

LEAGUERS PRESS FOR UPDATED LEAGUE CAMPAIGN FINANCE POSITIONS

This article provides an inventory of the work done by the League of Women Voters at the national, state and local levels related to campaign finance.

LWVUS Positions Pertaining to Campaign Finance

This overview of League of Women Voters positions and efforts related to Campaign Finance Reform (CFR) is copied from “A Primer for Engagement of League Members and Fellow Citizens, Money in Politics: Developing a Common Understanding of the Issues”.¹

The positions quoted below have been used by the League to address issues related to money in politics. The League's positions, along with extensive histories of their adoption and subsequent use, are found in its publication *Impact on Issues*, updated after each LWVUS Convention.

Position on Campaign Finance

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should 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 (1974, 1982).

Position on Individual Liberties

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes in the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. The League is convinced that individual rights now protected by the Constitution should not be weakened or abridged (1982).

Position on Citizens' Right to Know/Citizen Participation

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible. (1984)

Position on Congress

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that structures and practices of the United States Congress must be characterized by openness, accountability, representativeness, decision making capability and effective performance. [This is followed by five criteria for “responsive legislative processes”.] (1972, 1982)

Using these positions, the League has worked toward two main goals in recent years:

¹ “Money in Politics: Developing a Common Understanding of the Issues”, *League of Women Voters*, <http://lww.org/files/cfr%20Primer%20Final%20May%2027.pdf#page=1&zoom=auto,-13,798>, Viewed 12/18/15

1. Transparency in Campaign Finance

Protect the public's right to know by ensuring timely disclosure of campaign finance information. Disclosure methods must allow voters and candidates to find and report information in a manner that is easy to follow and use. Expanding disclosure requirements to include all organizations that spend large sums to influence elections will eliminate “dark money” contributions, and real-time disclaimers of who is paying must be included on all political advertising. All disclosure must be done in time for voters to obtain the information before an election.

2. Fighting Corruption and Providing Equal Opportunities for Candidates

The League has advocated for free airtime for campaigns and continues to promote public funding options at all levels. Public funding has the potential to encourage broad-based contributions and widespread citizen engagement while limiting the necessity to seek large contributions from private sources. In keeping with current Supreme Court rulings, the League works to limit the amounts that candidates can receive in contributions from all sources, including from PACs and large individual donors, and seeks to close “soft money” loopholes. The League works to better define “independent expenditures” and “coordination” to block the use of loopholes around contribution limits and to limit unlimited spending by outside groups. The League guards against legislation that limits resources to challengers in a way that protects incumbents and tries to close public benefit loopholes for incumbents such as postage and reduced broadcasting costs. Although spending limits have been largely ruled out, the League continues to support them, encouraging voluntary as well as mandatory spending limits.

The overriding goal of the League is to ensure that government serves the interests of all the people, not just those (including but certainly not limited to corporations) with money. Current (2012-2013-2014) work at the national level consists of:

- a. Working for new and effective rules by the IRS to ensure that 501(c)(4) organizations are not used for unlimited secret spending.
- b. Encouraging the President to appoint members of the Federal Election Commission and seeking reform of the FEC
- c. Supporting all legislation addressing disclosure.
- d. Participating in an amicus brief regarding *McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission*

LWVUS Amicus Brief to the US Supreme Court

Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission. In July 2009, the LWVUS submitted an *Amici Curiae* in support of the Appellee (FEC) before the Supreme Court of the United States

(SCOTUS) in the case of *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. The following are excerpts from the brief: ²

“Prevention of improper corporate influence in the electoral process—like the extension of the franchise, anti-discrimination mandates, and the bedrock equality principle of one-person, one-vote—is the pillar of our modern democracy.”³

“While our Constitution reflects an increasingly expansive view of individual participation in the political process, it does not reflect a similar solicitude for corporate participation. To the contrary, our constitutional history reflects a growing concern over the influence of corporations, and the distinction between the legal protections afforded to living persons and corporations has been part of our constitutional law from the Founding. Corporations are never specifically mentioned in the Constitution, and from the earliest days this Court has held that the government need not treat corporations the same way it treats individual citizens.”⁴

