



**LWVCT Public Issues Team 2010 Legislative Session Wrap Up** revised October 2010

The League’s Public Issues Team is pleased to provide an end of session legislative wrap up for members and friends. We hope you find it informative. Please go to the Action Page of the LWVCT website to see the actual testimony, communications and/or alerts on the bills outlined in the update:

<http://www.lwvct.org/action.htm>

The positions upon which our advocacy is based are also available online at: <http://www.lwvct.org/issues/resources/impact09.htm>

**SPECIAL SESSIONS – June, August 2010**

<b>ELECTION LAWS/ GOVERNMENT AREA</b>					
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Bill No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Bill Description</b>	<b>LWV’s Position</b>	<b>Status</b>
Election Reform/Military Voters	SB 501	AAC Absentee Voting By Members Of The Military	Changes state election law to comply with the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act, which Congress passed in October 2009 and applies to the November 2010 general election. Generally, it allows (1) applications for absentee ballots to be issued and returned by electronic means and (2) military and overseas absentee ballots to be issued by electronic means. The applicant or voter determines whether the application or ballot is delivered electronically or by another permitted method.	Support	Passed by both chambers/Signed by Governor/PA 10-1
Campaign Finance Reform/Citizens’ Election Program	SB 551	AAC Clean Elections	Responds to Second Circuit Court of Appeals’ rulings regarding the Citizens’ Election Program and bans on lobbyists’ contributions. Among other things, the bill eliminates the reversion clause and replaces it with a severability clause, eliminates the	Support	Passed by House and Senate. Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden by legislature/PA 10-1.

			<p>CEP's matching grant (i. e., "trigger") provisions for independent and excess expenditures, lifts the lobbyist contribution ban and establishes a \$100 contribution limit in its place, re-instates the sessional ban on contributions for communicator lobbyists, authorizes communicator lobbyists to give qualifying contributions (QCs) to participating candidates, limits the ban on soliciting contributions by lobbyists, state contractors, and people and PACs associated with them, defines "bundling" and establishes a restriction on bundling contributions and increases CEP grants for participating gubernatorial candidates. The bill retains the ban on contributions by state contractors, which the appeals court upheld.</p> <p>The bill also reduces the grant participating candidates receive if they possess a specified minimum number of lawn signs from any previous primary or general election, codifies the term "slate committee" for campaign finance and CEP purposes, and expands the list of items and services that are not considered contributions.</p>		
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**REGULAR SESSION ending May 2010**

<b>ELECTION LAWS/ GOVERNMENT AREA</b>					
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Bill No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Bill Description</b>	<b>LWV's Position</b>	<b>Status</b>
Campaign Finance Reform/Citizens' Election Program	Governor's Deficit Mitigation Plan/SB 492	Governor's March 1, 2010 Deficit Mitigation Plan/AAC Deficit Mitigation for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2011	Governor's plan would cut another \$12,000,000 from the CEP/SB 492 cuts \$6,000,000 from the program	Oppose	SB 492 passed the Senate, with 3 Ds and all Rs voting no/ Governor said she would veto the bill/ House originally planned to vote on package, but did not

					take it up in light of the Governor's veto threat (not enough votes in the Senate to override)/Died
Campaign Finance reform/Citizens' Election Program	HB 5545	AAC Deficit Mitigation for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2010	Transfers \$10 million from the Citizens' Election Fund to the General Fund for FY 2011 after January 1, 2011	LWV opposes further transfers from CEF, but if transfers must be made believes that they should happen after the 2010 election cycle	Passed both chambers/Signed by the Governor/PA 10-3
Campaign Finance Reform/Citizens' Election Program	HB 5544	AAC The Citizens' Election Fund	In order to give legislature more time to act, extends period of time before campaign finance law reverts back to pre-2005 law from 7 to 30 days in most cases /Reversion provision triggered when court issues an injunction prohibiting the payment of funds from the Citizens' Election Fund for 30 days	Support	Passed both chambers/Signed by Governor/PA 10-2
Campaign Finance Reform/ Citizens' Election Program	HB 5018	AA Making Adjustments to State Expenditures and Revenues for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2011	Implements the Governor's Budget Recommendations/Cuts \$3.2 million from CEP	LWV submits written testimony asking Appropriations not to make any cuts to the CEP	Joint Favorable Substitute bill voted out of the Appropriations Committee/Maintains \$3.2 million cut to CEP/Died
Campaign Finance Reform/ Citizens' Election Program	HB 5021	AA Implementing the Governor's Recommendations Concerning the Citizens' Election Program	Responds to federal district court's ruling declaring portions of the CEP unconstitutional by reducing grants, making eligibility thresholds party neutral, and suspending matching grants for independent and excess expenditures during the pendency of the appeal. Repeals the reversion clause.	Support	Substitute bill voted out of GAE Committee/Voted favorably out of Appropriations Committee/Renamed AAC The Citizens' Elections Program/Died
Campaign Finance Reform/Citizens' Election Program	HB 5022	AAC The Citizens' Election Program	Responds to federal district court's ruling by reducing grant amounts, eliminating grants for unopposed candidates, and making technical changes. Contingent upon a ruling by the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, reduces qualifying thresholds for minor party and petitioning candidates, and replaces the triggers for matching grants for independent and excess expenditures with a new supplemental grant available only to certain	Support	Substitute bill voted out of GAE Committee/Gutted and renamed AAC A Minor Revision to the Citizens' Election Program/Made minor technical change/Died

