



# LWVCT Legislative Wrap Up: 2011

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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 Advocacy Pages of the LWVCT website to see the actual testimony, communications and/or alerts on the bills outlined in the update: <http://www.lwvct.org/advocacy-overview.html>

The positions upon which our advocacy is based are also available online on the Advocacy Overview page of our website.

## Election Laws & Government Bills

■ **Bill No. HB 6651:** *AA Implementing Provisions of the Budget Concerning General Government*

**Subject Area:** Campaign Finance/State Elections Enforcement Commission

**Bill Description:** Creates the Office of Government Accountability (see below under Ethics SB 1009) and makes changes to the state election laws on campaign finance. Among other things, the bill makes scheduling revisions for the Citizens' Election Program, expands the list of goods and services that are not considered campaign contributions, eliminates mandatory audits of publicly financed campaigns and creates a system for random audits, and makes changes to the reporting requirements for organization and excess expenditures.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed consolidation of the watchdog agencies under the Office of Government Accountability.

**Bill Status:** Passed by the House and Senate/ P.A. 11-48/ Signed by the Governor

■ **Bill No. HB 6335:** *AAC Revisions to the Campaign Finance Laws*

**Subject Area:** Campaign Finance/ Contributions, Expenditures, Reporting

**Bill Description:** Makes changes to the campaign finance laws with respect to contributions, expenditures and reporting.

**LWVCT Position:** LWVCT followed, but did not testify on this bill.

**Bill Status:** Voted out of the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee/Died on the House calendar/ Many of the provisions included in this bill were included in HB 6651 (the budget implementer) which was ultimately passed and signed by the Governor.

■ **Bill No. SB 945:** *AAC Electronic Filing of Campaign Reports with the State Elections Enforcement Commission*

**Subject Area:** Campaign Finance/ Electronic Filing of Reports



**Bill Description:** Lowers the threshold for electronic filing of campaign finance reports from \$250,000 to \$4,500 for statewide candidates. Extends the electronic filing requirement to certain individuals and committees.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Voted out of the GAE Committee/ Referred to the Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding/ No action/ Dead

■ **Bill No. HB 6044:** ***AAC Audits Conducted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission***

**Subject Area:** Campaign Finance Reform/State Elections Enforcement Commission, Audits

**Bill Description:** Exempts from audits any candidate who does not accept public financing and spends less than the public financing threshold and establishes the maximum of candidates to be audited at not more than 40%.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed

**Bill Status:** Died in the GAE Committee

■ **Bill No. SB 942:** ***AAC The Integrity of Elections***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Secretary of the State's bill

**Bill Description:** Establishes procedures to address issues that may arise at polling places. Requires registrars of voters to (1) develop a municipal emergency contingency plan and (2) certify to the Secretary of the State (SOTS) the number of ballots they order for each polling place. In the absence of a certification or a waiver, the bill requires registrars to order one ballot for each registered voter. Registrars must also certify polling place locations and provide moderator contact information. Bill authorizes the SOTS to (1) access polling places, unless she is a candidate on the ballot, and review them for election law compliance and (2) disqualify moderators under certain circumstances. Reduces the duration of a moderator's certification to two years after 10/1/2011.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Passed House and Senate/ P.A. 11 – 46/ Signed by the Governor

■ **Bill No. SB 939:** ***AAC Election Related Statutes***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Election Related Statutes

**Bill Description:** Makes changes to election laws affecting voter registry lists, the conduct of primaries and elections, election officials, voting equipment and polling places, post-election procedures, and certain campaign finance forms. Prohibits businesses affiliated with a candidate from transporting, preparing, repairing or maintaining voting tabulators. Codifies in law voter privacy practices currently in regulation. Expands the investigatory powers of the SEEC to allow it to conduct investigations based on statements that registrars of voters file alleging election violations. Makes electors with permanent disabilities eligible for permanent absentee ballot status. Requires SOTS to recommend a method for online voting for military personnel stationed out of state. Imposes a ban on lobbyist contributions to committees associated with candidates while the General Assembly is in session. Final version requires moderators to attribute "unknown" votes for cross-endorsed candidates based on a formula.



**LWVCT Position:** Supported with the exception of provisions related to “unknown” votes for cross-endorsed candidates (provisions changed in final bill) and provisions regarding online voting for military personnel.

