



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL YAVAPAI COUNTY

LWVCYC.org LWVCYC@gmail.com P. O. Box 11538, Prescott, AZ 86304-1538 Jan. 2016

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President/Webmaster
Terri Farneti
533-5297

1st Vice President
Program:
Ellie Laumark
583-2800

2nd Vice President
Membership:
Corinne Shaw
772-0941

Secretary
Lindsay Bell
778-0348

Treasurer
Linda Greenberg
771-2136


Director
Public Relations
Toni Denis
848-2753

Director In-House
Communications:
Nancy Shugrue
227-1374

Director Voter Services:
Joyce Haas
775-5100

Nominating Committee
Tina Blake, Chm.
Cory Shaw, Bd.
open

A graphic for a meeting announcement. It features a background image of a classical building with columns and arches, overlaid with a faint image of a US dollar bill. The LWV logo is positioned at the top center. The text is centered and reads: "Money in Politics A League Consensus Meeting". Below this, the date and time are given as "Saturday, January 2, 2016 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.". The location is "Las Fuentes Resort Village 1035 Scott Drive Prescott, AZ". The entire graphic is enclosed in a rounded rectangular frame with a green border.


Money in Politics
A League Consensus
Meeting
Saturday, January 2, 2016
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Las Fuentes Resort Village
1035 Scott Drive
Prescott, AZ



A Note from the President

Merry Christmas - Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season! It's the time of year we look back at what we have accomplished – personally, globally and locally. I'm proud to have been a part of the LWVCYC team for my 15th year as a member – and I'm so grateful for all of you as members of our organization. For those of you who were able to make the holiday luncheon – it was lovely! Many thanks to Cory Shaw, our VP Membership for organizing the event – Augie's did a great job with the service and arrangements.

It's a good time of year to recognize the volunteer contributions to our League from serving on the Board, registering voters, welcoming guests for meetings, assisting with meeting set-up, serving on the Nominating Committee, participating in studies, offering ideas for program, to making it a priority to attend our meetings...THANK YOU!

I would also like to thank Toni Denis, Wini Daniel, Sandra Goodwin and Alice Harris, and others (forgive me if I forgot anyone...) for their donations to our League. As many of you know, of our \$60 dues - \$29.50 goes to National, and \$13.00 goes to State – leaving us with \$17.50 per member to work with. We know you have many options for end-of-year donations, but if you'd like to consider donating to the League...

There are two ways you can support the work of our League:

- Contributing to the General Fund supports day-to-day League activities such as voter registration drives, program planning, maintaining our website, and this year – we purchased a tent for voter registration and other events and for 2016...we hope to hold candidate forums. Please write your contribution checks to the General Fund to *League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County (LWVCYC)*.
- Contributing to the Education Fund supports the educational activities of the League such as printed materials – such as our Elected Official Guide locally, the Pros & Cons of the Ballot Initiatives statewide, and research costs. Donations to the Education Fund are tax deductible, and you can make your check out to the *League of Women Voters of Arizona Education Fund*. The statewide League administers this fund and grants are distributed back to us upon request.

Our January 2nd meeting on “Money in Politics” will be very interesting – and the study committee has dedicated hours and hours to understand all of the materials to present to our membership that morning. This is another consensus meeting to help formulate the final National League position on the topic. It is a hot issue – and one worth educating ourselves about. Please bring a friend to observe the process – we do need to encourage membership. I look forward to seeing as many of you there to kick off 2016!

Happy New Year

Jessie ☺



AN UPDATE ON MONEY IN POLITICS

LWV Money in Politics Review and Update Money in Politics Committee 2014-2016

With thanks to LWV of Massachusetts for its continuing work on this topic.



Money in Elections

Hard Money Candidates

- Caps on Contributions
- Disclosure

Lobbying

- Fundraising
- Bundling

Soft Money

Dark Money 501(c)(4)'s

- No Disclosure
- No Cap on Contributions
- Expend Only 50% On Electioneering

Political Parties & PACs

- Caps on contributions
- Disclosure

Super PACs

- Independent Expenditures
- No Caps on Contributions or Expenditures

Money in Politics

~ From the Advocacy Report at the National Convention

Campaign finance reform – money in politics – has been one of the League’s trademark issues for many, many years. And, just as in voting rights, the Supreme Court has intervened in campaign finance to overturn more than 40 years of protections.

Building on its terrible 2010 decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*, this year the Supreme Court decided the case of *McCutcheon v. FEC* and stuck down the aggregate limits on an individual’s total contributions to political candidates, political committees and party committees. The removal of these limits gives big money donors even greater influence over our elected officials and opens another loophole in campaign finance law. The League joined an amicus brief in the *McCutcheon* case urging the Supreme Court to uphold the aggregate contribution limits and we spoke out, disappointed by yet another irresponsible decision on money in politics by the Roberts Court.

The League has been taking action to overcome the effects of Citizens United and McCutcheon with strategies to compel full disclosure, limit so-called “independent” expenditures, ban individual-candidate SuperPACs, establish public financing of congressional and presidential elections, continue participation in Supreme Court challenges, and ensure that the 501(c)3 organizations can’t abuse the tax code and carryout unlimited and secret election spending. This work included direct lobbying, repeated use of the Lobby Corps, statements to congressional committees, letters and memos to members of the House and Senate, grassroots action alerts and press, media and social media outreach.

