



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL YAVAPAI COUNTY

LWVCYC@gmail.com P. O. Box 11538, Prescott, AZ 86304-1538 October 2012

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The League of Women Voters presents A Grand Celebration

Arizona's Centennial of a Woman's Right To Vote

PUBLIC WELCOME!

Hear about the influence of women in politics at the local, state and national levels.

Participants include:

Lora Lee Nye Council Woman,
 Prescott Valley

BJ Forshee Representative of
 Central Yavapai Citizens
 for Civil Dialogue

Lindsay Bell Yavapai County
 Democratic Chair

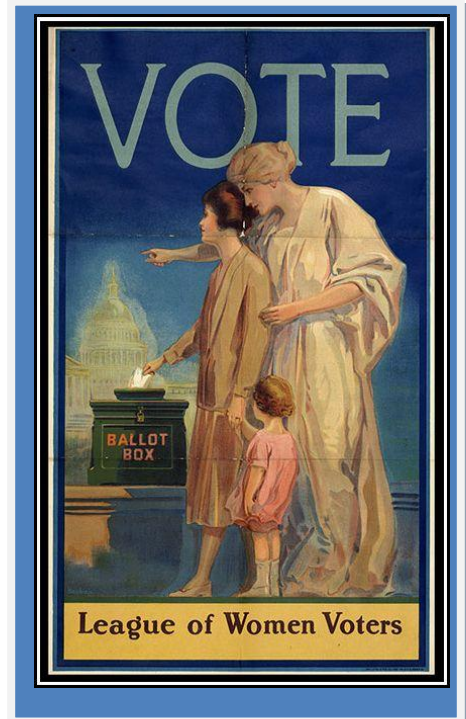
Pamela Jones President, Republican
 Women of Prescott.

When: Saturday, October 20, 2012

9 AM - Social Time; 9:30 AM - Program

Where: Lower level Community Room,

Las Fuentes Village, 1035 Scott, Prescott



LWVCYC Website: <http://goo.gl/5R9xU>



President's Message

Our country is certainly in the midst of exciting, and historical political times. We've had our first Presidential Debate, with a few surprises, and upcoming very soon is the one and only Vice-Presidential Debate and a second Presidential Debate on October 16th. Also this week on PBS' Horizon there will be a Senatorial Debate for the senate seat being vacated by Senator John Kyl. Yes, exciting times, but also very important.

We've had some changes on our board. Vicky McLane has graciously accepted the role of Director of Action. I am sure she will be very active and we are glad to have her on board. Committees have been moving right along, with voter registrations, membership meetings, etc. Speaking of memberships, I am so happy to see seven new members sign up in the month of September, six of them at our September meeting.

If you missed that meeting, you can still pick up our Voter Guide regarding the propositions on the ballot at our next meeting on Oct. 20. If the turnout of the last meeting is any indication, you will want to come early for a good seat. We will have some goodies for you because it will be a celebration meeting of the centennial anniversary of the AZ Women's Right to Vote. We will have women representatives from both parties and non-partisan participants on the panel as well. It promises to be a really fun and thoughtful meeting that you won't want to miss.

Our state league has been enmeshed in proposition activity. As you know LWV supports Proposition 204, and opposes Propositions 115 and 121, which is the Top Two prop to change primary elections. It hasn't been an easy proposition to oppose, with court appearances and back and forth letters to the editors maligning each side. Included in this issue is an excellent letter by Barbara Klein, our state league president. Take a moment to read it.

There has been other activity as well. You might have heard about a new movement toward civil dialogue in politics. The O'Connor House Foundation has initiated a group in Phoenix called Speak Out AZ, from which groups all over the state have formed to further civil dialogue, voter engagement, and voter education. The state league, LWVAZ, became a partner early on and it was natural for a group of interested citizens locally to form a group. I have joined that steering committee and we named it Central Yavapai Citizens for Civil Dialogue or CYCCD. If you would like more information please contact me.