**Bill Status:** House and Senate passed/ P.A. 11-173/ Signed by Governor

■ **Bill No. HB5978** ***AAC Permanent Absentee Ballot Status for Disabled Voters***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Absentee Ballots

**Bill Description:** Makes electors with permanent disabilities eligible for permanent absentee ballot status.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Bill died in the GAE Committee/ Provision passed as part of SB 939.

■ **Bill No. SB 753:** ***AAC On-Line Voting for Military Personnel Stationed Out of State***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Military Voters, Online Voting

**Bill Description:** Allows for on-line voting by military personnel stationed out of state.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed

**Bill Status:** Bill died in the GAE Committee/ A provision requiring the Secretary of the State to recommend a method for online voting for military voters stationed out of state passed as part of P.A. 11-173. See SB 939.

■ **Bill No. HB 6333:** ***AAC Provisional Ballots for State and Municipal Elections***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Provisional Ballots

**Bill Description:** Authorizes provisional ballots for use in state and municipal elections under the same circumstances as they are currently authorized for use in federal elections. Requires their use in place of challenge ballots.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Passed the House / Died in the Senate

■ **Bill No. SB 384:** ***AAC The Number of Polling Places and Moderators for Primaries***

**HB 6332:** ***AAC Primaries, Petition and Ballot Preparation Laws***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Procedures

**Bill Description:** Bills provide for election law changes including, among other things, the number of polling places and moderators for primaries, hiring of poll workers, and preparation of ballots.



**LWVCT Position:** Supported  
**Bill Status:** Died in the GAE Committee

■ **Bill No. HJ 88:** *Resolution Amending the State Constitution to Grant Authority to the General Assembly Regarding Election Administration*

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Absentee Ballots

**Bill Description:** Proposes a constitutional amendment (1) to eliminate the requirement for electors to gather on Election Day to elect state officers and General Assembly members and (2) to remove restrictions on absentee voting.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported  
**Bill Status:** Voted out of the GAE Committee/ Died on the House calendar

■ **Bill No. SJ 25:** *Resolution Amending the State Constitution to Allow for No-Excuse Absentee Voting*  
**SB 941:** *AA Implementing No-Excuse Absentee Voting*

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Absentee Ballots

**Bill Description:** Resolution removes restrictions on absentee-voting; bill implements no excuse absentee voting after passage of constitutional amendment.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported  
**Bill Status:** Bills died in the GAE Committee

■ **Bill No. SB 940:** *AAC Post-Election Audits*

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Voting Machines/ Post-Election Audits

**Bill Description:** Permits audits to be performed either manually or using an independent machine rather than a tabulator.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed  
**Bill Status:** Died in the GAE Committee

■ **Bill No. SB 804:** *AAC Recurring Post-Election Audits*

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Voting Machines/ Post-Election Audits

**Bill Description:** Exempts any municipality that has successfully completed a post-election audit from being randomly selected for an audit for ten years.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed  
**Bill Status:** Died in the GAE Committee



■ **Bill No. HB 5727:** ***AAC Post-Election Audit Procedures***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Voting Machines/ Post-Election Audits

**Bill Description:** Provides a four year exemption period for small towns which have undergone a post-election audit and further provides that registrars of voters will no longer be personally liable for failure to follow audit procedures. Instead, fines will be levied against municipalities.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed

**Bill Status:** Died in the GAE Committee

■ **Bill No. HB 6330:** ***AAC Certain Revisions to Elections Related Statutes***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Technical Revisions

**Bill Description:** Makes technical, minor and conforming election law changes to reflect the change from lever to optical scan voting machines.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Passed the House and Senate/ P.A. 11 – 20/ Signed by the Governor

■ **Bill No. HB 6331:** ***AAC An Agreement Among the States to Elect the President of the United States by National Popular Vote***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/National Popular Vote

**Bill Description:** Adopts the interstate compact entitled “The Agreement Among the States to Elect the President by National Popular Vote” under which Connecticut would commit its presidential electors to the winner of the national popular vote winner in a presidential election. Originally HB 6163.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Voted out of the GAE Committee/ Died on the House calendar

■ **Bill No. SJ 16:** ***Resolution Recognizing the Current Electoral College System as the Best Way to Elect the President of the United States***

**Subject Area:** Election Laws/ Electoral College

**Bill Description:** Recognizes the Electoral College as the best means of electing the president of the United States.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed

**Bill Status:** Died in the GAE Committee



■ **Bill No. SB 1009:** *AA Creating the Office of Governmental Accountability*

**Subject Area:** Ethics/ Watchdog Agencies

**Bill Description:** Establishes an Office of Governmental Accountability (OGA) and makes the new office responsible for most of the state “watchdog” functions by placing the Office of State Ethics, the State Elections Enforcement Commission, the Freedom of Information Commission, the Judicial Review Council and the State Contracting Board within the OGA.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed

**Bill Status:** Bill was successfully voted out of the GAE and Judiciary Committees/ Referred to the Appropriations Committee/ Bill died in the Appropriations Committee, however, its provisions were included in the budget implementer bill for general government which passed. See HB 6651.

■ **Bill No. SB 1197:** *AAC Establishing a Legislative Code of Conduct and House of Representatives and Senate Bipartisan Committees on Ethics*

**Subject Area:** Ethics/Legislative Ethics Code

**Bill Description:** Establishes a (1) legislative code of conduct and (2) procedure for convening a legislative ethics committee to decide complaints by a General Assembly member alleging misconduct by another member.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Successfully voted out of the Legislative and Appropriations Committees/ Died in the Senate

■ **Bill No. HB 6272:** *AAC Revisions to the State Codes of Ethics*

**Subject Area:** Ethics/State Codes of Ethics

**Bill Description:** Makes changes to the State Codes of Ethics for public officials and lobbyists. Expands the matters that create a conflict of interest.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Voted out of the GAE Committee/ Died on the House calendar

■ **Bill No. HB 6273:** *AAC The Office of State Ethics*

**Subject Area:** Ethics/ Office of State Ethics

**Bill Description:** Makes changes to the Citizen’s Ethics Advisory Board. Narrows restrictions on contributions by board members and OSE employees, but otherwise prohibits them from participating in political campaigns.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Voted out of the GAE and Judiciary Committees/ Died in the House



■ **Bill No. SB 880:** ***AAC The Publication of State Agency Regulations on the Internet***

**Subject Area:** Good Government/ Transparency

**Bill Description:** Requires state agencies to post their regulations on their websites.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Substitute bill, AAC Guidelines for the Department of Education for the Charging of Fees for Certain Records, voted out of GAE Committee/Voted out of the Education Committee /Died in the Senate

■ **Bill No. SB 806:** ***AA Requiring the Public Posting of Budget Bills Prior to Any Vote***

**Subject Area:** Good Government/ Transparency

**Bill Description:** Requires any appropriation or revenue related bill to be posted on the General Assembly website 72 hours before any vote.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Died in the GAE Committee

■ **Bill No. HB 6458:** ***AAC Periodic Overview of Video Providers***

**Subject Area:** Media/ Community Access TV/Video Providers

**Bill Description:** Requires the DPUC to conduct a performance review of each firm holding a certificate to provide cable TV service, including the company's provision of community access programming. Allows entities that receive funds for community access to use those funds for labor and staff expenses.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Passed in the House/ Died in the Senate

■ **Bill No. HB 6460:** ***AAC Public Access Channels***

**Subject Area:** Media/ Community Access TV/Video Providers

**Bill Description:** Provides for the creation of town-specific access channels. Allows entities that receive subscriber funds to use the money to create and develop town-specific community access programming, including for labor and staff expenses. Ensures continued funding of town-specific channels where it existed before 2008.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Voted out of the Energy & Technology Committee/ Died on the House calendar



## Natural Resources Bills

■ **Bill No. AAC** *The Establishment of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and Planning for*

**SB 1/1243:** *Connecticut's Energy Future*

**Subject Area:** Energy/Global Warming

**Bill Description:** Creates the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) by merging the departments of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Public Utility Control (DPUC). The bill also includes (1) Property-Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing that will let municipalities issue low-interest, low-risk loans to home- and business-owners for energy improvements, (2) a "Green Bank" that will leverage private investment, federal funding, and other sources to finance large-scale projects, and an accompanying Green Loan Guarantee Fund, (3) measures to increase building energy efficiency, (4) new programs for residential solar and for zero-emission electric generation, (5) measures to reduce energy costs by reforming how Connecticut buys power, and (6) efficiency standards for televisions, DVD players and other home electronics.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Passed by House and Senate/ P.A. 11-80/ Signed by the Governor

■ **Bill No. SB 60:** *AAC The Enforcement and Permitting Duties of the Department of Environmental Protection*