“Consistent with this original understanding, both the Constitution’s text and the Court’s early case-law reflect that the Constitution’s individual right guarantees do not apply equally to corporations, and that the federal and state governments have broad power to regulate the acts of corporations.”⁵

“The Constitution allows federal and state government to regulate corporations and does not require that artificial corporate entities be treated the same as individual citizens.”⁶

League President’s Article

Mary G. Wilson, President, League of Women Voters of the United States, wrote a “League Commentary” titled “A Revolution from the Court?” shortly after the Supreme Court arguments had been made and before the decision was announced. Here are two excerpts from her commentary⁷:

“Opponents of campaign finance restrictions argue that the First Amendment should apply to corporations in exactly the same way that it applies to individuals. They suggest that the corporate “person” created by the state should have all the rights of an individual citizen, including the right to make unlimited expenditures to elect or defeat specific candidates.

But this argument is a radical new theory and based on a fundamental fallacy: that corporations are persons just like individuals, and that democracy would be served by unleashing the tremendous sums that for-profit corporations can amass because they are shielded from the liabilities, taxation, and other responsibilities that fall on individual citizens. Such legal arguments run contrary to constitutional text and history and could

² *Citizens United v Federal Election Commission*, Brief of the League of Women Voters Amici [http://www.cuvfec.com/documents/case-08-205/Supplemental Question Amicus Brief of League of Women Voters.pdf](http://www.cuvfec.com/documents/case-08-205/Supplemental%20Question%20Amicus%20Brief%20of%20League%20of%20Women%20Voters.pdf)

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid, p. 3

⁵ Ibid, p. 15

⁶ Ibid, p. 19

⁷ Wilson, Mary G., “A Revolution from the Court?”, League Commentary on Citizens United v FEC Case Before the Supreme Court, <http://lwv.org/content/league-commentary-citizens-united-v-fec-case-supreme-court>, viewed 12/18/15.

reverse our centuries-long march of progress toward a more expansive, inclusive, citizen-based democracy. As Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist said in this context, 'it cannot be disputed that the mere creation of a corporation does not invest it with all the liberties enjoyed by natural persons'."

Note: The current leadership of LWVUS has somewhat moved back from the strong language President Wilson used above in relation to the concept of corporate "personhood." However, Past President Wilson, who attended the 2015 LWVWA convention in Yakima, stated during a caucus that all statements in her letter and in the *amicus* brief submitted to SCOTUS in the *Citizens United v FEC* case are indeed League positions.⁸

League Joins Amicus Brief in *McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)* case⁹: In July 2013, the LWVUS submitted an Amici Curiae in support of the Appellee (FEC) before the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS). The Supreme Court eventually ruled in the case that individual donors are able to give more than \$3 million to federal candidates, political committees and parties. Previously, the aggregate total of such gifts was capped at \$123,200 -- a lot of money, but not \$3 million.

The following are excerpts from the amicus brief:¹⁰

Appellants are wrong. They turn a blind eye to the real-world consequences of eliminating the aggregate limits, and disregard the ways the limits continue to advance the governmental interest in preventing corruption and the appearance of corruption, as well as in deterring circumvention of the base contribution limits. (Pg. 2)

*Furthermore, the aggregate limits directly prevent corruption and the appearance of corruption by blocking the recreation of the party "soft money" system that this court deemed corruptive in *McConnell v. FEC*, 540 U.S. 93 (2003). These limits should be upheld. (Pg. 3)*

In short, without the aggregate limits, joint fund-raising and unrestricted intra-party transfers would make the parties effective vehicles for circumvention because these techniques streamline the donation process for influence-seeking donors and enable such donors to communicate to party committees the identity of their preferred candidates. (Pg. 16)

Eliminate the aggregate limits, and candidates would control two vehicles for large-scale circumvention – namely, their campaign committees and their leadership committees. (Pg. 16) Donors could indicate with a "wink and a nod" or other informal means that certain recipients should transfer their contributions to their favored candidate. (Pg. 17)

⁸ "Leaguers Press for Updated League Campaign Finance Position", *League of Women Voters of Washington*, http://www.lwvawacutoolkit.org/LVW_Updated_Campaign_Finance_Position.pdf, viewed 05/23/16