Keep an eye on the VOTER issues, as we have some social activities coming up that we are sure you will enjoy. They are scheduled to ease post-election burnout, and encourage new friendships among us. I, for one, am looking forward to a non-serious activity or two!

As always, feel free to give me a call or email note if you have a concern, thought, or suggestion. My door is always open and I'd love to hear from you.

Vicky O'Hara

708-0608

vohara@cablone.net

*Don't Miss Our October 20 Meeting, as we celebrate
Arizona's Centennial of a woman's right to vote!*

Please join the League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County on Saturday October 20th, 2012 as we celebrate Arizona's Centennial of a woman's right to vote. Our distinguished panel of politically active women in our community will address the influence of women in politics at a local, state and national level. After sharing their views about women's long struggle for equal rights and where we are now in our journey, each panelist will address a question regarding the issues of water, education and the authority of the electorate college. A brief clip of the suffrage movement documentary Iron Jawed Maidens will also be presented.

Our gathering will be held at Las Fuentes Resort Village with refreshments beginning at 9am and the program scheduled from 9:30 to 11:30am. Bring a friend as you join The League in a thought provoking session of a Woman's Right to Vote-A Centennial Celebration!

Presenters –Centennial of AZ Women's Right to Vote



Lindsay Bell served as a Prescott councilwoman from 1995-99, and later ran for the state House of Representatives from District 1.

She has been a resident of Arizona for more than 42 years, has served on non-profit and government boards locally, regionally and statewide, and has participated in numerous committees and planning efforts to analyze and develop public policy. Bell received a bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's degree in public administration from ASU. She retired in 2008 after more than 35 years working in the non-profit sector, primarily in the administration of publicly financed programs. Her special interest is in establishing a regional public transit system.

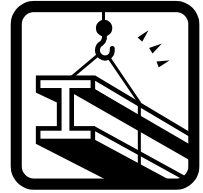
B.J. Forshee is a current member of the LWV, a community organizer and steering committee member for the grassroots organization in support of the O'Connor House projects and Speak Out Arizona in Prescott, the immediate Past President-Elect for AAUW Prescott, and past member of the AWEE Yavapai Advisory Council (Arizona Women's Education and Employment).



Pamela Jones holds a BA from Jacksonville University and a MBA from Duke University. She spent her professional career in hospital and medical group management. Pam's passion is politics and she served on the 2000 George W. Bush Inaugural Committee and worked as a volunteer in the East Wing of the Bush White House. She is currently the President of the Republican Women of Prescott, a political organization with more than 400 members.

Lora Lee Nye moved to Prescott Valley in 1999 and was elected to the Prescott Valley Town Council in 2003, and re-elected in 2007 and 2011. Her goals as a council member are to promote local and quad-city citizen awareness regarding town-wide issues and to increase citizen participation in town activities and governances. Lora Lee supports the development of work force housing, sustainable economic development, managed growth. She has been active in children and victim rights issues for over twenty years. Lora Lee's professional experience includes 20 years in administrative and office management in the behavioral health field. As a long-standing patron of the arts, she has performed at dinner theaters, and served on the Prescott Valley Arts and Culture Commission.





From a need to a plan through construction
to a result the whole county can be proud of.

NORTH ELEVATION



ENTRY PERSPECTIVE VIEW

Save the Date!



**Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
for the new
Yavapai County Juvenile Justice
Center**

**October 26, 2012
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

1100 Prescott Lakes Parkway

Formal Invitations to be sent out soon

LWV Stands for Judicial Merit Selection and in Opposition to PROPOSITION 115

WHAT IS MERIT SELECTION?

Merit selection is a method of choosing judges based upon their actual qualifications and background. In Arizona, it applies to Superior Courts in counties that have populations over 250,000 (Maricopa, Pima and Pinal). There is also a Judicial Nominating Committee for statewide appellate courts (Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals).

Non- partisan Judicial Nominating Commissions or JNCs composed of lawyers and non-lawyers locate, recruit, investigate and evaluate applicants for judgeships. All JNC interviews are in public, and public comments are solicited. Commissioners determine the most highly qualified of the applicants, who cannot all be from the same party, and vote in public for three candidates to nominate for appointment by the Governor. The Governor then appoints from this thoroughly vetted list. Once appointed, these judges stand for retention by the voters at least two years after they have been appointed, and if retained by the voters, they then begin a regular term in office.