**Subject Area:** Environment

**Bill Description:** Requires DEP to establish adequate staffing levels for enforcement and permitting.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Voted out of the Environment Committee/ Died in the Appropriations Committee

■ **Bill No. HB 6380:** *AAC The Budget for the Biennium*

**Subject Area:** Environment

**Bill Description:**

**LWVCT Position:** Submitted testimony to the Appropriations Committee in support of funding for the Department of Environmental Protection and the Council of Environmental Quality

**Bill Status:** Under the budget that passed, CEQ became part of the new Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

■ **Bill No. SB 1196:** *AAC The Conveyance of Certain Parcels of Land and the Removal of Certain Traffic Signs*

**Subject Area:** Land Use

**Bill Description:** Authorizes "Haddam Land Swap" of land that was purchased by the state with a commitment to the seller that it remain open space in perpetuity.



**LWVCT Position:** Opposed  
**Bill Status:** Passed by House and Senate/ Special Act 11-16/ Signed by Governor

- **Bill No. HB 6200:** ***AAC The Establishment of Tolls for the Extension of Route 11***
  - Subject Area:** Transportation
  - Bill Description:** Authorizes the Department of Transportation to establish tolls to extend Route 11 from Salem to I-95.
  - LWVCT Position:** Opposed
  - Bill Status:** Passed the House/ Died on the Senate calendar

- **Bill No. SB 31, HB 5949, and HB 6136:** ***“Border Tolling” Bills***
  - Subject Area:** Transportation
  - Bill Description:** Require the creation of border tolls in various forms.
  - LWVCT Position:** Opposed/Submitted statements to the Transportation Committee suggesting consideration of congestion pricing in lieu of border tolls
  - Bill Status:** All three bills died in the Transportation Committee

- **Bill No. HB 6380:** ***AAC The Budget for the Biennium***
  - Subject Area:** Transportation
  - Bill Description:**
  - LWVCT Position:**
  - Bill Status:** Voted out of the Appropriations Committee. While the Governor’s Budget, HB 6380, died on the House calendar, the Governor’s budget was approved as part of HB 6701, subsequent to union ratification of concessions needed to balance the budget, with the transportation section intact. Bus and rail fares will increase incrementally over the next several years.

- **Bill No. HB 5940:** ***AA Requiring the Creation of Strategic Plans for Passenger and Freight Rail Service***
  - Subject Area:** Transportation
  - Bill Description:** Requires DOT to create a strategic rail plan.
  - LWVCT Position:** Supported
  - Bill Status:** Died in the Transportation Committee



■ **Bill No. SB 57:** *AA Expanding the Beverage Container System*

**Subject Area:** Waste  
**Bill Description:** Expands the bottle bill to include teas, fruit juices and sports drinks.  
**LWVCT Position:** Supported  
**Bill Status:** Died in the Environment Committee

■ **Bill No. SB 832:** *AAC The Protection of Certain Natural Vegetation Near Rivers*

**Subject Area:** Water Resources  
**Bill Description:** Prohibits municipal zoning regulations from allowing disturbances to areas of natural vegetation within 100 feet of a river but allows such regulations to provide a special permit procedure for site-specific relief under certain circumstances.  
**LWVCT Position:** Supported  
**Bill Status:** Voted out of the Environment Committee/ Died in the Planning & Development Committee

■ **Bill No. SB 1020:** *AAC Water Resources and Economic Development*

**Subject Area:** Water Resources  
**Bill Description:** Circumvents the established Regulation Review process and blocks reforms to protect stream flows.  
**LWVCT Position:** Opposed  
**Bill Status:** Successfully voted out of the Commerce Committee/Recommitted by the Senate to the Commerce Committee/ Died in committee

■ **Bill No. SB 6400:** *AAC Licensure of Stormwater Professionals*

**Subject Area:** Water Resources  
**Bill Description:** Creates a licensing program for stormwater professionals.  
**LWVCT Position:** Opposed  
**Bill Status:** Voted out of Commerce and Planning & Development Committees/ Died in the House

■ **Bill No. SB 1242:** *AA Authorizing Bonds of the State....*

**Subject Area:** Water Resources  
**Bill Description:** Includes bond authorization for the Clean Water Fund.  
**LWVCT Position:** Supported  
**Bill Status:** Passed House and Senate/ P.A. 11-57/ Signed by Governor