⁹ *McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)*, http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/13pdf/12-536_e1pf.pdf, viewed 04/27/16

¹⁰ League of Women Voters of U.S. *Amicus Brief for McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)*, http://lwv.org/files/cfr.McCutcheon.12-536_bsc_Campaign_Legal_Center.LWV_.etal_.pdf, viewed 04/27/16

Eliminating the aggregate limits would thus herald the return to a pre-McConnell era when enormous contributions to parties and candidates were freely solicited and often given by donors explicitly seeking favors from elected officials. (Pg. 42)

League Joins Amicus Brief in Williams-Yulee v. The Florida Bar case:^{11, 12}

“LWVUS and the League of Women Voters of Florida joined an amicus brief in the case of *Williams-Yulee v. The Florida Bar* in January 2015. The case focuses on the constitutionality of prohibitions on direct solicitation by candidates for judicial office. The brief argues that the public must have confidence in the independence and impartiality of judges. Many state Leagues throughout the country worked on the issue of judicial elections.” The Supreme Court held that Florida’s ban on the personal solicitation of campaign funds by candidates for judgeships does not violate the First Amendment.¹³

League of Women Voters Submit Joint Amicus Briefs in US Court of Appeals

League Joins Amicus Brief on Disclosure in *Van Hollen v. FEC*¹⁴ case: The District of Columbia Court of Appeals heard the case of *Van Hollen vs. FEC* in July 2012. The League of Women Voters joined AARP, Brennan Center For Justice, Center for Media and Democracy, Center for Responsive Politics, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, Common Cause, League of Women Voters of the United States, Progressives United, and Sunlight Foundation in support of a lower court ruling that upheld strict disclosure requirements for the funding for electioneering communications.¹⁵ The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia vacated a Commission regulation governing the disclosure of certain donations used to fund electioneering communications. Specifically, the court found 11 CFR 104.20(c)(9) arbitrary, capricious and contrary to law because it requires disclosure of only those donations made for the purpose of furthering electioneering communications. The Supreme Court’s 2010 decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* removed entirely the ban on corporate and union electioneering communications.¹⁶

League Joins Amicus Brief in *Doug Lair v. Jonathan Motl*¹⁷ case: In July 2014, the LWVUS submitted an Amici Curiae in support of the Appellee (Motl) before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Ninth District.¹⁸ Less than five weeks before the November 2012 general election, the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana struck down Montana’s political campaign contribution limits, which had been in effect since

¹¹ *Williams-Yulee v. The Florida Bar*, http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/14pdf/13-1499_d18e.pdf, viewed 04/27/16

¹² “League Joins Amici Curiae in Williams-Yulee v The Florida Bar”, *League of Women Voters of US*, <http://lwv.org/content/league-joins-amicus-brief-williams-yulee-v-florida-bar>, viewed 04/27/16

¹³ *Williams-Yulee v. The Florida Bar*, <http://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/williams-yulee-v-the-florida-bar/>, viewed 04/27/16

¹⁴ *Van Hollen v FEC*, FEC, http://www.fec.gov/law/litigation/van_hollen.shtml, viewed 04/27/19

¹⁵ *Van Hollen v FEC Amici Curiae* by League of Women Voters of US, et. Al., <http://lwv.org/files/cfr.Van%20Hollen%20v%20FEC%20AARP%20et%20al%20Amicus%20Brief.pdf>, viewed 04/27/16

¹⁶ *Van Hollen v FEC*, http://www.fec.gov/law/litigation/van_hollen.shtml, viewed 04/27/16

¹⁷ *Doug Lair v. Jonathan Motl*, http://www.commoncause.org/policy-and-litigation/litigation/lair-v-motl/National_070114_Lair_v_Motl_CLC_et_al_amicus_brief.PDF, viewed 04/27/16

¹⁸ “League Joins Amicus Brief in Montana Contribution Limits Case”, *League of Women Voters of US*, <http://lwv.org/content/league-joins-amicus-brief-montana-contribution-limits-case>, viewed 04/27/16

1995. As they apply to individuals and PACs, these limits were already reviewed and held constitutional in *Montana Right to Life Association v. Eddleman* in 2004. Plaintiffs allege that Montana's campaign contribution limits are unconstitutionally low and violate the First Amendment.

