
League of Women Voters

Glendale/Burbank

The League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank will present several voter service programs in March

First . . .
Watch for the airing of
**AN INFORMATION PROGRAM
ON THE
GLENDALE CHARTER
REVISION
AMENDMENTS**

which will be taped on March 10 and will air on government channel 6.

The League thanks Charter Communications for producing the program

**TWO GLENDALE
CANDIDATES FORUMS**
THURSDAY, MARCH 10,
2005

7:00-9:00 p.m.

**PRESENTING
CANDIDATES FOR CITY
CLERK AND CITY
TREASURER**

THURSDAY, MARCH 17,
2005

7:00-9:30 p.m.

**PRESENTING
CANDIDATES FOR CITY
COUNCIL**

**Glendale City Hall
Council Chambers**
613 East Broadway
Glendale, California

Free parking is available in the municipal parking structure behind City Hall (entrance on Wilson Street)

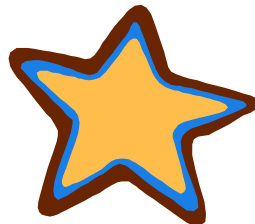
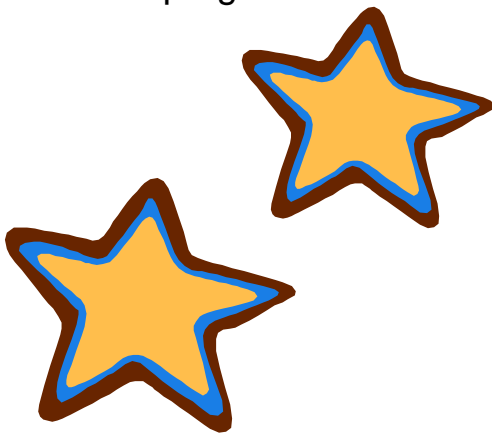
**... AND A CANDIDATES
FORUM IN BURBANK**
WEDNESDAY, MARCH
30

7 pm

**PRESENTING
CANDIDATES FOR
BURBANK CITY
COUNCIL AND
BURBANK UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Burbank City Hall
275 E Olive Avenue
Burbank, California

The Forums will be televised live and repeated on Channel 6 courtesy of Charter Communications



California Budget Project January 26, 2005

CALIFORNIA HAS A LARGER SHARE of working families with low incomes than the rest of the United States, according to a report released today by the California Budget Project (CBP). Heads of households in these families were also less likely than their national counterparts to have a high school diploma or its equivalent. The study—*Working Hard, Falling Short: Investing in California's Working Families*—warns that failing to address these challenges could weaken California's ability to compete in a global, knowledge-based economy.

In particular, the report finds that:

ALMOST 30 PERCENT OF CALIFORNIA'S working families with children had incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level in 2002, when the poverty level for a family of four was \$18,392. The comparable figure for similar families elsewhere in the United States was about 25 percent.

- The vast majority of low-income California families were working families in 2002. More than nine out of 10 families with incomes between 100 and 200 percent of the federal poverty level included adults with significant work effort over the previous year.

- In 2002, adults without a high school diploma or its equivalent headed about 40 percent of California's low-income families. The comparable figure for the rest of the United States was about 23 percent.

- Almost half (45.8 percent) of California's families with children and incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level included married parents. For the rest of the United States, that figure was 34.4 percent.

THE REPORT ALSO CITES EVIDENCE suggesting that by 2020, more than 70 percent of California's prime working-age population will be non-white. Latinos and blacks, for example, are less likely to graduate from high school and to take the courses that would prepare them for college. In

addition, the baby boom generation is reaching retirement age. Given California's shifting demographic profile, the report concludes that education and training must be a priority if employers want a skilled workforce in the future.

NOTING THE LINK BETWEEN educational attainment and economic success, the report calls for more opportunities for low-income youth and working adults to obtain basic skills and qualify for postsecondary education. Specifically, the report recommends keeping student fees at affordable levels, especially in community colleges; maintaining adequately funded, need-based financial aid programs for students; targeting outreach programs to low-income communities; building up vocational and technical education programs; and expanding adult education and occupational skills training.