## Social Policy Bills

■ **Bill No. SB 1035:** *AA Revising the Penalties for Capital Felonies*

**Subject Area:** Death Penalty

**Bill Description:** Eliminates the death penalty as a sentencing option for a capital felony committed on or after the bill's effective date, leaving life imprisonment without the possibility of release as the penalty.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Voted out of the Judiciary Committee/Died in the Senate after two senators who had previously favored repeal of the death penalty stated publicly that they did not want to take action on the bill after meeting with the sole survivor of a family murder

■ **Bill No. SB 1094:** *AA Banning Large Capacity Ammunition Magazines*

**Subject Area:** Gun Laws

**Bill Description:** Prohibits the possession of certain ammunition feeding devices that accept more than ten rounds.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Died in the Judiciary Committee

■ **Bill No. SB 1210:** *AAC The Use of Deadly Force to Defend the Residents of a Home*

**Subject Area:** Gun Laws

**Bill Description:** Creates a presumption that it is reasonable to use deadly force to defend oneself from a person who has unlawfully entered a dwelling.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed

**Bill Status:** Died in the Judiciary Committee

■ **Bill No. SB 1239:** *AAC The Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2013 and Other Provisions Relating to Revenue*

**Subject Area:** Income Assistance

**Bill Description:** Among other things, creates a state earned income tax credit set at 30% of the federal earned income tax credit.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Passed by House and Senate/ P.A. 11-6/ Signed by the Governor

■ **Bill No. SB 877:** *AAC Mental Health Parity*

**Subject Area:** Mental Health



**Bill Description:** Requires large group health insurance policies (those with more than 50 members) to comply with the federal Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (MHPAEA, P. L. 110-343) and its regulations .

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** Voted out of Insurance and Real Estate Committee/Died in the Senate

■ **Bill No. HB 6380:** ***AAC The Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2013***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** The Governor's budget proposals for FYs 2012 and 2013. Flat funds most education grants, but cuts student transportation & priority school district (PSD) grants by 10%. Proposes a task force to study Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grants and other means of funding education.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported most flat funding, opposed cuts to transportation and priority school districts, expressed concern re: ongoing cap on special education Excess Cost Grant, supported ECS task force.

**Bill Status:** Appropriations Committee added \$2 million total to Governor's proposals, restoring PSD grants to nearly flat and adding to some small grants; retained cut to transportation; adopted study of vo-tech system as proposed by Education Committee. See SB 1239 for final disposition

■ **Bill No. HB 6385:** ***AA Implementing the Budget Recommendations of the Governor Concerning Education***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** Fleshes out Governor's programmatic and funding proposals for education. Proposes a task force to study ECS and other means of funding education. Sets a Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) that would require towns to spend in 2012 & 2013 as much as they did in 2009 (i.e. essentially flat funding). Transfers control of vo-tech high schools to local or regional districts.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported ECS task force in hopes that it would bring funding more in line with LWVCT goals for school finance. Supported MBR as proposed. Expressed concern re: long term funding implications of vo-tech high school proposal and supported opt-out provision for local & regional boards of education.

**Bill Status:** Education Committee passed ECS Task Force unchanged, modified MBR to allow spending reductions for enrollment loss, scrapped vo-tech transfer in favor of a study on how the system should be administered. See HB 6651 for final disposition.

■ **Bill No. HB 6431:** ***AAC The Minimum Budget Requirement***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** Allows districts to reduce education spending based on reduced enrollment and savings generated by health plan changes, interdistrict cooperation, regionalization, etc.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed based on the difficulty of credibly documenting such savings and cost to administer bill's provisions.

**Bill Status:** Education Committee incorporated concept of allowing reductions for enrollment loss into HB 6385. Remainder died.



■ **Bill No. HB 6432:** ***AAC Closing the Achievement Gap***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** Establishes a task force to develop a statewide master plan to eliminate the achievement gap. Requires State Department of Education (SDE) to develop model Pre-kindergarten-Grade 4 curricula and establish a Cultural Resource Center. Places additional reporting requirements on districts with achievement gaps. Requires priority districts to provide universal pre-kindergarten (PreK) and full-day kindergarten (K) by 2013.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported task force. Expressed concern about cost of curricula and reporting in the absence of additional funding. Questioned adequacy of additional PreK funds in Governor's budget in the context of proposed cut to Priority School District grant.