The League of Women Voters (LWVUS) testifies before Congressional Committees

On February 11, 2015, LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara testified at a FEC Hearing on "Corruption in the Political Process."

*"It is time for the FEC to step in and recognize that the fact that coordinated spending is occurring and must be better regulated. Candidates should not be allowed to solicit funds or assist in fundraising for outside groups that engage in independent campaigns. Campaign professionals should not be able to play musical chairs between candidate campaigns and independent spending groups. And family members should not be in the position of setting up supposedly independent activities."*¹⁹

Other LWVUS Actions, Testimonies and Letters to FEC

Additional LWVUS actions, testimonies, and letters can be found at the following links:

"League Calls on FEC to Reconsider Pay-to-Pay Rules", <http://lww.org/content/league-calls-fec-reconsider-pay-pay-rules>

"League and Partners Surpass FEC Petition Goal", <http://lww.org/press-releases/league-and-partners-surpass-fec-petition-goal>

The League submitted comments urging the IRS to close the loopholes that allow unlimited secret spending in elections by 501(c)(4) groups and continues to work for effective IRS regulation while protecting truly nonpartisan voter service activity.²⁰

In December 2013, the IRS issued a notice of proposed rulemaking geared at curbing the abuse of tax-exempt political campaign activity. However, some changes in the proposed regulations would have deemed "political" some nonpartisan activities such as voter registration drives, "get out the vote" drives, hosting candidate forums, and publishing voter guides.²¹

In December 2013, LWVUS President Elizabeth MacNamara spoke out in favor of the proposed rulemaking (regulations) for non-profit, 501(c)(4) organizations.²²

"Some have suggested that the new proposal goes too far by including voter registration and voter guides under the definition of candidate-related political activity which would be controlled under the proposal governing 501(c)(4) organizations. 'This IRS action is about dark, secret money in America's elections plain and simple,' MacNamara said.

¹⁹ MacNamara, Elisabeth, "Statement by Elisabeth MacNamara for FEC Hearing on "Corruption in the Political Process.", <http://lww.org/content/statement-elisabeth-macnamara-fec-hearing-corruption-political-process>, viewed 02/23/16

²⁰ "League Calls on IRS to Stop Dark Money", <http://lww.org/press-releases/league-calls-irs-stop-dark-money>, viewed 04/27/16

²¹ IRS REG-134417-13, December 23, 2013, https://www.irs.gov/irb/2013-52_IRB/ar18.html, viewed 04/27/16

²² "New IRS Proposal for Tax Exempt Groups 'Important First Step Against Abuse' Says League", <http://lww.org/press-releases/new-irs-proposal-tax-exempt-groups-important-first-step-against-abuse-says-league>, viewed 04/27/16

‘Unlike some opponents of such reforms, the League thinks the concern about truly nonpartisan activity is overblown,’ she continued.”

The Actions of LWV-Hawaii and LWV-Massachusetts

Many state Leagues have been active on the issue of money in politics. The following section will highlight Hawaii, because they were the first to boldly act; Massachusetts, because they have been instrumental in encouraging the LWVUS to act and graciously share their in-depth information on the subject with Leagues across the nation; and Washington, because we have also been on the forefront of the movement.

LWV-Hawaii testified before their state House Judiciary Committee on April 8, 2010 in support HCR 282, a resolution to amend the Constitution saying: *“We strongly believe that the term ‘person’ should match reality. Corporations and unions are legal entities; money is not speech, and human beings, not corporations, are persons entitled to constitutional rights.”*²³ HCR 282 is titled *“Requesting congress to propose an amendment to the constitution of the United States to permit congress and the states to regulate the expenditure of funds by corporations engaging in political speech.”*²⁴

Massachusetts Leagues of Concord-Carlisle, Amherst, and Sudbury have been leaders on the issue of money in politics. LWVMA was instrumental in pressing to update the LWVUS position on campaign finance reform and pushed to initiate a study on corporate “personhood” at the National Conventions in 2012 and 2014.²⁵

Action of the LWV-Washington State: LWVWA Positions and Efforts

Washington League of Women Voters’ (LWVWA) Contribution to WA Public Disclosure Act

