



# THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

## League Lines

MARCH/APRIL 2009

### Calendar

414-273-8683

<http://lwvmilwaukee.org>, e-mail: [info@lwvmilwaukee.org](mailto:info@lwvmilwaukee.org)

For the most up-to-date information on events, see

<http://lwvmilwaukee.org>

#### March

- 11 Wed., 6 pm Board Meeting  
1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee  
Contact: Louise Petering, (414) 351-3617
- 18 Wed., Unit Discussion Meetings  
Topic: **National Popular Vote Consensus**  
1:15 pm St. Matthew's Church  
1615 Wauwatosa Ave., Wauwatosa  
Contact: Gloria Weiskotten (414) 354-9783  
  
6:30 pm Shorewood Public Library  
Community Room South, Shorewood  
Contact: Barbara Hussin (414) 351-0819  
  
7:30 pm Natalie Kleman's home  
8801 W. Oklahoma Ave., #111, West Allis  
Contact: Ruth Snedic (414) 771-7690
- 23 Mon., 7 pm Natural Resources Committee  
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee  
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067
- 24 Tue., 9:15 am International Relations Committee  
For details, contact Ned Maxwell  
(414) 258-9222
- 25 Wed., 9 am, 11 am & 2 pm  
New Citizen/New Voter  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
Contacts: Dorothy Sherman, (414) 425-9527  
Kit H. O'Meara, (414) 226-9930
- 26 Thur., 9 am & 11 am  
New Citizen/New Voter  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
Contacts: Dorothy Sherman, (414) 425-9527  
Kit H. O'Meara, (414) 226-9930

#### April

- 7 Spring general election -**VOTE!**
- 7 Election night reporting  
Contact: [Info@lwvmilwaukee.org](mailto:Info@lwvmilwaukee.org)
- 8 Wed., 6 pm Board Meeting  
1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee  
Contact: Louise Petering, (414) 351-3617
- 9 Thur., May/June Bulletin deadline  
Contact: Louise Petering (414) 351-3617
- 15 Wed., 9 a.m, 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.  
New Citizen /New Voter Registration  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
Contacts: Dorothy Sherman, (414) 425-9527  
Kit H. O'Meara, (414) 226-9930
- 16 Thur., 9 a.m, 11 a.m.  
New Citizen /New Voter Registration  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
Contacts: Dorothy Sherman, (414) 425-9527  
Kit H. O'Meara, (414) 226-9930
- 22 Wed., Earth Day
- 22 Wed., 6:15 pm General Meeting & Box Supper  
Milwaukee's Lake Park Pavilion community room (under Bartolotta's restaurant)  
Topic: **Transit Decisions for Milw. Co.**  
Speaker: Kerry Thomas, executive director of Transit Now  
Reservation deadline: April 14 (form inside)  
Contacts: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067 & Louise Petering (414) 351-3617
- 27 Mon., 7 pm Natural Resources Committee  
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee  
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067
- 28 Tue., 9:15 am International Relations Committee  
For details, contact Ned Maxwell  
(414) 258-9222

at the Wisconsin Club, we look forward to warmer weather. Thanks to Zabelle and Sue and Rich Lindberg for coordinating the luncheon.

The spring election season for non-partisan races (circuit court, state superintendent of public instruction, state



League guest (l.) and Pres. Louise Petering with January 17th Luncheon Speaker Joseph Geck, consultant with Global Intercultural Communication. Mr. Geck spoke about U.S. healthcare costs and quality and its effect on competition in a global marketplace.

supreme court, local municipal seats) is in full swing. Thanks to the 30 of us who worked to report Feb. 17 election results. Our coffers are replenished because of your contributions. We will report again on April 7.

Many hands make light work - and camaraderie as well. That is our goal - to build League community as we go about building League. My thanks to Dorothy Sherman for assuming the lead in the New Citizen/New Voter project, to her backup Kit Halloran O'Meara and to all of you who help with that effort.

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#### League Lines Production Crew

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Louise Petering

Though the weather was cooperative for our Jan. 17 health care luncheon that Zabelle Malkasian graciously sponsored

"The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. Join LWV - where leaders are actively engaged in effecting change at the local, state, and national levels."