			candidates. Repeals the reversion clause.		
Campaign Finance Reform/Independent Expenditures	5471	AAC Independent Expenditures	Responds to the US Supreme Court's decision in <i>Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission</i> which allows corporations to directly fund attack ads and other independent expenditures. Provides that independent expenditures made by an entity must be properly disclosed and attributed to the entity making the expenditure.	Support	Substitute bill voted out of GAE Committee/Creates rebuttable presumption re: certain types of expenditures/ Expenditures must be disclosed to SEEC in most cases and carry attribution/Passed by consent and signed by Governor/ PA 10-187
State Elections Enforcement Commission/Citizens' Election Program/Election Reform	HB 5428	AAC The Powers and Duties of the State Elections Enforcement Commission, the Integrity of Elections and Revisions to the Citizens' Election Program	Among other things, augments the powers of the SEEC, makes a violation of the "Voter's Bill of Rights" subject to penalty, provides monetary fines for the failure to file a candidate intent affidavit under the Citizens' Election Program, lowers the threshold for mandatory electronic filings to the SEEC, extends the SEEC's review period for grant applications for candidates for state-wide offices, and repeals the reversion clause (section 9-717)	Support	Substitute bill voted out of GAE Committee/Referred to Judiciary Committee/Joint Favorable/Tabled for House calendar/Died
Citizens' Election Program/Election Reform/Voting Procedures	SB 421	AAC Elections	Omnibus bill which makes changes to various election statutes. Changes include (1) repealing Section 9-717, the "reversion" clause in the public financing law, (2) making other changes to the <u>campaign finance laws</u> , including dealing with the issue of lawn signs, streamlining filing procedures and timelines, adding and clarifying definitions, allowing the SEEC additional time to review complicated statewide grant applications, and requiring electronic filing of financial disclosure statements in most cases, (3) extending the use of <u>provisional ballots</u> to all elections, (4) allowing the transmission of <u>absentee ballot applications and ballots</u> by electronic means, subject to certain safeguards and (5) adopting measures to ensure that <u>military and overseas voters</u> have sufficient time to vote. Also, extends the time electors who change party affiliation must wait before	Support with the exception of the provision extending the period of time for attachment of party privileges for voters who change parties	Substitute bill voted out of GAE Committee/Eliminated provisions re: provisional ballots, repeal of Section 9-717, provisions dealing with military and overseas ballots and the attachment of party privileges/ Remaining provisions dealt with campaign finance changes/Died

			their enrollment privileges in the new party take effect from 3 months to 4 months		
Election Reform/Absentee Ballots	HB 5442	AAC Absentee Voting by Members of the Military and by Citizens Living Abroad	Amends statutes to conform to the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act. Allows for transmission of applications for absentee ballots and ballots by electronic means, subject to certain safeguards.	Support	Substitute bill voted out of GAE Committee Passed in the House/Never taken up by the Senate/Died
Election Reform	HB 5441	AAC Certain Revisions to Elections Related Statutes	Among other things, expands the use of provisional ballots to all elections, gives the Secretary of the State access to polling places on Election Day for purposes of reviewing compliance with state and federal law, adopts measures to address voting privacy issues in a consistent manner and extends the prohibition on transporting, preparing, repairing and maintaining a voting machine in C.G.S. §9-247a to business entities affiliated with a candidate	Support	Substitute bill voted out of GAE Committee Passed in the House/Never taken up by the Senate/Died
Election Reform/Voting Technology/Audits	SB 364	AAC Post-Election Audits	Substitutes audits using different machines for the current system of hand counted post-election audits	Oppose	Public hearing held in the GAE Committee/ No further action taken/Died
Election Reform/Same Day Registration	HB 5321	AAC A Pilot Program for Municipal Primary Registration	Establishes a pilot program to permit same day registration for municipal primaries in 2011	Support	Substitute bill voted out of GAE Committee/Similar to original bill/Fiscal impact \$40,000 to SOTS, under \$5000 per municipality/ Referred to Appropriations Committee/Motion failed/Died
Election Reform/Voters with Disabilities	SB 287	AAC Accessible Voting for Voters with Disabilities or Needing Assistance	Provides that each polling place comply with requirements for assisting electors with disabilities and prohibits a candidate who is on the ballot from assisting an elector in the voting booth	Support	Substitute bill voted out of GAE Committee Referred to Planning & Development/Joint Favorable/Tabled for Senate calendar/Died
Transparency in Government	SB 290	AAC The Publication of State	Requires state agency regulations to be posted on the Internet web site of the state agency	Support	Public hearing held by GAE Committee/Voted

