARENOW CAMPAIGN

In the upcoming year, Leagues will continue to participate in the OneCareNow campaign of daily city events, petition gathering, health care forums, and educating our elected officials on the benefits of SB 840. We will be guided by Senator Kuehl's comparisons of her bill and the new plans as well as two major studies of similar and varied reform models done by the Lewin Group that provide cost estimates.

This year's debate on how to extend health care benefits to all or most of California residents is an ideal prop for the OneCareNow campaign to use in building a massive movement to pass single payer in California. It will be a hot topic, and will provide an opportunity for League members to do what they can do so well—educate, educate, educate.

Julie Rajan, *Social Policy Director*, [social\\_policy@lwvc.org](mailto:social_policy@lwvc.org)  
Barbara Storey, *Health Care Program Director*,  
[bs\\_lwv004@cox.net](mailto:bs_lwv004@cox.net)

## Help Make Government Work 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.

\_\_\_ \$50 Individual member

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ \$75 Two members in a household

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Checks made out to LWVCS are not tax deductible.