

## Kickoff Program to Examine Money in Politics

As the role of money becomes increasingly prominent in government, the League of Women Voters of Oakland brings you the latest developments and implications in its Fall 2014 Kickoff Program:

Money in Politics: Price Tag on Democracy  
Wednesday, September 17  
6:00 to 7:30 p.m.  
Oakland City Hall Hearing Room 2

We will first hear from LWVO's Helen Hutchison, who recently became president of the LWV of California and who intimately knows the League's national and state positions on campaign finance. Then attendees will have the chance to hear a local politician's perspective on the subject from 15th District Assemblymember Nancy Skinner.

We also will see a short video on the subject provided by the LWV of Massachusetts, which League members attending the National Convention in Dallas found very worthwhile.



Helen Hutchison



Nancy Skinner

As LWVUS has stated, the League "is deeply committed to reforming our nation's campaign finance system to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process."

**DON'T FORGET:  
ELECTION DAY IS NOVEMBER 4  
REGISTER BY OCTOBER 20**

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# President's Message

Here's some exciting news: LWVO is moving to a new office. We will share a pleasant, light-filled space with the Bay Area League in the historic Central Building on the corner of Broadway and 14th Street, facing City Hall. BART access right in front, covered parking structure down the block, lots of interesting non-profit agencies as neighbors, staff in the lobby every evening, and a perfectly-equipped conference room where we plan to hold our monthly Hot Topics gatherings. All we need to make it perfect is some members to spend a few hours a week – or share the job with someone, and alternate weeks – as the face and voice of the League, in the office and answering the phone. Please contact Bonnie Hamlin (bhamlin@igc.org) to learn more.

In case you hadn't noticed, there is a major election in November. At the national convention in June, Leagues from around the country decided to focus study and advocacy on the influence of money in politics, a threat to democracy. Come to the September 17 Kickoff Program to hear from the front lines: State Assemblymember Nancy Skinner, who has fought long and hard on this issue, and LWVC President Helen



Katherine Gavzy

Hutchison. LWVO will continue to be visible all around the city, wearing both our Action and Advocacy hat and our Voter Service and Education hat. "Vote with the League" on page 3 summarizes League positions on all ballot measures; if you want to know why we have taken these positions and contribute your own ideas, come to Hot Topics on September 26 and October 6. Voter Service is organizing candidate forums and impartial presentations on the ballot measures. See page 4 for details and keep checking our website and Facebook for updates. Volunteering for any of these activities is fun, educational, and a short-term commitment. This year we will also repeat the super-successful Oakland Easy Voter Guide, distributed (with your help) everywhere in English, Spanish, and Chinese, and inserted in 20,000 issues of the *East Bay Express* on Wednesday, October 8. New in 2014 will be professionally-produced brief "pros and cons" videos on local ballot measures, featuring a diverse group of LWVO member speakers and posted on YouTube and elsewhere; look for an announcement in September.

- Katherine Gavzy

## League of Women Voters of Oakland 2014-15 Board of Directors

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# Vote with the League on November 4

## OAKLAND BALLOT MEASURES

### Measure Z: Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act

*This measure would continue Oakland's existing parcel tax to reduce gun violence, robberies, and homicides. Two million dollars would go to the Fire Department for immediate response, 3% would go to auditing and to the oversight commission and, of the remaining funds, 60% would go to police services and 40% to violence prevention strategies.*

VOTE YES. Oakland needs more police on the streets, quicker response times, and greater investigative capacity to deter and punish criminal behavior. This measure guarantees that Oakland will have at least 678 sworn police personnel on the job. The violence prevention strategies now being implemented by the city are based on what works, as demonstrated by verified results; we need to continue them.

### Measure CC: Public Ethics Commission Authority Increase, Charter Amendment

*This measure would give the Commission increased independence from City Hall, provide it with stronger enforcement authority to hold public officials and lobbyists accountable, and provide it with sufficient staff to do the job we expect it to do.*

VOTE YES to give the Public Ethics Commission the authority to go along with its responsibilities and help renew faith in city government.