*President, continued from pg. 1*

Thanks also to Anne Morrissey and backup Anita Sorenson for taking over phone responsibilities from Dorothy. Finally, thanks to Chris Weber Sponnick, Mary Stefaniak and Gloria Weiskotten for coordinating as a membership team. Of course there are more thanks to pass around; your turn is coming at our annual meeting. Put our May 20 annual meeting on your calendar now. We are honored that Milwaukee Police Chief Edward Flynn will provide our keynote address. From all we read in the newspaper and electronic media, we are in for a no-nonsense talk. Use the form in this bulletin to reserve for the meeting – for yourself and your guests. Let's make it a community event.

## **VOTER SERVICE**

Committee Chair Anne Baynton

Your League held a Feb. 5 pre-primary candidates forum for aldermanic districts 1, 3 and 5 at Oak Creek Community Center. More than 100 people attended, along with 12 of the 13 candidates. Sarajane Kennedy skillfully moderated this large panel of candidates. Louise Petering collected and sorted audience question cards. Chuck Baynton was timer, and Chris Weber attended to our recruitment table. The candidates and audience applauded the League for sponsoring the forum.

Our members also held a mayoral candidate forum Feb. 7 in Greenfield City Hall's council chamber, which drew an audience of about 55 people. Two of the three candidates appeared: Mayor Michael Neitzske and former Mayor Timothy Seider. The third candidate, Alderman Tom Pietroski, declined to participate. Plans to have the event taped for public access television were dashed when Mr. Seider refused to be televised. Ruth Snedic moderated the forum, Greenfield resident Nina Kohl collected question cards and ran the recruitment table, and Chuck Baynton was timer. Special thanks to Nina Kohl for helping to organize and publicize the event.

The Town of New Berlin, which is outside of Milwaukee County, had also requested that League host a mayoral candidate forum for them. Anne Baynton advised a non-League member, New Berlin resident Marta Broge, on the basics of forum procedures. She was an able student, and the forum went well there.

A well-organized and conducted candidate forum is powerful. It allows voters to see and hear the candidates side-by-side. We are building a team of forum experts and if you'd like to join, please call the League office at (414) 273-8683. Whatever role you'd like to fill, we can train you to help us "make democracy work."

## **NEW CITIZEN/NEW VOTER**

Project Coordinator Dorothy Sherman & Member Ruth Snedic

Alert to special registration deputies: It's important to get your renewal application notarized. We may register voters as soon as our new state cards and deputy numbers arrive from the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board. The board obliges us to be retrained by July 2010, but plans to sponsor a training session in Milwaukee before then.

Thank you to the following League members who distributed our New Voter booklets following Jan. 28-29 US naturalization ceremonies: Joann Kreimendahl, Barbara Eisenberg, Beverly Katter, Rosemary Bigelow, Ruth Snedic and Dorothy Sherman. Performing the same service Feb. 11-12: Rosemary Bigelow, Mary Brod, Donna Faw, Joann Kreimendahl, Nancy Laskin, Phyllis Wax, Dorothy Sherman, and Ruth Snedic. We enjoyed being part of the ceremonies and witnessing the excitement of more than 700 people taking U.S. citizenship oaths.

To volunteer for the March 25-26 and/or April 15-16 ceremonies, call Dorothy Sherman at (414) 425-9527 or Ruth Snedic at (414) 771-7690 or send an email to Dorothy-Sherman@sbcglobal.net or rjrsnedic@milwpc.com. No voter registrations are allowed after the March ceremonies, which fall within the state "blackout dates" just prior to elections, but we'll be distributing New Voter pamphlets. In April we will need 2009 special registration deputies to register new voters, plus volunteers to distribute voter booklets.

## **ACTION**

Chair Ruth Snedic

Our members were alerted to urge US Senators Russ Feingold and Herb Kohl to support a Feb. 24 cloture vote regarding Washington D.C. voting rights. A cloture vote requires 60 "ayes" for Senate consideration. President Louise Petering emailed both senators urging them to support D.C. voting rights. Both did and the vote passed.