In 1971 a broad-based coalition of citizens and organizations, including LWVWA, formed the Coalition for Open Government. Their work resulted in the gathering of signatures in record-breaking time and the subsequent passing of the Washington Public Disclosure Act in 1972, a comprehensive bill that had 72% voter support. The Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported on Nov. 8, 1972 that it was the *“toughest campaign and lobbying disclosure law in the nation.”* [“3 to 1 OK for 276”, p. A8].²⁶

Washington League of Women Voters (LWVWA) - Defending Citizens' Right to Campaign Disclosure:

The League of Women Voters of Washington was an originator of Initiative 276, which established the Public Disclosure Commission and set specific limits on donations to candidates. We’ve fought to strengthen Public Disclosure Commission enforcement and now are pleased to be joining as friends of the court with Washington Coalition for Open Government (WCOG) to protect and strengthen citizens’ right to sue in a case before the Washington Supreme Court, Utter vs. BIAW. The case involves whether citizens may

²³ “LWV-Hawaii Legislative Testimony – HCR 282”, <http://www.lwv-hawaii.com/testimony/hcr282.htm>, viewed 04/27/16

²⁴ HCR282 HD1,

http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/Archives/measure_indiv_Archives.aspx?billtype=HCR&billnumber=282&year=2010, viewed 04/27/16

²⁵ “Leaguers Press for Updated League Campaign Finance Position”, *League of Women Voters of Washington*, http://www.lwvwacutoolkit.org/LVW_Updated_Campaign_Finance_Position.pdf, viewed 05/31/16

²⁶ Cuillier, David et al., “Initiative 276”, Aug. 24, 2004, <http://www.washingtoncog.org/pdfs/1276%20document%20-%20David%20Cuillier.pdf>

*bring enforcement suits if, for any reason, the state Attorney General chooses not to bring suit in response to allegations of disclosure violations. The League and WCOG argue that the citizen's enforcement action is the lasting ray of sunlight so that voters can 'follow the money' in campaigns."*²⁷

The League of Women Voters-Washington's Positions on State Legislation for Campaign Finance Reform (CFR), 2009-2014:

- The LWVWA supported SB 6344, "Concerning Campaign Contribution Limits," which was signed into law with bi-partisan support. "This law prevents undue influence of big money and special interest groups by reducing the large, lump sums used increasingly, to control our election process."²⁸
- The LWVWA supported SB 5912/HB 1738, "Concerning public funding for Supreme Court campaigns." The bill advocated for "preventing corruption and undue influence in our Supreme Court by creating a public fund for qualified candidates."²⁹
- The LWVWA supported SB 5021 "Enhancing Election Campaign Disclosure Requirements to Promote Greater Transparency for the Public." The bill lowered reporting requirements, changed how political committees can be named to identify sponsors, and increased penalties for violations.³⁰
- The LWVWA supported HB 2499. The bill "increased the public's ability to know who was funding campaigns for ballot measures and regarding political committees identification" and "extends disclosure on ballot measure political advertising by requiring the top 5 funders to be listed on such advertising."³¹
- The LWVWA supported SB 5010, "An Act relating to Public Funding for Supreme Court Campaigns."³²

NOTE: Beginning in 2013, the LWVWA discontinued year-end "Legislative Wrap-Ups" in the Legislative Newsletter. Kathy Sakahara, 1st Vice President of League of Women Voters Washington and lobby team member for Government & Campaign Finance issues, has verified the following League positions on legislation from 2013 through 2014.

- The LWVWA opposed SB 6371, legislation removing the requirement that candidates and authorized political committees must file contribution and expenditure reports electronically: SB 6371; sponsored by Senator Roach.
- The LWVWA supported SB 6098, legislation Increasing transparency of campaign contributions and closing certain loopholes to increase transparency and including campaign contributions by incidental committees

²⁷ "LWV – Defending Citizens' Right to Campaign Disclosure", *E-News, League of Women Voters of Washington*, Aug. 19, 2015, http://participate.lwv.org/o/5950/c/9163/t/0/blastContent.jsp?email_blast_KEY=162611, viewed 04/27/16