### Measure DD: Redistricting, Charter Amendment

*This measure would establish that City Council and School Board districts would be created by an independent commission made up of Oakland citizens. Starting in 2021, redistricting would occur in the year ending in 1, immediately after the federal census.*

VOTE YES. Currently members of the City Council create new districts one year after the census; they naturally consider their own re-election first; much better to have an independent group of citizens do it.

### Measure N: Oakland Unified School District College and Career Readiness for All Act

*This measure would impose a \$120 a year parcel tax for ten years. Funds would be used to provide more one-on-one and small group instruction to help students in every high school qualify for admission to university or to improve programs that offer practical experience leading to apprenticeships, job training, and well-paying jobs for students in a competitive job market.*

The League has not yet taken a position on this measure.

### Measure FF: Minimum Wage Increase

The League has no position on this measure.

### Measure EE: Oakland Municipal Employees' Retirement System, Charter Amendment

The League has no position on this measure.

## ALAMEDA COUNTY BALLOT MEASURES

### Measure BB: Transportation Sales Tax

*This measure would increase the current voter-approved ½ cent sales tax to 1% for 30 years; revenue would fund only transportation projects and programs described in the ballot measure.*

VOTE YES. Federal and state funding for transport is being cut. This new ½ cent sales tax will improve roads in every city, improve county bus service, restore most AC Transit cuts, and improve paths and routes for bicyclists and pedestrians.

## STATE BALLOT MEASURES

### Prop 1: Water Bond. Funding for Water Quality, Supply, Treatment, and Storage Projects

The League has not yet taken a position on this measure.

### Prop 2: Rainy Day Budget Stabilization Fund Act

*Requires annual transfer of state general fund revenues to budget stabilization account. Requires half*  
*(continued on page 4)*

# Vote with the League (from page 3)

the revenues be used to repay state debts. Limits use of remaining funds to emergencies or budget deficits.

VOTE YES to increase fiscal discipline by requiring the state to contribute to its rainy day reserve fund and pay debts when times are good so as to have reserves for bad times.

## Prop 45: Healthcare Insurance; Rate Changes

The League has no position on this measure.

## Prop 46: Drug and Alcohol Testing of Doctors; Medical Negligence Lawsuits

The League has no position on this measure.

## Prop 47: Criminal Sentences; Misdemeanor Penalties

*This measure would change low-level nonviolent*

*crimes such as simple drug possession and petty theft from felonies to misdemeanors; sentences for people convicted of dangerous crimes like rape, murder, and child molestation would not be changed.*

VOTE YES to ensure that prison spending is focused on violent and serious offenses and will increase alternatives for non-serious, non-violent crime. The savings generated will be invested in prevention and support programs in K-12 schools, victim services, and mental health and drug treatment.

## Prop 48: Indian Gaming Compacts

The League has no position on this measure.

- Marion Taylor

## CANDIDATE FORUMS AND VOTER SERVICE

Here are the currently scheduled LWVO candidate forum dates in City Hall Hearing Room 1 with the tentative races on those dates. Be sure to check [lwvoakland.org](http://lwvoakland.org) or our Facebook page for updated information as the dates approach. Although co-sponsors, if any, are not listed here, we are honored every election with the interest in co-sponsoring shown by other groups which value our expertise and credibility.

Plan to attend as many of these forums as possible to experience directly your local choices in the November 4 election. For those who cannot attend, we are committed to have a KTOP and YouTube presence for every race, to assure Oakland voters the best opportunity possible to choose wisely.

