



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTH CAROLINA

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Legislative Update for February 13, 2009

During the 2009 Regular Session of the North Carolina General Assembly, The League of Women Voters of North Carolina will be focusing on four main issues. These are as follows:

1. Campaign and Election Reform
2. Access to Government
3. Environment
4. Tax & Budget Fairness

In the next Legislative Updates we will examine each focus, update you on bills that have been introduced, as well as give an idea as to what expect over the upcoming weeks for each issue.

CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION LAW

George Reed, editor of the Raleigh Report, states "current law sets us a system of public funding for appellate level judges and for three members of the Council of State (Insurance Commissioner, Auditor, and Superintendent of Public Instruction)." As stated in last week's Legislative Update, the bill labeled Voter-Owned Election for Treasurer (S 20), would add the Treasurer to the list. The Senate Appropriations/ Base Budget Committee has yet to meet on the bill.

In 2009 a census and redistricting is set to occur. Reed states that we should, "expect several bills to look at less political ways to draw new districts for the US House of Representatives and the state Senate and House." The first of these bills is Independent Redistricting Commission (H 35). The bill introduced by Rep. Dollar, "would set up an independent commission which would receive proposed redistricting plans from the public (which, of course, includes legislators and other political folks), score them on the basis of criteria in the bill, and then implement the one with the highest score. There would be a required \$100 fee to submit a plan, with the highest scoring plans earning a refund of the fee" Reed reports. Needless to say, our focus on Campaign and Election Law will see many new ideas and perhaps many changes this session.

Also in the current edition of the Raleigh Report, George Reed gives us all a great refresher on gearing up while the Assembly is kicking into high gear. He recommends:

- If you don't already know who your senator and representative are, find out now. Your voter registration card will tell you which House and Senate districts you are in, and your local board of elections can tell you who represents you. Or go to the General Assembly's newly redesigned website (www.ncleg.net), then find "Who Represents Me?" at the bottom right side of the homepage.

- Make note of their contact information, which you will need throughout the session. All legislators can be called through the General Assembly switchboard (919/733-4111). The GA website (www.ncleg.net) will give you their office phone numbers, mail addresses, and e-mail addresses. Note also which committees they've been assigned to and any committee or subcommittee of which they are the chair.

The League will be sending legislative updates and calls to action during the 2009-2010 Session. This is the third update of the session. For additional information on The League of Women Voters of North Carolina and our policies and partners, please visit www.lwvnc.org.

The Legislative Update is compiled by Erin Connelly, Project Coordinator for the North Carolina League of Women Voters. If you wish to subscribe or unsubscribe, please email Patty Dale at daleph55@gmail.com.

LWV is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.