**Bill Status:** Education Committee incorporated task force and PreK/K concepts into SB 929. Remainder died.

■ **Bill No. SB 1103:** ***AAC Early Childhood Education***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** Requires school districts to provide preschool; provides additional school readiness grants to towns and regional school readiness councils that make additional spaces available; eliminates the Office of Early Childhood Planning, Outreach and Coordination and requires SDE to begin a state-wide longitudinal evaluation of the school readiness program; amends the membership of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet and adds duties to the cabinet, giving it responsibility for coordinating all early care and education activities within SDE.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed PreK requirement on cost grounds and questioned long term viability of proposed funding structure.

**Bill Status:** Education Committee struck PreK requirement. Appropriations Committee struck longitudinal evaluation system. Final bill stripped of all significant fiscal impact, but retains reorganization provisions, which establishes a coordinated system of early care education within SDE. PA 11-181/Signed by Governor.

■ **Bill No. HB 6498:** ***AAC School Districts***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** Delays implementation of certain mandates in PA 10-111, the education reform package passed last session. Creates a task force to examine issues related to changes in high school graduation requirements mandated by PA 10-111.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported delayed implementation on fiscal grounds and creation of task force.

**Bill Status:** Passed pretty much as proposed. PA 11-135/ Signed by the Governor.

■ **Bill No. SB 1195:** ***AAC School Finance Reform***

**Subject Area:** School Finance



**Bill Description:** Reshapes the way education is funded in CT, primarily by revamping the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant; alters variables in the ECS formula, the way those variables are determined, their operation within the formula, and the mechanism for determining both the state share of funding and how funds are distributed among towns. It also requires school districts to contribute significantly to the cost of educating students who leave their home districts to participate in the Open Choice program or to attend magnet and charter schools.

**LWVCT Position:** Opposed, expressing preference for studying ECS as proposed in HB 6385. Reiterated long term LWVCT goals for school funding as outlined in the school finance position.

**Bill Status:** Died in Appropriations Committee

■ **Bill No. SB 1121:** ***AA Establishing a Task Force to Study the Distribution of State Funds to Municipalities***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** Establishes a task force to study the equity, efficiency, and continued viability of the distribution of PILOT, Mashantucket Pequot & Mohegan, ECS, and school transportation grants

**LWVCT Position:** Gave qualified support. Questioned why only these grants would be studied; expressed concern about overlap with ECS task force, suggested creation of ongoing oversight body vs. proposed one-time task force; suggested broader membership.

**Bill Status:** Passed Appropriations & Government Administration and Elections Committees as proposed. Incorporated as proposed into HB 6651 AA Implementing Provisions of the Budget Concerning General Government

■ **Bill No. SB 929:** ***AAC Closing the Achievement Gap***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** Education Committee's substitute bill incorporates concepts from HB 6432 and other bills re: the achievement gap. Includes task force & interagency council to develop & administer master plan to close the gap. Requires priority districts to provide universal PreK and full-day K by 2013. Changes K eligibility age in FY 16 & requires districts to provide PreK slots for kids affected.

**LWVCT Position:** See HB 6432.

**Bill Status:** Appropriations Committee stripped out Priority School District PreK/K provision and PreK requirement related to change in K age. Senate struck K age change. PA 11-85/ Signed by the Governor.

■ **Bill No. SB 1239:** ***AAC The Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2013, and Other Provisions Relating to Revenue***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** Budget bill, with all major school funding provisions same as passed by Appropriations Committee. See HB 6380.

**LWVCT Position:** See HB 6380.

**Bill Status:** House and Senate passed/ PA 11-6/ Signed by the Governor



■ **Bill No. HB 6651:** ***AA Implementing Provisions of the Budget Concerning General Government***

**Subject Area:** School Finance

**Bill Description:** Implements SB 1239. ECS Task Force, Vo-Tech Task Force, Municipal Funding Task Force same as passed by Appropriations Committee. Minimum Budget Requirement allows spending reductions for enrollment reduction, capped at .5%, or more for school closing(s) in amount determined by SDE Commissioner.