Thursday, 9/4, 6 - 9 p.m.  
School Board Districts 2, 4, & 6

Wednesday, 9/10, 6 - 9 p.m.  
City Council Districts 2, 4, & 6

Friday, 9/19, TBD

Monday, 9/22, 6 - 8 p.m.  
AC Transit At-Large & Ward 3

Tuesday, 9/23  
Peralta Community College  
Trustee Areas 3, 5, 7

Monday, 9/29  
TBD

Thursday, 10/2  
Mayor Forum

Friday, 10/3  
TBD

Wednesday, 10/8, 6 - 8 p.m.  
BART District 4 & EBMUD  
Ward 3

### YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

Candidate Forum Helper: be a timekeeper, question sorter, moderator. Be the first to have made informed candidate decisions. Contact Joey Hansell at [joeyhansell@gmail.com](mailto:joeyhansell@gmail.com).

Pros and Cons Presenter: after training, go to groups around Oakland with our neutral information and handout on RCV. You can choose day or night, weekdays or weekends during October. Contact Helen Neville at [helennev@sbcglobal.net](mailto:helennev@sbcglobal.net).

Easy Voter Guide Sorter/Deliver: one day in early October, informal and fun. Contact Judy Merrill at [judy@apstate.us](mailto:judy@apstate.us).

# Ranked-Choice Voting Demystified

Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV) allows voters to rank a first, second, and third choice candidate for a single office. This makes it possible to elect local officials by majority vote without the need for a separate run-off election.

Voters in Berkeley, Oakland, and San Leandro use Ranked-Choice Voting to elect most local officials. In 2006 the Oakland City Council proposed adopting Ranked-Choice Voting; they voted 6-2 to put a measure on the ballot. The measure passed with 69 percent of voters supporting it. Ranked-Choice Voting does not affect the election of county, state, and federal officials, or the approval or rejection of ballot measures.

Why Ranked-Choice Voting is a good thing:

- More people vote in November than in a June primary, so decisions are made by a larger proportion of citizens. RCV provides instant runoff.
- More voters who are people of color, less well off, younger, and who have lower-level jobs vote in November; in June the majority of voters are white, older, well-off, and well-educated.
- Less negative campaigning. If a candidate wants those supporting a different candidate to give them their second or third vote, they will not attack that other candidate but rather emphasize what they can do for the whole city.
- New candidates, new ideas, and dissenting opinion are taken seriously. Candidates outside the mainstream have a chance – third-party candidates in partisan elections, or members of diverse groups not often successful in two-candidate races.

- Saves money by eliminating the \$800,000 cost of a June primary, and requiring candidates to raise money for only one campaign, not two.

- Strategic voting: a voter can vote for the candidate they really like best. Near election time it becomes clear who the front-runners are. But voters can still give their first vote to the candidate they really like, even if they think he/she won't win. Then they can decide which of the front runners to give their second and third votes to. Each choice empowers the voter. There are no games here. We each have one

vote, but we can indicate backup choices according to our sincere preferences. That's the best way to make sure our votes count, and Oakland gets the mayor, city council members, and school board leaders we deserve.

Links to further information:

[Lwvoakland.org/rankedquest.html](http://Lwvoakland.org/rankedquest.html)

[SmartVoter.org/ca/alm](http://SmartVoter.org/ca/alm)

[Acgov.org/rov/rcv](http://Acgov.org/rov/rcv)

[Acgov.org/rov/registration.htm](http://Acgov.org/rov/registration.htm)

- Judy Merrill

## CRITICAL RCV POINTS

**REMEMBER:** The person in office can be either good or bad after being elected by either the Primary or Ranked-Choice Voting system; don't blame the voting system for the actions of the person in office.

**VOTE STRATEGICALLY:** Vote your favorite as your first choice, regardless of his or her likelihood to win, then choose from the front runners for your second and third choices. If your first choice is eliminated early, your second and third choices of the front runners still have you in a strong position to help choose the winner.



BRE# 00875454



**Terry Kulka**

*8 LWV members have entrusted me with the sale of their homes – let's make yours #8 #9*

**(510) 682-5917**

**terrykulka@att.net**  
**www.TerryKulka.com**

# Q&A with Your New Board Members

Amy Lyons  
Treasurer



*What do you do for work?*

I'm the executive director of a private family foundation, which makes charitable contributions to Bay Area nonprofits.