**ACTION ALERT! Take part in historic decision. Voice Your Support for Regional Transit Authority!**

*Editor's Note: For details see page 7 of the January/February Bulletin.*

As hoped, the Regional Transit Authority enabling language was included in the Governor's budget. Our thanks to the Governor! The RTA is urgently needed to provide regional connections to jobs and avoid a 35% cut in bus service. It would also support major initiatives such as KRM Commuter Rail that link people to jobs in the region, and spur job growth and economic development.

The next step for the RTA is the Joint Committee on Finance (JCF) where the budget will be debated and a JCF version will emerge.

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#### Timeline

Late March: JCF budget hearing in Milw. & Racine  
April: Budget is debated in JCF

Contact information for the Joint Committee on Finance:

Pedro Colon (d)  
888 534-0008, rep.colon@legis.wisconsin.gov

Tamara Grigsby (d)  
888 534-0018, rep.grigsby@legis.wisconsin.gov

Lena Taylor  
608 266-5810 sen.taylor@legis.wisconsin.gov

Alberta Darling  
608 266-5830 sen.darling@legis.wisconsin.gov

For more information contact:

Transit NOW: [www.transitnow.org](http://www.transitnow.org), 262-246-6151

## LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP

Chair Chris Weber Spornick

We are proud that our members renew faithfully even as we add new ones. League provides value to communities. Our members benefit as well - in skill development, knowledge of issues, expanded social network and fellowship. Since not all members can be active, we must increase numbers to sustain our mission.

There are dozens of activities and techniques to build membership. The most productive and easiest way is for members to solicit someone they know. Bring friends, colleagues or neighbors to a League event to show what League does and how members enjoy serving the community. Your board and other members plan recruiting efforts through the year and welcome your support.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Committee Chair Dr. Jennifer A. Runquist

Wisconsin's July 2008 Global Warming Report, is summarized below. View the full report at: [www.dnr.wi.gov/environmentprotect/gtfgw/documents/Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/environmentprotect/gtfgw/documents/Final_Report.pdf).

- According to 2003 estimates, our state emits about 123 million metric tons of greenhouse gases (GHG) each year. We rank 21st in these gas emissions, which is under 2% of the nation's total.
- Allowing Wisconsin's annual carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions to increase 1% annually would push this state's output from about 131.3 million metric tons to 156 million metric tons by 2024.
- The Global Warming Task Force proposes a 22%

reduction in emissions from 2005 levels by 2020 and a 75% reduction by 2050. The proposed reductions – to about 98 million metric tons in 2022 and 32 million metric tons in 2050 - represent a very ambitious goal based on increased conservation, efficiency, advanced technologies and possibly some new nuclear infrastructure, which is non-CO<sub>2</sub> producing.

A number of task force groups, conservation and energy efficiency, utilities, transportation, agriculture and forestry, industry and ad-hoc groups developed policies and programs for greenhouse gas-emitting processes. Since utilities produce 34% of GHG, transport 24%, industrial 13%, residential and agriculture at 9%, reductions in these areas would be necessary to achieve the stated reduction goals.

The Wisconsin Voluntary Greenhouse Gas Reduction Initiative, a public/private partnership overseen by the Office of Energy Independence, promises to be a national leader in achieving voluntary GHG emissions reductions by individuals, local governments, community-wide programs, farms and businesses. Its four program areas, to be financed by a recommended \$20 million to \$30 million annual budget:

marketing to change behavior; community sustainability and energy independence programs; business initiatives and business opportunities which lower emissions.

### Among the recommended policies:

**Conservation and Energy Efficiency** – Utility efforts to reduce electrical demand, including rate incentives; stricter building codes; higher standards for lighting and appliance efficiency.

**Utility supply side** - Carbon dioxide sequestration studies for coal plants; easing the moratorium on new nuclear plants; improving electric transmission and distribution lines to facilitate small power-producing units; wind-siting reform; tax incentives for renewable energy development.