CHANGES PROPOSED by PROPOSITION 115

Currently, the Governor appoints ten lay members to each JNC and the Bar Association nominates five lawyers. If Proposition 115 passes, this balance of lay members to lawyers will change drastically. The Governor will appoint 14 out of 15 members, and the Bar Association will have only one appointment. This imbalance in representation of lay to lawyer blatantly introduces political patronage appointments into the selection process.

Another equally alarming change would be that if Proposition 115 passes, the JNCs are mandated to send eight rather than three names to the governor **and** they can all be from the same party. Appellate Court Judge Mary Schroeder has publicly stated that there are occasions when there are “definitely not eight highly qualified candidates,” and the requirement for eight nominations could introduce mediocrity into the selection process as well as present further possibilities for political patronage.

Proposition 115 would cause a serious blurring of the Separation of Powers. It is an attempt by the executive and legislative branches to control the judicial branch.

And it is not just what Proposition 115 would do if passed, it is **also the way it got to the ballot** and how it got the legal community to support it. The lobbyist for the Arizona judges association has publicly stated that legislators on the negotiating committee told the representatives of the legal community that if they did not go along with this ballot measure, the legislature would introduce a measure next year to emasculate the entire merit selection system. So it is an **extorted compromise** – not an agreeable compromise as it has been presented to the public.

Long term, this is a foot in the door, the nose of the camel to return to pre 1974 days when Arizonans elected their judges. If you wanted to be a judge, you ran for office, you campaigned, attended lunches, held fund raisers, and stated publicly your support or opposition to major social issues in order to get elected.

"It does mean greater control by the governor, and if the governor is inclined to appoint friends and political allies, it's going to result in less about merit and more about politics," said Keith Swisher, a professor at the Phoenix School of Law.

In Texas it was common for judges to have **rolodexes** on their bench that kept track of which lawyers coming into their courts had supported their candidacy and made contributions to their campaigns. And on the other hand, **lawyers went "judge shopping"** and tried to get their cases into the courts of the judges they knew would likely have leanings toward their case.

SO, DOES THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS SEE POLITICS STICKING ITS UGLY HEAD INTO OUR COURTS IF PROPOSITION 115 PASSES?

You bet we do – as do, FIVE retired chief justices of the supreme court and immediate past chief justice Ruth McGregor, as do 19 past presidents of the Arizona bar.. As does Paul Bender, esteemed constitutional lawyer from ASU. And about 60 other legal firms or independent lawyers who have signed on to oppose it. They don't want Arizona to be a rolodex state and they are out there working to defeat this measure.

Former Arizona Chief Justice Charles Jones, a conservative Republican, is one of five former chief justices who have signed a letter opposing the proposition. Jones said elected officials look at everything through "a prism of politics," when the courts are supposed to be nonpartisan and independent of the executive and legislative branches. **"The courts have no constituency other than the written law of the land," he said.**

This measure is not to be taken lightly. It is a **major threat to impartial non-partisan courts and judges** and the present and future citizens of Arizona.

Arizona is admired throughout the United States for our merit selection system of judges and 24 other states have copied and implemented a similar systems. Several others are working to adopt a judicial merit plan.

We must not let the blindfold on lady justice slip. We must defeat Proposition 115 and save Arizona's non-partisan system of selecting judges!

For further information, contact: Sandra Goodwin, Chair, Impartial Courts
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ARIZONA
928 632 8490 esgoodwin@commspeed.net

The State Board of the League of Women Voters also voted to formally oppose Prop 121, Top Two, and support Prop 204, Educations and Jobs.