²⁸ "Government, Campaign Finance", *League of Women Voters of Washington, Legislative Newsletter, Vol.42, No.9*, http://www.lwvwa.org/pdfs/LNL%2042_9.pdf, viewed 04/27/16

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ "Campaign Finance & Government", *League of Women Voters of Washington, Legislative Newsletter, Vol.43, No.18*, http://www.lwvwa.org/pdfs/LNL%2043_18.pdf, viewed 04/27/16

³¹ "Government, Campaign Finance", *League of Women Voters of Washington, Legislative Newsletter, Vol.44, No.12*, http://www.lwvwa.org/pdfs/LNL%2044_12.pdf, viewed 04/27/16

³² "Campaign Finance & Government", *League of Women Voters of Washington, Legislative Newsletter Vol. 43, No. 18*, http://www.lwvwa.org/pdfs/LNL%2043_18.pdf, viewed 04/27/16

- The LWVWA supported SB 6166, legislation concerning the use of credit cards for campaign expenditures.
- The LWVWA supported HB 2525, legislation concerning public funding for Supreme Court campaigns through judicial election reform act.
- The LWVWA endorsed HB1005, legislation concerning ethics in state government and politics, “Requires certain agencies, lobbyists, and lobbyists' employers to file reports required by the fair campaign practices act electronically over the internet as provided by the public disclosure commission.”
- The LWVWA supported SB 6414, legislation calling for improving lobbyist reporting and disclosure.
- The LWVWA supported SB 6414, legislation concerning electronic filing requirements and searchable web site for access to lobbyists’ reports; yearly fee to lobbyists when required to report entertainment expenditures; ethics boards to define limits on food and beverage gifts from lobbyists.
- The LWVWA supported SB 5507, legislation calling for increasing transparency of donors to candidates and ballot measures.

The Positions of the League of Women Voters-Washington on State Legislation for Campaign Finance Reform (CFR) in the 2015-2016 session.

NOTE: Beginning in 2013, the LWVWA discontinued year-end “Legislative Wrap-Ups” in the Legislative Newsletter. Kathy Sakahara, 1st Vice President of League of Women Voters Washington and lobby team member for Government & Campaign Finance issues, has verified the League’s positions on legislation from 2014 to the present.

- The LWVWA supports SB 5153: Increasing transparency of campaign contributions. “This bill brings “dark money” into the light. This bill requires nonprofit organizations making campaign contributions of \$25,000 or more to disclose contributions over \$10,000. This is supported by the League’s position of regular and full disclosure of campaign finances for both ballot issues and candidates is necessary before primary and general elections.”³³
- The LWVWA supports SB 5528, legislation concerning when contributions from political committees to other political committees are prohibited.
- The LWVWA supports HB 1175, legislation concerning concealing the identity of contribution sources as a class C felony.
- The LWVWA supports SB 5483, legislation concerning fund sharing between political committees.
- The LWVWA supports SB 5409, legislation concerning the use of credit cards for campaign expenditures.
- The LWVWA supports SB 5375, legislation requiring disclosure by entities that compensate for petition signatures.
- The LWVWA supports HB 1397 and SB 5308, legislation concerning personal financial affairs statement reporting requirements for elected and appointed officials, candidates, and appointees.

³³ “Government and Elections”, *League of Women Voters of Washington*, http://participate.lwv.org/c/9163/p/salsa/web/common/public/content?content_item_KEY=10079, viewed 04/27/16

- The LWVWA supports SB 5309, legislation improving efficiency of public disclosure commission operations and requirements.
- The LWVWA supports SHB 1085, requiring electronic filing of lobbyists' reports.³⁴
- The LWVWA supports SB 5867, legislation enhancing public disclosure of lobbying and campaign activity.
- The LWVWA supports HB 1083, legislation concerning the acceptance of gifts by state officers and employees.
- The LWVWA supports HB 1914, SB 5386 and SB 5383, legislation addressing gifts of food and beverage to state officers and state employees.

Actions on Campaign Finance Reform by LWVWA at 2011 State Convention and in Local Leagues

At the LWVWA state convention in 2011, it was resolved that the president of LWVWA appoint a committee to investigate how unlimited and undisclosed corporate financing is impacting WA state campaigns and legislation. The committee was to report to all the local Leagues with information and suggestions about how to disseminate it to the general public. The LWVWA Citizens United Committee was formed and produced a report, which was made available through the LWVWA website.