		Agency Regulations on the Internet	adopting such regulations		to change reference to the Appropriations Committee/Voted out of Approps 55 – 0/ Tabled for calendar in the Senate/Died
Ethics	HB 5403	AAC Revisions to the Code of Ethics	Omnibus bill that, among other things, allows notaries public and justices of the peace to serve on the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board, staggers appointments to the CEAB, allows reappointments to the board, permits members of the board to serve beyond their term to adjudicate at a board hearing for a pending matter, and requires prospective members to certify that they are aware of the special restrictions of the Code of Ethics for Public Officials that would apply to them. Also gives the Office of State Ethics the authority to interpret certain existing statutes, limits gift giving between supervisors and subordinates to one hundred dollars per year (rather than per gift), requires lobbyists to report gifts to state employees, and adds employer other than the state to the conflict of interest provisions.	Support	Substitute bill voted out of the GAE Committee/Died
Media/PEG/Video Providers	HB 5509	AAC Public Access Television and the Definition of Public Service Companies	Designed to improve & protect community access television in the state by preserving the number of access channels and setting standards for signal quality by all providers. Also removes holders of a certificate of cable franchise authority from the definition of a public service company.	LWV supports provisions supporting community access television, but opposes removing holders of a certificate of cable franchise authority from the definition of a public service company	Public hearing held by Energy & Technology Committee/No further action taken/Died
Media/PEG/Video Providers	HB 5463	AAC Periodic Review of Video Providers	Provides for a regular review by the DPUC of every company providing service in the cable TV/video industry	Support	Substitute bill voted out of the Energy & Technology Committee Referred to Appropriations Committee/Joint Favorable/Tabled for calendar in the Senate/Died

Media/PEG/state public affairs TV	SB 350	AAC Satellite Television	Provides incentive for satellite TV providers to carry Connecticut Television Network, by increasing gross receipts tax for providers who do not carry CT-N	Support	Voted out of the Energy & Technology Committee/Referred to Finance Committee/Never taken up/Died
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**NATURAL RESOURCES**

Topic	Bill No	Title	Bill Description	LWV's Position	Status
Environmental Protection	SB 453	AAC The State's Regulatory Environment	Seeks to streamline the state's regulatory system	Oppose because would not streamline but weaken regulations and CT Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) oversight.	Voted out of Commerce Committee/Voted out of Environment Committee/Referred to Appropriations Committee/Died
Water Resources	SB 174	AAC The Standards of Water Quality	Seeks to change the procedures and requirements for adopting water quality standards.	LWV supports underlying bill but opposes amendment that would undermine DEP water standards adoption process currently underway.	Voted out of Commerce Committee/Voted out of Environment Committee/Voted out of Public Health/ Tabled for calendar in the Senate/Died