**LWVCT Position:** See HB 6385 and HB 6431.

**Bill Status:** House and Senate passed/ PA 11-48/ Signed by the Governor

■ **Bill No. HB 6305:** ***AAC Implementation of the Sustinet Plan***

**Subject Area:** Universal Health Care

**Bill Description:** Implements the recommendations of the Sustinet Health Partnership board of directors established by PA 09-148 to create the "Sustinet Plan," consisting of multiple, coordinated health insurance plans providing or offering, over a phased-in period, health insurance products to state employees; enrollees in Medicaid, HUSKY Plan Part A and Part B, or HUSKY Plus; municipal, municipal-related, nonprofit, small, and other employers; and individuals in the state. Creates a non-profit public option.

**LWVCT Position:** Supported

**Bill Status:** HB 6305 and HB 6308 were combined into one bill designated HB 6308 AAC Healthcare Reform. The bill as passed requires the comptroller to offer employee and retiree coverage under "partnership plans" to (1) nonstate public employers beginning January 1, 2012 and (2) nonprofit employers beginning January 1, 2013; establishes reporting requirements for certain municipal employers sponsoring group health plans; establishes the Office of Health Reform and Innovation (OHRI) and the Sustinet Health Care Cabinet in the Lieutenant Governor's office; requires certain providers to submit patient-identifiable and emergency department data to the Office of Health Care Access (OHCA), which must keep it confidential; makes a variety of changes in the laws relating to contracts between health care providers and health insurers; requires the Insurance Department to license and regulate third-party administrators; changes various health insurance statutes to conform with the 2010 federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA); revises the health insurance utilization review, grievance, and external appeal statutes to comply with the PPACA. Although the amended bill does not include a non-profit public option, it requires the Sustinet Cabinet to create a business plan by October 1, 2012 with alternatives to the current health care system, including a public option. Passed by the House and Senate/PA 11-58/ Became law, not signed by the Governor.

■ **Bill No. HB 6308:** ***AA Establishing the Connecticut Healthcare Partnership***

**Subject Area:** Healthcare

**Bill Description:** Sometimes referred to as the "pooling" bill. Requires the comptroller to offer employee and retiree coverage under the self-insured state employee health insurance plan, to (1) nonstate public employers beginning July 1, 2011; (2) municipal-related and nonprofit employers beginning January 1, 2012; and (3) small employers beginning July 1, 2012.

**LWVCT Position:** LWV has supported similar bills in past years, but this year focused our advocacy efforts on HB 6305

**Bill Status:** See HB 6305, above.



## Other Connecticut Bills Monitored by LWVCT

1. Air quality: SB 830 AA *Prohibiting the Use of Certain Outdoor Wood-Burning Furnaces* – Voted out of the Environment Committee – Died on the Senate calendar.
2. Environment: SB 1019 AA *Authorizing a Buyer's Conveyance Tax on Real Property* (would allow municipalities to create a “green fund” using a percentage of the real estate conveyance tax) – Successfully voted out of Commerce and Environment Committees. Recommitted by the Senate to the Commerce Committee. Dead.
3. Environment: SB 1157 AAC *The Restoration of the Energy Conservation and Load Management Fund* – Passed by the Senate, died on the House calendar.
4. Environment: SB 828 AA *Establishing a Paint Stewardship Program* – P.A. 11-24. Signed by the Governor.
5. Environment: SB 834 AAC *Municipal Open Space Priorities and Funding for the Purchase of Such Properties* – No public hearing scheduled. Dead
6. Gun Laws: SB 123 AAC *Defense of One's Home*, HB 5172 AAC *The Defense of a Person's Home* – No public hearings scheduled. Dead
7. Gun Laws: HB 5643 AAC *The Carrying of Concealed Firearms by Out-of-State Residents* – We were pleased that HB 5643 died after a public hearing was scheduled.
8. Gun Laws: We opposed but did not formally testify against HB 5263 AA *Authorizing Renewal by Mail of a State Permit to Carry a Pistol or Revolver* and HB 5270 AA *Concerning Authorizing Renewal of State Permit to Carry a Pistol or Revolver by Mail or by Electronic Submission*. HB 5263 passed and was signed by the Governor (P.A.11-186).
9. Housing: HB 6462 AA *Establishing a Priority Category for the Rental Housing Revolving Loan Fund* – Original bill, entitled AAC *The Department of Economic and Community Development*, would have provided for an annual report on the state's housing policies. As passed and signed into law (P.A. 11-42) requires the DECD to establish a priority category for low-interest loans to owner-occupants of buildings with 2 to 4 units.
10. Housing: HB 5889 AAC *Reestablishing the Department of Housing* – Public hearing held. Died in the Housing Committee.
11. Housing: HB 6003 AA *Establishing a Learn Here, Live Here Program* – No public hearing scheduled. Dead
12. Housing: HB 6051 AAC *An Urban Homesteading Pilot Program* – Successfully voted out of the Housing and Planning & Development Committees. Died in the House.
13. Land Use: HB 5782 AAC *A Hotel Tax* - Among other things, redesignates planning regions so that the boundaries of such regions are coterminous with any economic development districts approved by the Governor. Further provides that the state shall not contain more than eight planning regions – Voted out of Planning & Development Committee, died on the House calendar.
14. Redistricting: SJ 11 *Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Provide for a Nonpartisan Reapportionment and Redistricting Commission* – No public hearing scheduled. Dead
15. Redistricting: SB 1193 AAC *The Determination of the Town of Residence of Incarcerated Persons*, HB 6606 AAC *The Determination of the Residence of Incarcerated Persons for Purposes of Legislative Districting* – Public hearings held. Died in the Judiciary Committee.
16. Reproductive Choice: Followed HB 5098, HB 5790, HB 6246 (*An Act Requiring/Concerning Notification Of A Parent Or Legal Guardian In Cases Where A Minor Seeks To Terminate A Pregnancy*), HB 5099, HB 6247 (*An Act Requiring The Administration Of An Ultrasound Procedure Prior To The Termination Of A Pregnancy*), SB 354 (*An Act Concerning Unborn Victims Of Violence*) and SB 428 (*An Act Concerning The Notification Of Family Life Education Programs To Parents*). None of these bills went anywhere.
17. School Vouchers: SB 629 AA *Amending the Education Cost Sharing Formula to Establish a Money Follows the Child Approach* was referred to the Joint Committee on Education where it died.