THE REPORT ALSO NOTES, however, that low-wage jobs are forecast to account for a large share of the California labor market. In 2003, more than half of all jobs in the state (52.4 percent) were in occupations with a median wage of no more than \$15 per hour, equivalent to an annual income of no more than \$31,200 for a full-time, full-year worker. Many of these jobs are in the service sector, which is expected to expand in the coming years. The report concludes that the state can help low-income working families make ends meet by increasing the supply of affordable housing; increasing enrollment in publicly supported health programs; creating a state earned income tax credit; and fully funding state child care programs.

The Executive Summary for *Working Hard, Falling Short: Investing in California's Working Families* can be downloaded from the CBP web site at <http://www.cbp.org/2005/0412wpfExecSumm.pdf>

National League's Democracy Agenda

Washington, D.C. – The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) today announced a Democracy Agenda to guide the organization's work. Launched on the 85th anniversary of the League's founding, it is an advocacy and public education effort to strengthen and renew the basic tenets of American democracy.

"The occasion of our 85th birthday provides an opportunity to look back and to the future," stated Kay J. Maxwell, LWVUS President. "Since our founding in 1920 we've come a long way, but much still needs to be done. The Democracy Agenda focuses on the most important foundations of our government and nation," added Maxwell.

"Years of band-aid solutions and neglect have allowed the mechanisms of many of our government systems to become weak and in some cases break down completely. The Democracy Agenda presents viable solutions to help overcome these persistent weaknesses and educate communities nationwide on how to make things better," Maxwell said.

"We will move the Democracy Agenda forward through the work of our members and supporters, community organizations, elected and government officials and the people of this nation," stated Maxwell. This effort seeks to protect our electoral processes through election reform and campaign finance reform, advance our representative government through nonpartisan redistricting, and preserve our constitutional rights by safeguarding civil liberties. The League will work to tackle these issues and others in related areas on behalf of all citizens.

"Now is the time to get to work," said Maxwell.

"Democracy is at risk when long lines and faulty voting processes keep Americans from voting and having their votes counted. Democracy is at risk when partisan gerrymandering ensures that elections are over before the people even vote. Democ-

racy is at risk when government actions threaten basic civil liberties. And, democracy is at risk when special interests pay for election campaigns. We must renew and repair our democracy so that it truly works for all citizens," Maxwell concluded.

LWVUS encourages state and local Leagues to make this unique democracy agenda their priority also. The Board envisions an overarching effort in strengthening and renewing democracy through advocacy, education and visibility efforts. This theme provides a framework for reaching out to the public, building League membership and accomplishing core program goals. Additional information about this special focus will be forthcoming.

The Board recognized that advocacy on many other League issues will also be appropriate during 2005. The other issues on which LWVUS expects to take some degree of priority action are *Clean Air, Social Security, D.C. Rights*, and protection of the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) from oil drilling.

Selection of these issues for priority action does not mean these are the only issues on which the LWVUS will take legislative or other advocacy action. We plan to continue our

current active monitoring of the many issues that are important to the League. However, we recognize that our resources are not unlimited and that there are many issues on which coalition partners may be better suited or more effective. For example, the Board discussed the fact that the major issues confronting Congress this year in the area of reproductive choice are likely to occur in the context of the Senate's consideration of judicial nominees. The Board reiterated the League's firm commitment to reproductive choice, but confirmed that maintaining the League's policy of not taking a position on particular political or judicial appointees is essential to our position as a well-respected nonpartisan voice.

Now
is the time
to get to work

Kay J. Maxwell
LWVUS President

Universal Health Care Coverage Model Lewin Group Report

The Health Care for All Californians Act: Cost and Economic Impacts Analysis, the long anticipated report of the Lewin Group, was released January 19. Senator Sheila Kuehl was joined at a press conference by John Shiels, Vice President of the Lewin Group, who conducted an analysis of SB 921, Kuehl's 2003-2004 bill to reform health care coverage in California. The Lewin study projected and compared the cost of health care in California under the current system and under the single payer system defined by SB 921. An earlier study for the state's landmark Health Care Options Project (HCOP), which compared three theoretical single payer models, also was conducted by the Lewin Group.

The new study indicates that the April 2004 version of SB 921 provides even greater savings than the models analyzed for the earlier HCOP study. The basic structure which creates the savings will not be changed as Kuehl's proposal is further amended for the 2005-2006 legislative session.

In addition to the analysis of SB 921, the Lewin study corroborates findings from other government studies on administrative, bulk purchasing and primary care savings. The Lewin findings also corroborate real-world cost savings experienced in single payer systems such as Medicare, the Veteran's Administration, Kaiser Permanente and the Canadian health care system.