**Transportation** – Freight idle reduction; shift to plug-in hybrid electric vehicles for government fleets; lower state speed limits and promotion of rail and bicycle lanes. Wisconsin's Department of Transportation has budgeted \$100 million for commuter rail, which requires local funding to win federal aid. (RTA related!)

**Agriculture and Forestry** - Sustainable forest management; planting 20 million new trees in urban areas; prairie plantings to augment vegetative cover carbon sinks; biofuel development and reduction in methane emissions via ruminant diet changes.

**Industry** - More efficient boilers and boilers that use biomass; a reduction in electricity use and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by industry, and incentives for energy improve-

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*continued from pg. 3, Natural Resources*

ments in energy used per unit of production.

**Ad hoc Groups** – More efficient recycling and re-use of paper, electronics and untreated wood waste; more efficient water and waste treatment collection and distribution.

**GREAT LAKES RESTORATION FUNDS** - Obama Budget a Down Payment for Great Lakes Campaign Pledge – Next Stop: Congress.

President Obama recently announced an unprecedented investment of \$475 Million in his Fiscal Year 2010 Budget to restore the Great Lakes - an effort that is key to creating jobs and growing our economy. Additionally, there could be as much as \$1 billion in other Great Lakes restoration and economic recovery funding provided to the Great Lakes states through increased funding for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs. Thirty-five million people rely on the Great Lakes for their drinking water, and millions more benefit from the commerce and business that depends on the waters of the Great Lakes.

[Group x], working as part of the 110 member Healing Our Waters® - Great Lakes Coalition applauded the announcement. This investment is a major victory for the Great Lakes, and represents the largest, most serious commitment to Great Lakes restoration in a President's Budget in history. Along with the participation in Great Lakes Day in Washington, D.C. this February by the White House Council of Environmental Quality Director Nancy Sutley and EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, the President's Budget demonstrates he is serious about his \$5 billion campaign commitment to the Great Lakes. It is clear he understands that unless America invests in the Great Lakes these problems will get worse and the price we pay will be higher.

Today, the health of our Great Lakes is seriously threatened by problems such as untreated sewage, toxic discharges, and invasive species. The plan for Great Lakes restoration and economic recovery is a multi-year strategy for tackling the problems, and calls for action to: modernize sewage treatment, clean-up polluted harbors, restore wetlands, and prevent unwanted, new species from invading the lakes. Each of these steps is essential if we are to restore the lakes and revive our economy.

Members of Congress ultimately hold the purse strings for the federal government through the annual appropriations process, so it is critical they match the President's initiative in their own budget resolution and appropriations to restore this treasured resource. Group X and the Healing Our Waters – Great Lakes Coalition will be working in the coming weeks to ensure the Great Lakes Congressional Delegation does what's necessary to provide the funding the President has called for to create jobs, revive our economy, and restore the Great Lakes. You can learn more and contact your Members of Congress by visiting [www.healthylakes.org](http://www.healthylakes.org).

**Reserve now for Wednesday April 22 Transit Meeting and May 20th Annual Meeting**

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## **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Committee Chair Ned Maxwell

We are enjoying the eight-week University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Great Decisions lecture series at 7 p.m. Tuesdays. We discuss each lecture topic at 6:30 pm the following Monday evening at Wauwatosa Public Library conference room.

All are welcome. If you would like to fill the position of "conversation instigator," please let me know. John Abelt also desperately needs a conservative opponent now that Jim McCann is absent due to health issues. Upcoming issues: energy, March 2; the Arctic, March 9; and the global food crisis, March 16.

At our Jan. 25 session on rising world powers, we concluded that Brazil, India, China, the European Union and Japan require different approaches and that "hard power" is an unsuitable American response to every trouble. The US has neither the manpower nor money to be world policeman. The US should use its influence and leadership to deal with emerging areas of potential conflict, but recognize, as developments of the last decade amply demonstrate, that the US is not omnipotent. The most important goal now is to signal to the world our understanding that we must be a partner in the strategy and objectives of other countries and not try to impose our will.