LWV Urges Support for Proposition 204

By Judy Hedding, About.com Guide September 23, 2012

In November 2012 voters in Arizona will address Proposition 204, entitled **Taxation**. It arises from an initiative measure to amend Arizona Revised Statutes. If passed, Proposition 204 would **permanently increase the state sales tax rate by one cent per dollar** beginning June 1, 2013, to a rate of 6.6 percent. The money collected from the tax increase would be used **for educational programs, public transportation infrastructure projects and human services programs**. Prop 204 would annually distribute the first one billion dollars of additional sales tax as follows:

- (1) Five hundred million dollars into the "quality education and performance fund", to assist school districts and charter schools with assessment and accountability requirements, including improvement plans for failing schools, to provide teacher and principal evaluation systems based in part on student achievement, to improve pupil reading proficiency by the end of third grade and to implement a system of testing and awarding diplomas to high school students who demonstrate readiness for college level math and English;
- (2) Ten million dollars into the "education learning and accountability fund" to maintain a system for compiling student data and school finance data to meet state and federal reporting requirements;
- (3) Ninety million dollars into the "education accountability and improvement fund" to provide performance funding to school districts and charter schools based on performance measures relating to academic progress, parental satisfaction and student engagement, to provide teacher training and for technology necessary to implement statewide academic standards and assessments;
- (4) One hundred million dollars into the "state infrastructure fund", to be used for a variety of transportation infrastructure projects, highway improvement projects and other transportation-related projects;
- (5) Twenty-five million dollars into the "children's health insurance program fund", to be used for costs associated with the current publicly funded health care program for children under nineteen whose household income is at or below two hundred per cent of the federal poverty level;
- (6) One hundred million dollars into the "family stability and self-sufficiency fund", to be distributed to state agencies and private nonprofit entities as a match for federal funds for programs that provide for the basic needs of children, families and vulnerable adults whose household income is below two hundred per cent of the federal poverty level;
- (7) Fifty million dollars into the "university scholarship, operations and infrastructure fund", to be used to provide university scholarships to resident students based on financial need or academic achievement, and the remaining fund monies would be allocated to the three state universities for operating and infrastructure expenses based on performance in meeting goals set by the Board of Regents;
- (8) Up to one hundred twenty-five million dollars to the state general fund to fund the required inflationary adjustment for the kindergarten-through-twelfth-grade school system. Sales tax revenue over

one billion dollars would be distributed to in established percentages for specific education-related programs, except 11% that would go to the "state infrastructure fund".

The one cent tax is projected to generate \$971 million in revenue in its first year. Of that amount, \$753 million would be distributed to education, \$97 million to transportation and \$121 million to human service programs.

Advocates of Proposition 204 say that:

This initiative prevents legislators from using the one-cent sales tax renewal as they wish. Every dollar must be spent as you designate, with 80 percent of the funding benefiting education across the spectrum: K-12, vocational education, community colleges, universities and GED programs. To protect your investment, the Legislature will be prohibited from cutting K-12 funding. Arizona must invest in education, not only to protect schoolchildren but to protect the state's economy. When companies decide to relocate or remain in Arizona, they base that decision on whether Arizona has a highly skilled, well-educated workforce.

The quality of education affects our ability to keep and recruit excellent employees, as well as recruit new companies with good-paying jobs. We depend on our state's educators to graduate students with the skills necessary to succeed in our rapidly changing job market so that Arizona remains competitive nationally and internationally. The Quality Education and Jobs initiative provides the investment in education that Arizona needs to thrive economically. Arizona is one of 45 states that have adopted a new, more rigorous curriculum called the Common Core and a new test tied to the new standards that will replace AIMS. Teachers and principals will have one-third to one-half of their evaluations tied directly to how well their students perform. We must invest in education at this critical time to ensure that our teachers in the classroom have the resources they need to help our state's 1 million schoolchildren succeed. The initiative also guarantees state investment in Arizona's transportation infrastructure, which also is critical to Arizona's economic health. Arizona must have safe and efficient highways, roads and transit for Arizona to keep the job-creating businesses it has and recruit new ones to the state.