Highlights of the SB 921 analysis include:

- Health care spending for coverage of all California residents would result in a reduction of \$8 billion in total health care spending in the first year.
- First year administrative costs would be reduced to 1.8 percent of health system expenditures, compared to California's current administrative system expenditures of about 30 percent.
- Administrative simplification would lower administrative costs by about \$20 billion in the first two years alone.

- Costs of providing services to currently uninsured and underinsured Californians would be around \$17 billion the first year and would be offset by savings of \$25 billion from reduced administrative costs and bulk purchasing of prescription drugs and durable medical equipment.

- First year savings of \$5.2 billion on the cost of pharmaceuticals and durable medical equipment would be achieved through the use of the state's purchasing power to negotiate price discounts.

- Expanded use of primary and preventive care would provide savings of \$3.4 billion during the first year.

- Total savings over the first decade are estimated to be \$343.6 billion, of which \$43.8 billion are savings to state and local governments.

- Estimated state and local government savings would include savings of \$1 billion on the cost of employee and retiree benefits in 2006.

- Californians would save money in spite of the fact that benefits provided by this insurance model for all residents include hospitalization, prescription drugs, dental, vision, and durable medical equipment coverage with no co-payments or deductibles.

Senator Kuehl pointed out, "The findings of the report confirm that California can create a fiscally sound state insurance plan that covers every Californian with a solid, comprehensive health plan, reduces costs and controls health cost inflation. . . . Finally—and this is very important—The Lewin Report is based on a model in which every Californian has access to the physician of his or her choice."

The report in its entirety is available at www.healthcareforall.org, the Web site of Health Care for All Californians, the organization that contracted for the Lewin study on SB 921.

Plans for Health Care Reform Legislation

DURING THE 2003-2004 LEGISLATIVE session SB 921 gained the support of 26 coauthors and many organizations, including the LWVC, and was passed by the Senate and by the Assembly Health Committee. In mid-February Senator Kuehl plans to introduce a new bill, the California Health Insurance Reliability Act (CHIRA), which will build on the health insurance model of SB 921. Senator Kuehl was joined at the January press conference by Senate President pro Tempore Don Perata, who pledged his support in moving the legislation in the coming legislative session. In addition, more legislators have committed to co-authoring the 2005-2006 bill.

New provisions being considered include a tax structure that would replace, at much lower cost, what individuals and employers now pay for health care.

The LWVC has not yet taken a position on this bill.

Member News

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Anne Christine Gernant
Robert Roe
Carol Ross

FEELING MUCH BETTER

Lorene Simon
Alan Wilson

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHIES

to **Terry Bailey**
on the death of her father

CATHY SELLITTO

NOTARY PUBLIC

Mobile Service

Business Hospitals Residence

(818) 502-0661



Membership Application

It is easy to join the League of Women Voters of Glendale/Burbank. All Citizens of voting age are welcome. Associate Membership is open to all others.

YES! I want to add my voice to yours by joining the League of Women Voters as part of your voice for citizens and force for change. I enclose: (please check one or more of the following)

- \$60.00 for a one-year individual membership (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- \$100.00 for a one-year household membership for two members who share the same address (includes a copy of our VOTER, nine times per year)
- I am unable to join League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$ _____

Name/Names _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

I would like to receive my VOTER by email.
My email address is _____)

Make check payable to League of Women Voters. Mail to Vera Naylor, 7714 Via Capri, Burbank CA 91504

Gifts made payable to "LWV Education Fund" are tax deductible.

The Voter

is published nine times a year by the League of Women Voter of Glendale/Burbank, California

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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 advocacy.

The League never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and come to a consensus on. In an era of proliferating and powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.



League Awarded MacArthur Grant for Civil Liberties

Recently, the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) was awarded a \$225,000 grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to coordinate a national public dialogue about the delicate balance between civil liberties and homeland security

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fax: 818.242.0525
M-F 8:30-6:30
Sat. 10-4; Sun. 12-4

249 N. Brand Blvd.
Glendale, CA 91203
Corner of Brand / Calif.
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League of Women Voters
Burbank/Glendale

VOTER

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League websites:
LWV Glendale/Burbank
<http://www.gb.ca.lwvnet.org>

LWV California
<http://www.ca.LWV.org>

LWV United States
<http://www.LWV.org>

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