This discussion on "rising powers" segued nicely into our Feb. 1 discussion about the nightmare that is Afghanistan and Pakistan. These two countries have feuded for decades over who takes what side in the Kashmir area debate that poisons India-Pakistan relationships the same way Israel-Palestine relations poison the Middle East. They are separated by a mutual hatred and internal sectarian strife with fighting warlords, fighting the radical Islamist Taliban, fighting for control of poppy production and fighting the US-backed, corrupt governments of both countries. Keys to solving the mess: beefed-up security (expand the ability and independence of the military and police force, and curb corruption), mutual tolerance of the various and sundry tribes; women's rights (sadly, the first group to be punished are the women). These hotbeds of terrorism will demand our attention for years, fading only when their standard of living rises to a sustainable level and brutal repression is replaced with lawful compassion.

## **HOUSING TRUST FUND UPDATE**

Program Vice President Sue Lindberg

Waukesha County Housing Trust Fund sponsored a well-attended and enthusiastic advocacy training session Feb. 11. Vicky Selkove, mobilization strategies manager for Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, was trainer for the afternoon event at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Waukesha.

Of the 26 proposals seeking \$4.9million from the City of Milwaukee HTF dollars, nine projects were awarded near-  
*continued on pg. 5*

ly \$1million. These projects are expected to result in 133 units of affordable housing and leverage \$17million in construction work.

Supporters of the Milwaukee Housing Trust Fund plan to meet April 7 at 4:30 pm in a yet-undetermined location. For details, contact Heather Dummer Combs at the Interfaith Conference office, (414) 276-9050, or email her at [heatherdc@interfaithconference.org](mailto:heatherdc@interfaithconference.org).

## **NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT**

*Editor's note: At the 2008 LWVUS Convention, the delegates voted to adopt a new study, "The Advisability of Using the National Popular Vote Compact Among the States as a Method of Electing the President." The original study of the process of selecting the President culminated in our 1970 position supporting direct election of the President by popular vote as an essential element of representative government. Conventions in 2002 and 2004 further expanded and updated the position taking into account the entire presidential selection process including a process that produces the best possible candidates, informed voters and optimum voter participation. Please see [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) for all materials related to this study. Please come to March 18th Consensus.*

Our current position reads: The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The LWV believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The League supports changes in the presidential election system – from the candidate selection process to the general election. We support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information.

### **Background for the National Popular Vote Compact**

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the president by popular vote. Now, League members have the opportunity to consider whether to support the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) as a viable process to achieve that result. The NPV Compact would avoid the need for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College (EC), and would assure that the individual receiving the most votes would become president.

The NPV Compact proposal uses the mechanism of the EC. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual that received the most votes nationwide. Thus, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together. State elections officials in all states participating would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes.

This alternative method of assigning a state's EC votes would take effect only when enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. This 270-vote threshold also corresponds essentially to states representing a majority of the people of the United States.

The plan includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement – conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues and recounts.

Currently four states have passed legislation to enact the NPV Compact. There are pros and cons to this plan, which are discussed in full in papers found on the LWVUS Web site. Summaries of these papers are also available. League members can learn more about the plan from these sources and consider its ramifications at consensus meetings across the country. Be sure to participate! Who better than the League to be ready to speak to this good-government issue?

**To prepare for the consensus meeting, please read the complete version of this paper (available at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)) by the LWVUS National Popular Voter Compact Study Committee.**

**Support for the National Popular Vote Compact**  
Because the League already supports direct election of the president, arguments against the Electoral College (EC) are not included in the material supporting the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact).

**Constitutional Issues** The NPV Compact is a way to assure that every person's vote counts equally and that the person receiving the most votes is the winner of the presidency. The same result would be achieved by constitutional amendment but the U.S. Constitution is difficult to amend. The NPV Compact is a viable way to attain the same goal as amending the Constitution to eliminate the EC.

A constitutional amendment is not needed to effectuate the NPV Compact because states already have the right to implement changes in how electors are appointed.

The NPV Compact is a compact between states—a method of concerted state action that has long been sanctioned by the Constitution and the courts.