*What do you do for fun?*

Lots of things like hiking, biking, exercising, walking and exploring Oakland neighborhoods, movies, reading, cooking, trying new restaurants, and hanging out with friends and family.

*What is one thing most everyone knows about you?*

I am addicted to NPR.

*What is one thing almost no one knows about you?*

I just started doing Nia dance!

*What is your favorite thing about Oakland?*

That the people of Oakland are, generally speaking, smart, engaged and care about their community; there's so much Oakland pride; and (especially when compared to some other cities) Oaklanders are just regular, unpretentious folks. I also think that Oakland has the best Bay Area climate and is most centrally located to take advantage of the whole Bay Area and Northern Cal.

*Why is the League important to you?*

I'm a big believer that engagement is the key to making our democracy stronger. The League has such a great brand – been promoting voting for almost 100 years.

Deborah Shefler  
At Large



*What do you do for work?*

I practiced civil litigation for 37 years, retiring four years ago. I worked for the US Department of Justice, was in private practice, and spent my last 20 years as a member of the PG&E Law Department.

*What do you do for fun?*

My husband and I travel and hike regularly. I enjoy knitting, yoga, spending time in Brooklyn and London, watching films, eating out and cooking for friends, writing travelogs, reading newspapers and books, and nurturing pots of succulents.

*What is one thing most everyone knows about you?*

I am crazy about my young grand nephews, and their new baby sister.

*What is one thing almost no one knows about you?*

I volunteered as an architectural docent for 10 years for SF Heritage ([www.sfheritage.org](http://www.sfheritage.org)).

*What is your favorite thing about Oakland?*

We have lived here for 32 years. We love the weather, the availability of hiking trails, and the fun of a dynamic and diverse community.

*Why is the League important to you?*

Working with the League makes me feel like I can do something that could make a difference in my community. Like the League generally, I feel voting rights and an informed electorate are the basis of good government.

### Have You Renewed Your Membership?

The mailing label on page 8 of this issue of *The Voter* can help you answer that question.

Look at the top line of the label. If the date shown is lower than 06/30/15, you have not renewed. (If there is no date at the top of the mailing label, you are not a member – but we would love to have you join!) If you haven't renewed or are not a member, go to the League's website and click on "Join-Renew LWVO."

If the date on your copy of *The Voter* is lower than 06/30/15, but higher than 06/30/14, you owe us a pro-rated amount of dues; check the table on the website that shows you what the pro-rated amounts are.

Please do renew – membership in the League during an election year is particularly rewarding.  
Questions? Contact Bonnie Hamlin at bhamlin@igc.org or (510) 658-6212.

Welcome New Members (partial list): Katie Taylor, Patrick Doherty, Janet Leban, Bernice Jordan, Nina Senn  
Welcome Back: Len Raphael

Many, many thanks to the following members who have recently renewed at the Susan B. Anthony level or higher. We are so grateful to you for showing your commitment to LWVO by making these contributions. Other members are urged to consider renewing at the Susan B. Anthony level; it does not cost you very much more and it means so much to LWVO.

Renewing at the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Level:  
Helen Haug

Renewing at the Susan B. Anthony Level: Ellen Ansel, Mary Bergan, Cynthia Berrol, Seena Clark, Robert Hamilton, Liz Hendrickson, Lynne Jones, Terry Kulka, Juliette Linzer, Susan Schroeder, Zabrae Valentine

## SHARE THIS WITH A FRIEND – INVITE THEM TO JOIN US!

Membership in the League of Women Voters of Oakland is a bargain and a statement. It's a bargain because you will have access to valuable information and insights via the Voter newsletters and LWV websites, through membership not only in LWVO but also in LWV Bay Area, LWV California and LWVUS, and via a variety of events and dialogues with key leaders throughout the year.

Your statement as a League member will be that you are committed to providing non-biased, well-researched information to voters, and that the issues your League follows are those that affect every area in Oakland: schools, public safety, local government, parks, our economy, and more.