18. Universal Health Care: SB 921 AA *Establishing a State Health Insurance Exchange* - Establishes the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange as a quasi-public agency to satisfy requirements of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). Under the Act, a 14-member board manages the exchange, including operating an online marketplace where individuals and small employers (i. e., those with up to 50 employees) will be able to compare and purchase health insurance plans that meet federal requirements beginning in 2014. Bill as passed includes positive features of SB 1204 AA *Establishing the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange*. P.A. 11-53. Signed by the Governor.
19. Universal Health Care: SB 11 AAC *The Rate Approval Process for Certain Health Insurance Policies* - Bill would have established a new rate approval process for individual and small employer group health insurance companies, HMOs, and hospital and medical service corporations. Overwhelmingly passed by House and Senate. P.A. 11-170. Vetoed by Governor. Governor and legislative leadership reportedly reached an agreement that did not involve a veto override, but allows the Insurance Commissioner to hold up to four public hearings at the State Healthcare Advocate's request on rate increase proposals of 15% or more.

## National Advocacy

1. Campaign Finance Reform: Sent letters to the Connecticut's entire Congressional Delegation in May, 2010 and to Senators Lieberman and Dodd in November 2010 urging them to support the federal DISCLOSE Act.
2. Election Laws/Voting: Submitted comments to the US Election Assistance Commission urging it to create a system for online voter registration for all by requiring the National Voter Registration Act application form to be available in electronic format.
3. Environment: Sent letters to Senators Lieberman and Blumenthal asking them to support the EPA's authority to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Also sent letters to Connecticut's five members of Congress urging them to oppose legislation that would prevent action to clean up our air. Responded to requests from the LWVUS. Numerous emails were sent to Connecticut's Congressional Delegation urging them to support the Clean Air Act and other laws needed to protect citizens against life-threatening pollution.
4. Reproductive Choice: H.R. 1 *Full Year Appropriations Act 2011* – House bill placed on Senate calendar and contained the “Pence Amendment.” This amendment would have eliminated public financing for Planned Parenthood by denying funding through the Title X family planning program for preventative care. The League supports a system that insures a basic level of health care including disease prevention, health care education and primary care that includes prenatal care and reproductive rights. Without Title X funding, women and families would not get the critical health care they need including cancer screenings. Passed the House, rejected by the Senate.
5. Universal Health Care: P.L. 111-148 *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* – This law focuses on provisions to expand coverage, control health care costs and improve the health care delivery system. The League opposed efforts to repeal this law. The League supports a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost for all U.S. residents. Repeal of this law would leave millions without insurance. Efforts to repeal so far have not been successful.