**SOCIAL POLICY**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Bill No</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Bill Description</b>	<b>LWV's position</b>	<b>Status</b>
Gun Control	HB 5158	AAC The Regulation Of Firearms	Would regulate the sale and use of firearms, including mandating annual firearms safety refresher and requiring notification of a firearm purchase to the Department of Public Safety no later than twenty-four hours after purchase.	Support	Voted out of the Public Safety Committee/ Referred to Judiciary Committee/Never taken up/Died
School Finance	SB 279	AAC Foreign Languages Taught in the Public Schools	Would add 2 years of foreign language to high school graduation requirements beginning with the class of 2016	Oppose due to cost and lack of new funding to cover the significant additional costs it would impose on school districts	Died in Education Committee  Note: provisions of this bill were incorporated into SB 438 which passed PA 10-111
School Finance	HB 5489	AAC Secondary School Reform	Increased high school graduation requirements, including 2 years of foreign language, beginning with the class of 2017 if federal funding is secured, otherwise with the class on 2019. Required the state to provide grants to school districts beginning in 2012 for implementation, but specified neither the amount nor criteria for determining the amount of grants.	Oppose due to cost and lack of specific funding stream	Voted out of Education Committee/Voted out of Appropriations Committee/Died on House calendar  Note: provisions of this bill were incorporated into SB 438 which passed PA 10-111
School Finance	HB 5491	AAC Certain School District Reforms to Reduce the Achievement Gap in Connecticut	A multi-pronged set of proposals, including online credit recovery and universal AP programs	Oppose due to cost and lack of new funding	Voted out of Education Committee/Voted out of Appropriations Committee/Amended version passed by the House/Died on the Senate calendar Note: provisions of this bill were incorporated into SB 438 which passed. PA 10-111
School Finance	HB 5493	AAC Strategic Planning in State Education Policy and Charter School Funding	Would require the state to pay tuition for charter school students equal to the expenditure per pupil of each student's home district. The state would deduct tuition from home district ECS grants. Reimbursement to districts is less than 100% and only within available appropriations	Oppose due to impact on ECS & disproportionate affect on poor towns.	Died in Education Committee Note: provisions of this bill were incorporated into SB 438 which passed PA 10-111

School Finance	SB 438	AAC Charter Schools	Combines provisions from 279, 5489, 5491, 5493 and others in a massive ed reform package that raises high school graduation requirements beginning with the class of 2018, immediately lifts restrictions on charter school growth (without changing how they are funded), adds student academic growth to teacher evaluations as of 2013, requires development of a statewide longitudinal data system in 2012, and implements measure to close the achievement gap in 2011.		Passed PA 10-111
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## **OTHER ADVOCACY**

<b>STATE</b>
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Topic				LWV's Position	Status
School Finance				Urges State Board of Education to reject proposal to require local school district funding of charter schools	Proposal rejected. Task force established to study and make recommendations in Fall 2010 for overhauling the state's school finance system.
Transportation				<p>In order to reduce congestion on our roads, reduce green house gas emissions and increase needed revenue for transportation projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● urges CGA Transportation Committee to support congestion pricing rather than border tolls as a congestion reduction measure and revenue generator for the State Transportation Fund</li> <li>●urges CGA Leadership to make transit investment a priority in the Transportation Budget</li> </ul>	Border toll proposal failed; crippling transit cuts avoided.
<b>NATIONAL</b>					
Topic	Bill No	Title	Bill Description	LWV's Position	Status
Air Quality/Clean Air	H.J. Res 45	Pay-as-you Go of	Would strip the US	Oppose	Not voted upon

<b>Act</b>		2010 Murkowski amendment	Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) authority to regulate global warming pollution under the Clean Air Act	amendment	
<b>Climate Change</b>				Urges support for strong climate change legislation Joins Oxfam America as part of the 100 "Sisters on the Planet" Ambassadors to Washington, DC to advocate for climate legislation	No bill voted upon
<b>Election Laws/Campaign Finance</b>		DISCLOSE ACT: Democracy is Strengthened by Casting Light on Spending in Elections Act	Would create strong new disclosure rules, require more complete disclaimers by those running campaign ads, bar election spending by foreign corporations, and prohibit election ads by large federal contractors or corporations that receive federal bailout funds.	Support - Urges Congressional delegation to pass DISCLOSE ACT well in advance of the 2010 elections	Passed in House/Died in Senate
<b>Health Care</b>	HR 3590 and H.R. 3962	Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and Affordable Health Care for America Act	Comprehensive health care reform intended to reduce costs, improve health, quality of care and access to care,	Support	Reconciliation Bill Passed/Became Public Law No 111-148
<b>Reproductive Choice</b>	H.R. 3590	Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Stupak/Pitts amendment	Health Care Reform	Oppose Stupak/Pitts amendment which would restrict women's access to abortion coverage in the private health insurance market	Amendment was not included in Public Law No. 111-148 but the Hyde Amendment, restricting the use of federal funds for abortions, was issued by executive order by President Obama and extended to the bill.

				but support underlying bill	
<b>Transportation</b>		Public Transportation Preservation Act of 2010	Contained \$2 billion in grants for transit agencies across the US to preserve public transit.	Support	Died in Committee