The best feature of this initiative is that it directs how this tax will be spent. With the potential of an additional one billion dollars, it will provide a minimum funding level that cannot be reduced by the legislature. Funding will be available to support teachers in carrying out more rigorous education standards. An accountability structure will be implemented. It ensures children of lower-income families will be healthy and ready to learn. This initiative is a very ambitious effort to correct the funding cuts imposed by the Legislature upon the states' population.

Prop 204 creates a stable, dedicated revenue source for education that will help create highly educated and skilled students. Arizona has been grappling with poor economic times. For K-12 education, this has meant nearly one-fifth of funding cut from public schools in the past four years - the second biggest cut in education funding among all the states. Rather than investing in Arizona's and our students' future, our legislature created mandates without the resources to ensure they are successful.

All of this revenue is available simply by renewing an existing sales tax at the same rate, one cent per dollar, that was approved by the voters in 2010 to fund education and health programs. Without a yes vote on the Prop 204, the tax approved in 2010 will expire on May 31, 2013 and this revenue will be lost to our schools and communities.

Political Parties United in Dislike of Top-Two Primaries

by Natasha Khan, Cronkite News Service, October 1st, 2012

They don't agree on much, but a plan to create "top two" primaries has Arizona's major and minor political parties on the same page – or at least close to it.

Their responses range from outright opposition from Republican, Libertarian and Green leaders to noncommittal dislike from the Arizona Democratic Party.

Proposition 121, dubbed the Open Elections/Open Government Act, would replace the current partisan primary system with a single primary that advances the top two vote-getters regardless of party.

The Open Government Committee, led by former Phoenix Mayor Paul Johnson, contends the change would produce more moderate candidates and increase primary election turnout.

Tim Sifert, spokesman for the state's Republican Party, said voters should be able to elect the candidates of their choice and that political parties should maintain the right to elect their own candidates. "We are adamantly opposed to this constitutional amendment," Sifert said.

The state Democratic Party hasn't taken an official stand on the measure, but Executive Director Luis Heredia said there is little support for it. "We believe that Prop. 121 does not resolve what the proponents believe, which is to moderate the state," he said.

Leaders of Arizona's Libertarian and Green parties argue that the initiative would make it virtually impossible for their candidates to make it onto the general election ballot. "It will destroy third parties in Arizona," said Warren Severin, chairman of Arizona's Libertarian Party.

"There is a reason we have partisan primaries in Arizona," said Angel Torres, co-chair of Arizona's Green Party and a candidate for state House in a Phoenix-area district. "Whether you are a member of the Democratic Party or the Republican or Libertarian or Green Party, those voters can vote for the candidates that can best represent their views and their values in the general election."

If passed, the measure could create general elections with Democrats running against Democrats or Republicans running against Republicans in state, local or federal elections. The change wouldn't apply to presidential elections.

Maricopa County Attorney Bill Montgomery, a Republican, has become the public face of the group Save Our Vote AZ, a coalition that is the main opposition to Proposition 121. The group fought the measure five times in court, twice reaching Arizona's Supreme Court, but failed to keep it off of the ballot.

Montgomery said that once he did his homework he found the initiative "woefully inadequate" in meeting its promises to voters, including producing better candidates and increasing voter turnout. "You may wind up only having a choice between two people from the same party," he said. "Not much of a choice."

As of Sept. 27, Save Our Vote AZ had raised \$108,226, according to the group's post-primary election report filed with the Arizona Secretary of State's Office. Most of its funding came from a group called Americans for Responsible Leadership, which has contributed \$75,000.

Americans for Responsible Leadership, which lists a Phoenix post office box as an address, has [a website](#) dedicated to its opposition to Proposition 121 and Proposition 204, which would make permanent a one-cent-per-dollar sales tax dedicated primarily to education.

The Open Government Committee, supporting the measure, had raised over \$1 million as of Sept. 27, but much of that money was spent trying to put Proposition 121 on the ballot.

The League of Women Voters, which participated in the lawsuits against the measure, contends that Proposition 121 would limit choice and could harm third parties. “One of our greatest concerns is that on the general ballot there could be only one party to choose from,” said Barbara Klein, the group’s president.