Early in this biennium, the League mounted a campaign for passage of the DISCLOSE Act, including generating more than 20,000 letters to the Senate, dozens of letters to the editor, and radio ads in the target areas of Maine and Tennessee.

In addition to these actions, the League is also going back to basics to make sure that our underlying strength – the understanding and agreement of League members -- is solid. This biennium a talented and committed group of volunteers has served on the LWVUS Campaign Finance Task Force. The Task Force recently completed a Campaign Finance Primer and PowerPoint, that in large part to LWV Massachusetts and is working on other tools all to provide critical educational materials. As the board looked at all the issues around Campaign Finance, we are struck by the importance of building membership understanding and agreement as we move forward to protect our representative democracy from being overwhelmed by big money.

From the Associated Press, 12-19-2015

What is 'dark money,' and how are states responding to it?

One category of politically related spending is less regulated than others in the U.S., and states are moving in opposite directions when it comes to disclosure requirements. Here are questions and answers about the so-called dark money involved in political races.

Q. What is "dark money?"

A. It's what critics call political spending by nonprofit groups that do not report the sources of their contributions. The money generally comes from nonprofits registered as social welfare organizations and goes toward independent spending rather than campaign coffers controlled by candidates. The federal government does not require those groups to disclose their individual donors, and neither do most states.

Q. How much of a factor is this kind of spending in elections?

A. It accounted for more than \$300 million in the 2012 presidential and congressional elections, and is expected to play a significant role in 2016. An analysis of TV ad buys seeking to influence state-level campaigns in 2014, released by the Center for Public Integrity, found that \$25 million was spent by groups that did not disclose their donors.

Q. What do courts say about this?

A. They had a role in creating it. The U.S. Supreme Court's Citizens United ruling in 2010 found it unconstitutional to put limits on political spending by businesses, unions and nonprofit groups. That case and others have altered the democratic process, with political spending increasingly done by outside organizations

rather than candidates or parties. The Citizens United ruling also encouraged prompt disclosure as a way to hold corporations and candidates accountable.

Q. So have lawmakers responded with a push for transparency?

A. Far from it. Many states have not updated their campaign finance laws in reaction to "dark money" spending, and some are going the other way: Gov. Scott Walker backed Wisconsin legislation allowing political campaigns to coordinate spending with advocacy groups that do not have to disclose their donors.

Q. What's the argument against disclosure?

A. Attorney James Bopp, who represents conservative groups fighting campaign finance regulations, calls it a free speech issue, because naming the sources of advocacy group donations would chill certain voices. "For the speech-police types that I'm fighting, their goal was never disclosure," he said. "They're trying to shut us down."

Q. Are any states trying to shine a light on dark money nevertheless?

A. Some. Rhode Island and Massachusetts are requiring top donors to be listed on independent advertisements. In California, groups that spend more than a certain amount on political ads are required to report their donors to the state. In Maryland, donors will have to be disclosed unless they specifically tell the organizations that they do not want their money used for political ads.

"The overall trend in the disclosure world is going toward more and better systems," said Edwin Bender, executive director of the Helena, Montana-based National Institute on Money in State Politics, which tracks political spending and advocates for transparency.

Q. Are the new laws having their intended effect?

A. In most cases, it's too early to tell. Montana and Maryland get their first tests in 2016. Jonathan Motl, Montana's commissioner of political practices, vows vigorous enforcement, and says that even if there are "glitches in the system," whatever it does "is a heck of a lot better than what we've had before."

'Dark money' grows in politics even as states try to stop it

Just before Rhode Island voters chose their governor last year, a group in Ohio transferred \$730,000 from secret donors to another Ohio organization that spent the money on television ads aimed at defeating Gina Raimondo, the Democrat who eventually won a tight race.

More than a year later, it's still not clear where the money came from or why two Ohio-based groups would want to influence an election 600 miles away. The same groups also funneled anonymously donated cash for major political ad campaigns in Arkansas and Illinois.

Rhode Island's disclosure laws are tougher than most, but this was a classic case of "dark money" keeping its secrets despite requirements that donors who pay for political ads reveal themselves to the public.

With the presidency at stake in 2016 as well as a dozen governor's races, 34 U.S. Senate races, all 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and scores of mayoral races, state legislative seats and ballot initiatives, this kind of unlimited anonymous spending is expected to grow, and handling it has become the biggest campaign finance challenge for states nationwide.

Some legislatures are trying to collect and publish the sources of these donations, but most states allow

independent groups to spend unlimited cash on political ads with little transparency.

At least one state, Wisconsin, is moving away from disclosure: Republican Gov. Scott Walker signed laws Wednesday that blur the lines between the activity of candidate campaigns and groups that - in almost all other states - are supposed to act independently.

This could set back democracy if other states follow suit, said John Pudner, the founder of Take Back Our Republic, a group based in Auburn, Alabama that argues for tighter campaign finance laws from a conservative perspective.