The committee contacted all 21 WA Leagues asking for input on various proposals for responding to the Citizens United decision and seeking consensus in time for 2012 National convention. The committee also wanted to know if any local Leagues had acted on the issue. A few Leagues replied:

LWV/Bellingham/Whatcom County reported that they formed their own committee which was meeting biweekly. They were very interested in the material.

LWV-Jefferson County reported having 100% consensus in support of the Constitutional amendment written by Move-to-Amend. They sponsored a forum in May 2010 in Port Townsend featuring a lawyer well-versed in constitutional law and court precedents and were co-sponsoring another forum on the subject with Occupy Port Townsend in March 2012 at the Chimacum high school auditorium.

LWV of the San Juans held a meeting to educate the public. They put together a series of video clips illustrating the issues at stake in the decision, then had a local lawyer interpret both the case and the decision. The meeting opened up for questions and lively discussion. Many attendees had been unaware of the ruling and its consequences. The crowd left galvanized to act.

LWV/Seattle/King County Board reported their statement dated March 3, 2012: (Whereas) The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County in response to the 2012-2014 National Program Planning call for suggestions by more than a 2 to 1 margin chose the issue of "Corporate personhood/campaign finance", (therefore) League of Women Voters Seattle-King County suggests that LWVUS seek a remedy in whatever form is necessary.

LWV/Snohomish County board "*has gone on record supporting a resolution*" circulated by a consortium headed by GMOP (Get Money Out of Politics) asking Washington State legislators to urge Congress to call for a Constitutional Convention.

³⁴ "Government and Elections", *League of Women Voters of Washington*, http://participate.lwv.org/c/9163/p/salsa/web/common/public/content?content_item_KEY=10079, viewed 04/27/16

LWV Thurston County reported that a majority of members favored action including a resolution by the LWVWA in support of a Constitutional amendment and a resolution for support for a Constitutional amendment at the next LWVUS convention. They held a program which dealt exclusively with redressing the Citizens United decision. In addition to the unanimity among the membership, there was audience support from non-League members. Also they researched monies spent in the 2010 elections, which reconfirmed the need for action.

Results of LWVWA Convention in 2013, the Creation of this Toolkit and Important Deadlines

At the LWVWA convention in 2013, the LWVWA Citizens United Study Group, under the umbrella of LWV-Jefferson County, proposed a study on how money in politics affects the citizens of WA State and the LWV. The scope of the proposed study was to research and evaluate whether the addition of unlimited money into the political process affects initiatives and candidate elections, whether it influences a candidate's voting behavior, and whether citizen-access to the democratic process is impacted. In addition, the LWVWA board proposed a campaign finance toolkit project. The study passed and the board-initiated campaign finance toolkit passed as well.

Because delegates to the 2014 LWVUS convention authorized national studies to update the campaign finance reform positions and to analyze the pros and cons of a Constitutional amendment, the LWVWA study group decided creating the "LWVWA CU Toolkit"³⁵ with information specific to Washington would provide the best service to local Leagues by documenting and relating the consequences within the Washington state region.

Two LWVUS studies were performed, "Money in Politics" and "Constitutional Amendment". Each League in the states submitted their consensus report to LWVUS. These studies and their reports resulted in the LWVUS releasing two updated positions, "Money in Politics"³⁶ and "Constitutional Conventions under Article V of the U.S. Constitution"³⁷.

NOTE: LWVUS conventions are held in even numbered years, and LWVWA conventions are held in odd numbered years.

³⁵ LWVWA CU Toolkit, http://www.lwvwacutookit.org/LVW_Updated_Campaign_Finance_Position.pdf, viewed 05/10/16

³⁶ "LWVUS Position on Money in Politics", *League of Women Voters*, <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/lwvus-position-money-politics>, viewed 05/10/16

³⁷ "League Position Adopted: Constitutional Conventions under Article V of the U.S. Constitution", *League of Women Voters*, <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/league-position-adopted-constitutional-conventions-under-article-v-us-const>, viewed 05/10/16