Although those opposing the measure are against it for a variety of reasons, they are connected by the status quo, said David Berman, a senior research fellow at Arizona State University’s Morrison Institute for Public Policy.

“I think the organizations which are opposing are pretty much concerned about the loss of influence to their parties and their groups,” Berman said.

Ranked Choice Preferable to Top Two?

'Top-2' primary is like candy — offers quick satisfaction but ultimately rots teeth

By Guest Opinion, [Arizona Capitol Times](#), October 5, 2012

Thank you for the informative article “Other states with top-2 primaries show mixed results” from the Sept. 21 issue of the Arizona Capitol Times. The piece presented a number of pros and cons of the top-two system based on both actual results and expectations from other states.

While it was fairly comprehensive and included some of the League of Women Voters of Arizona’s concerns about more money and actually greater party power in primaries, it did not include the principal reasons that the League is opposing the measure — Proposition 121 — on our November ballot.

We have a sincere appreciation for the dissatisfaction supporters have with the fact that the views of a majority of Arizonans are not well- represented. We understand that they are looking for “moderation” in their legislators. However, civility and compromise are more productive goals than trying to eliminate all other views that are not somehow defined as “moderate.”

We believe that writing election laws for the purpose of a particular outcome does not make for good public policy, especially when there are better alternatives that do not disenfranchise any voters and actually open up the election system to candidates and voters.

Contrary to what is often presented, Prop. 121 is not a small step toward a better system, but one with negative consequences, particularly for independents and third-party voters and candidates.

Worse yet, it risks all this and offers much less voter choice for the general election.

We wish that supporters of Prop. 121, when initially considering changes to election laws, had done a more thorough study of the options and not chosen to go with the “hot” new “reform” for election laws.

The League believes there are several different ideas that would meet the goals of the supporters without reducing voter choice in the general election. Some of these include:

1. Easing independent candidate ballot access in Arizona and repealing the sore loser law.
2. Instant runoff voting for single-seat elections or American-style proportional representation with multi-seats. Both can be done with a ranked choice voting system either in primaries or to replace them, but still eliminate the spoiler effect while electing the candidate with the most overall support.
3. Even a top-two election based on the Louisiana model would be a small improvement. All candidates run in a general November election and if no candidate receives 50 percent, a runoff is held in December.

The top-two system on the November Arizona ballot is like candy; it offers quick satisfaction but ultimately rots your teeth. Top-two may do serious long-term harm to representative democracy in Arizona. So why would we risk it when there are actually better solutions?

With a ranked ballot, voters have far more choice, candidates who appeal to the broadest majority do better, negative campaigning is not rewarded and it does not shut out the voices of new challengers and third parties. Serious reforms are like good vegetables, compared to the candy of top-two.

The League has been working to educate residents about this option and to get ranked choice onto the ballot and will continue to do so. If top-two wins, however, those healthier changes may be pushed back many years.

— *Barbara Klein, president, League of Women Voters of Arizona.*

— *Bonnie Saunders, immediate past president, LWV Arizona.*

— *Ann Eschinger, former president, LWV Arizona.*

Interesting Reading!

Report: Medicaid boost would save Arizona money

From **Mary K. Reinhart** - Sept. 26, 2012 The Republic | azcentral.com

Expanding Medicaid under federal health reform would save state tax dollars, create thousands of jobs and provide government-paid health care to hundreds of thousands of low-income Arizonans, according to a new report from a bipartisan think tank.

Research from the Grand Canyon Institute, whose board includes former Republican and Democratic state lawmakers, shows that with a \$1.5 billion investment over the first four years the state would collect nearly \$8 billion in federal funding and insure an additional 435,000 people by 2017.

"It adds more jobs, it improves our economy, it covers more people and it costs the state general fund less," said Dave Wells, the report's author and research director for the institute.

But opponents of health-care reform, including the Goldwater Institute, are urging Gov. Jan Brewer and lawmakers to reject Medicaid expansion, arguing that neither the state nor federal government can afford it.