"Disclosure is important and fair," Pudner said. "If we want to get people away from their cynicism, let them know everything."

Political funding has been shifting to independent groups from individual campaigns since the U.S. Supreme Court's 2010 Citizens United ruling, which removed caps on how much corporations, unions and interest groups can spend on advocacy communications that do not specifically call for the election or defeat of candidates.

The ruling explicitly encouraged transparency: "Prompt disclosure of expenditures can provide shareholders and citizens with the information needed to hold corporations and elected officials accountable for their positions and supporters," Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote.

But the federal government doesn't require such disclosure, and most states don't either. Even in states that do have been stumped by webs of financing that obscure the sources.

Of \$850 million spent on state-level political broadcast TV ads in 2014, \$25 million - or about 4 percent - came from groups that do not have to disclose their donors, according to an analysis by the Center for Public Integrity of data from the advertising tracking firm Kantor Media/CMAG. That's twice as much as 2010, when a similar number of state offices were on ballots. In the 2012 congressional and presidential elections, dark money topped \$300 million.

If last year's mayor's race in Newark, New Jersey, is any guide, anonymous cash will be a far bigger factor in 2016 races at all levels, nationwide. Independent spending dwarfed what the candidates' authorized committees spent, and while much of it was duly reported as coming from unions, much also came from advocacy groups not required to identify individual donors.

Most of this money pays for television commercials, but it also funds automated calls to voters, fliers through the mail, and advertising in newspapers, radio and the Internet.

Denise Roth Barber, managing director of the Helena, Montana-based National Institute on Money in State Politics, calls it a "shell game," with donors giving anonymously to one group that contributes to other organizations so that the original sources never appear on campaign finance filings.

In one of the most high-profile cases, California's political ethics commission and attorney general sued to force out-of-state groups to report who donated the \$15 million they spent on the eve of the 2012 general election. Public records requests by the media then revealed that much of the money had come from wealthy Californians, and had been funneled through a network of conservative groups in failed attempts to defeat a tax-hike initiative backed by Gov. Jerry Brown and to pass an anti-union initiative.

Rhode Island has required groups running advocacy ads to disclose top donors since 2012. The Mid America Fund complied by reporting that the Republican Governors' Association provided some of the money for the ads in 2014, and that most of it came from another Ohio group, the Government Integrity Fund. The RGA discloses its donors. The Government Integrity Fund does not.

The spending - about half what each major party candidate spent during the last two months before Election Day - flooded Rhode Island's solitary media market in the final two weeks with ads accusing

Raimondo of "gambling with our retirement."

The Rhode Island Democratic Party told the state elections board that the group should have disclosed its original donors. The board's executive director, Robert Kando, told The Associated Press that the issue will be considered in January at the request of Common Cause, which has pushed for more donor disclosure around the country.

The Government Integrity Fund's president, Ohio lobbyist Thomas Norris, did not return messages from the AP.

State Sen. Juan M. Pichardo, a Democrat who sponsored Rhode Island's disclosure law, told the AP that the group is "violating the intent and the law."

"It's deceiving," Pichardo said. "People should know where the money is coming from, what sort of influence and the intent is from the organization and the donors."

California, Montana, Maryland and a few other states have approved more requirements aimed at forcing independent groups to disclose their original funding sources, and several will get their first tests in 2016. But other states have quashed campaign finance overhauls.

New Mexico State Sen. Peter Wirth, a Democrat from Santa Fe, has twice seen the disclosure bills he sponsored win bipartisan Senate approval, only to die in the House.

"Groups on both sides kind of come out of the woodwork and are convinced that somehow this is going to change the rules and not work for them," Wirth complained.

The result for New Mexico: No limits on coordination between independent groups and candidates, and a big jump in dark money. Common Cause said spending by nonprofits and independent groups - some with anonymous donors - jumped from \$6 million in 2006 to \$14 million in 2012, and is growing fast.

Geoff Mulvihill, Susan Montoya Bryan, Jennifer McDermott writers



LWVCYC Tentative Calendar 2015-16

Day	Date	Time	Activity	Topic/Place
Tues.	Dec. 29	8:00	Board	Board Meeting
Sat.	Jan 2nd, 2016	10:00	Public Meeting	Money in Politics
Tues.	Feb. 2	8:00	Board	Board Meeting
Sat.	February 6th	10:00	Public Meeting	Program Planning
Mon.	Febr. 22		Deadline	Deadline Voter Regist. For Presidential Primary
Tues.	March 1	8:00	Board	Board Meeting
Sat.	March 5th	10:00	Public Meeting	What's our water future?
Tues.	Mar. 22		Election	Presidential Preference Primary
Tues.	Apr. 19	8:00	Board	Board Meeting
Sat.	April 23	10:00	Public Meeting	Legislative Update This is a fourth Saturday.
Tues.	May 3	8:00	Board	Board Meeting
Sat.	May 7	TBA	Members	Annual Meeting and Speaker
TBD			Board	New Board Retreat
Mon.	Aug. 1		Deadline	Voter registration deadline for Primary Election
Tues.	Aug. 30		Election	Primary Election