**Evaluating Fairness** A candidate can be elected presi-  
*continued on pg. 6*

dent by receiving the most electoral votes even though he or she did not receive the most popular votes. This is not a result voters expect or desire. As election campaigns are now waged, major emphasis and resources are concentrated in key EC battleground states because that is where elections are won or lost. The NPV Compact would eliminate the emphasis on battleground states and would be more apt to assure campaign strategies that appeal to a broad spectrum of the electorate which would foster greater voter participation.

The argument that the plan would negatively impact states' rights is countered by poll results showing that most voters want their individual vote to count, rather than allotting them to electors representing the state as a whole.

Any claim that the NPV Compact is an unprecedented disregard for the U.S. Constitution ignores the reality that voting rights have been changed through state action many times. Women's suffrage, for example, was instituted by twenty states before passage of the constitutional amendment that made the right universal

**Mechanical Considerations** Those opposed to the NPV Compact cite mechanical issues that might lead the NPV to fail, but the Compact includes provisions that address issues of enforcement, winning levels and recounts.

**Other Issues** The Voting Rights Act and the NPV Compact are in harmony, assuring equality of votes throughout the United States.

**League Issues** Opponents say that the NPV Compact conflicts with the League's support of uniform voting standards. Supporters of the Compact advocate its passage in all states, which would result in uniform voting standards. It is true that the NPV Compact could be in effect for an interlude when not all states had signed on to it. The same could be demonstrated for other laws, such as the Equal Rights Amendment. Nonetheless, it must be remembered that uniform voting standards are not now in effect. The NPV Compact could help assure that every vote would be counted equally.

Further, implementation of a method which assures direct election of the president by popular vote is in keeping with the League's long-held position.

To prepare for the consensus meeting, please read the complete version of this paper (available at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)) by the LWVUS National Popular Voter Compact Study Committee.

**Opposition to the National Popular Vote Compact** There is little respect for the Electoral College (EC). The League opposes it and most voters want a direct popular vote. But is the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) an appropriate way to achieve that result?

**Evaluating Fairness** Voters supporting the candidate who receives the majority of votes in their state want their

state's electors to support their choice. Adoption of the NPV Compact may require a state elections official to direct its state's electors to cast their ballots in support of a candidate who was not favored by the voters of that state.

Passage of the NPV Compact will result in the emphasis of presidential campaigns shifting from the battleground states to areas of large concentrations of population. So, while some voters are disenfranchised by the EC, others might be disenfranchised by the NPV Compact. Because the Compact requires entry into a contract with other states which binds state elections officials to direct electors to vote in a certain way, regardless of the outcome of the election in their state, states' rights are diminished.

In addition, one can question the advisability of a method that bypasses the normal constitutional amendment process in this manner.

**Constitutional Issues** Many constitutional scholars argue that this plan will lead to extensive litigation involving challenges to the NPV Compact on issues such as the scope of constitutional powers, the Compact itself, the need for congressional approval, the concerns of non-compacting states, and constitutional protections of state interests and their role in elections.

**Mechanical Issues/Flaws** The methods for enforcement of this plan are unclear. Opponents question the power and timing to withdraw from the Compact and the power to enforce compliance.

Others express concern about an onslaught of lawsuits between compacting and non-compacting states, as well as procedures in close elections.

The plan, allowing the election of a president by a plurality of votes, does not improve on the current system; neither the present system nor the NPV Compact requires that the president be elected by a majority.

**Other Issues** The Voting Rights Act requires pre-clearance for legislative changes. This, too, has the capacity to engender lawsuits to ensure compliance.

**League Issues** This proposal does nothing to achieve the goal of uniform standards of voting. The NPV Compact is effective when passed by states representing 270 electoral votes, effectively negating the impact on presidential elections of the voters in states that represent the other half of electoral votes. A system that assures no voter disenfranchisement is a better way to assure that every person's vote counts.

The League has long supported the abolition of the EC. Although the NPV Compact purports to foster the same result, it creates additional concerns. Amending the U.S. Constitution is a difficult process, and we should seriously consider supporting the normal amendment procedures to abolish the EC versus this specific "work-around."