Join the League, one of the nation's most trusted, nonpartisan grassroots organizations where "hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement."

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership (\$65)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Each additional member at an address (\$32.50) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student membership (\$25)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Income (\$10 minimum)                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Susan B. Anthony Membership (\$100)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth Cady Stanton Membership (\$250)      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrie Chapman Catt Membership (\$500) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |

Name/Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to LWVO, and mail to 436 14th Street, Suite 1213, Oakland CA 94612.

Dues are not tax deductible.



The League of Women Voters of Oakland  
 436 14th Street, Suite 1213  
 Oakland, CA 94612



(510) 834-7640  
 www.lwvoakland.org  
 info@lwvoakland.org

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**CALENDAR**

Monday, September 12 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	Board Meeting	St. Paul's Towers 17th Floor Library 100 Bay Place Oakland, CA 94610
Wednesday, September 17 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.	Money in Politics Kickoff Program	Oakland City Hall Hearing Room 2 1 Frank Ogawa Plaza Oakland, CA 94612

Future "Hot Topics" Round Table Discussions  
 (Central Building Second Floor Conference Room  
 436 14th Street, Oakland, CA 94612)

Friday, September 26 - "Vote with the League"  
 LWV positions on local ballot measures

Monday, October 6 - "Vote with the League II"  
 LWV positions on state ballot measures

Wednesday, December 3 - Election Results Analysis

Monthly Programs (Locations TBA)

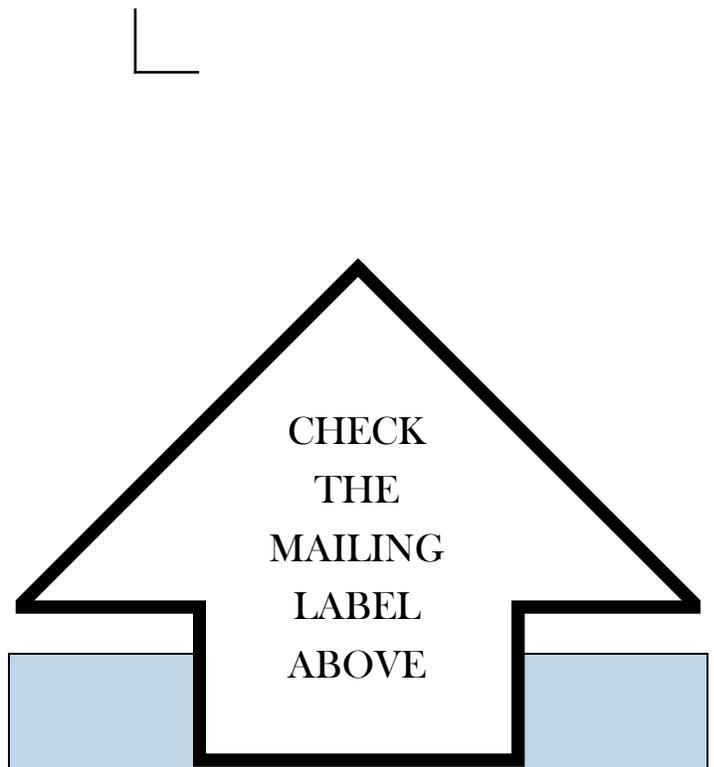
Wednesday, October 1 - November Ballot  
 Measures, Impartial Pros and Cons

Wednesday November 19 - Higher Education  
 Access and Finances: A League Study

Wednesday February 4 - The City Budget Process:  
 Is It Working? Is It Transparent?

Wednesday March 4 - Water and the Impact of  
 Climate Change

Wednesday April 1 - Public Safety, Cameras, and  
 Privacy Questions



Is there a date at the top of it?

If there's no date at the top of it, you're not a member. Please join; see how at [www.lwvoakland.org](http://www.lwvoakland.org).

If there is a date, it shows when your membership expires. Renew using the form in this Voter or online.