**Consensus Items to be considered at the Wed. March 18 Unit Discussion Meetings**

**Amending the Constitution**

**1. Which statement best reflects the consensus of the group? Select one.**

- a. Action to alter a basic element of the Constitutional framework, which is achievable by amendment to the Constitution, should be accomplished by amendment to the Constitution.
- b. Action by states through a compact process is an acceptable way to alter the method for electing the President and Vice-President.
- c. The group could not reach consensus.

**2. Which statement best reflects the consensus of the group? Select one.**

- a. Because a compact has never before been used to address a fundamental constitutional issue such as voting, the chance that it might set a precedent for the future leads to the conclusion that it is better that the League continue to work for an amendment to the Constitution to establish the direct popular election of the President and the abolition of the Electoral College.
- b. Despite the novelty of the use of the compact approach to address a fundamental constitutional issue such as voting, the League should support the NPV Compact as a way of achieving an important goal.
- c. The group could not reach consensus.

**Congressional Consent**

**3. Which statement best reflects the consensus of the group? Select one.**

The possibility that the NPV Compact will require congressional consent is not of sufficient concern to block the implementation of the plan.

- a. The possibility that the NPV Compact will require congressional consent is sufficient to conclude that the plan should not be implemented without obtaining such consent.
- b. The group could not reach consensus.

**Enforcement**

**4. Which statement best reflects the consensus of the group? Select one.**

- a. The NPV Compact contains sufficient enforcement provisions to assure smooth operation of the plan.
- b. Although it is not possible to determine whether the enforcement provisions will be sufficient to assure smooth operation of the plan, the plan should be passed anyway.

- c. Enforcement of the plan is likely to add uncertainty and bring the courts into the presidential election in ways that raise substantial concerns.
- d. The lack of adequate enforcement provisions is sufficient to conclude that the NPV is not a viable plan.
- e. The group could not reach consensus.

**Uniformity**

**5. Which statement best reflects the consensus of the group? Select one.**

- a. The uniformity of voting systems is more important to American democracy than the possibility that the NPV Compact can be adopted.
- b. The NPV Compact is more important than uniformity of voting systems because it would succeed in achieving the popular election of the President.
- c. The group could not reach consensus.

**Popular Election of the President**

**6. Which statement best reflects the consensus of the group? Select one.**

- a. It is more important to achieve the goal of national popular election of the President than it is to achieve the goal of abolition of the electoral college.
- b. It is more important to amend the Constitution to abolish the Electoral College than it is to achieve the goal of popular election of the President by alternative methods, such as the NPV Compact.
- c. The group could not reach consensus.

**Achievability**

**7. Which statements reflect the views of the group?**

- a. The NPV Compact will have problems being passed because of the need for congressional consideration and the need for action by so many states.

Agree                      Disagree                      No Consensus

- b. A constitutional amendment to establish the direct popular election of the President and the abolition of the Electoral College will continue to have problems being passed.

Agree                      Disagree                      No Consensus

## **Join the League of Women Voters - Today! Non-partisan, non-profit since 1920!**

Milwaukee Co. Dues [Circle One]: \$60 Individual    \$75 Household (2 or more individuals)    \$25 Student    \$25 Limited Income  
\$100 Sustaining (supports \$25 memberships)    \$160 Centennial (supports action & activities)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ WI Zip \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Website - <http://lwvmilwaukee.org>    Email Address - [Info@lwvmilwaukee.org](mailto:Info@lwvmilwaukee.org)**

Involvement [Check One]: Active \_\_\_\_\_ or Supporting \_\_\_\_\_    Interests: Voter Service \_\_\_\_\_    Lending Practices \_\_\_\_\_    Government \_\_\_\_\_

International Relations \_\_\_\_\_    Environment/Natural Resources \_\_\_\_\_    Health Care/Social Policy \_\_\_\_\_    Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please Note: Circle your preferred means of contact, indicate your interests & involvement level, and mail this form with your check to the **League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County, P.O. Box 100785, Milwaukee, WI 53210; OR join online at [www.lwvmilwaukee.org](http://www.lwvmilwaukee.org).** Tax-deductible contributions to the LWV Ed Fund may be directed to the address above. Thank you!



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
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