Goldwater Institute economist Byron Schlomach said the health-care industry, not taxpayers, would benefit.

"It will put a lot of money in the pockets of people who are already doing well," Schlomach said.

The federal expansion, to take effect in January 2014, would be the largest ever for the nearly 50-year-old federal-state insurance program, but the U.S. Supreme Court in June gave states the option of declining.

Brewer is expected to decide what Arizona will do after the November election. Though the governor has been a vocal opponent of the federal health-care law and she led efforts to cut state Medicaid programs in prior years, she is considering expansion. But any expansion would need legislative approval and key lawmakers, including House Speaker Andy Tobin, have said they oppose expanding Medicaid coverage.

The Grand Canyon Institute's analysis compares three possible options: keeping the status quo, which includes a freeze on coverage for childless adults; restoring coverage to 100 percent of the federal poverty level; or full expansion under the federal law to 133 percent of the poverty level.

Full expansion would save the state \$1.2 billion over restoring the childless-adult coverage because the state would receive a larger percentage in federal matching funds. The federal government would cover 90 percent of the costs of full expansion, but the federal funding would be 66 percent -- the current share -- under the status quo or partial expansion.

Wells said failing to at least increase coverage to everyone earning below the poverty level, which Arizona voters approved in 2000, would likely draw a lawsuit. A trio of public-interest law firms sued Brewer last year over cuts to the Medicaid program, but an appeals-court ruling let the cuts stand, saying the courts couldn't force the Legislature to appropriate money.

Now that state finances have improved, Wells and others argue that lawmakers can't claim they don't have enough money to fully fund Medicaid as voters intended.

In addition, Wells' analysis shows full Medicaid expansion would create the equivalent of 21,000 jobs based on the infusion of nearly \$8 billion in federal dollars through 2017. The state's costs would be \$1.5 billion during that same period.

More than 150,000 Arizonans have lost health insurance and an untold number have been deemed ineligible for coverage due to state budget cuts over the past two years.

Schlomach issued a policy brief this week to state lawmakers, encouraging them to reject Medicaid expansion, maintain the freeze on childless adults and refuse to create a state insurance exchange, the quasi-governmental marketplace through which consumers would purchase health insurance.

He said a broader Medicaid program would reduce pressure on people to take responsibility for their own health care, and advocated a lifetime Medicaid-coverage limit of five years.

An analysis by the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, the state's Medicaid program, shows an additional 300,000 low-income people would get health coverage during the first year of a full expansion, but the state's added share would create a \$400 million budget deficit by fiscal 2015.

Grand Canyon Institute board members say they hope their analysis will help Brewer and other lawmakers make the case that Medicaid expansion is both fiscally responsible and a public-health imperative.

"There's no question to the value of giving more people access to health care," said Sue Gerard, board president of the Maricopa Integrated Health System, which oversees the county's safety-net hospital and member of the Grand Canyon Institute board. "You can't think of a whole lot of investments that can give you that kind of return."

Arizona taxpayers pay for 53% of births

Taken from Alia Beard Rau - Sept. 22, 2012 The Republic | azcentral.com

Arizona taxpayers foot the bill for the delivery of more than half of all babies born here, a growing trend with a \$200 million-plus annual price tag that has caught state leaders off guard -- even though the numbers have been rising for more than a decade.

The share of births paid for by Medicaid has been rising steadily since 1990. That growth hit a significant milestone in 2003 as it passed 50 percent, meaning that state-funded births outnumbered for the first time the number paid for by parents or their insurance companies.

The share has since continued to inch higher. In 2011, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, Arizona's Medicaid program, paid for 53 percent of the state's 84,979 births, while private insurance paid for 42 percent, according to state statistics. The remainder were paid for by individuals.

Nationally, state Medicaid programs on average cover about 40 percent of births, according to Families USA Deputy Executive Director Kathleen Stoll. Only about a dozen states' public-health programs have seen the share of publicly funded births pass 50 percent, but many more are getting close.

While no single factor is fueling the trend, there does appear to be a correlation between the rise in publicly financed births and the decline in Arizonans covered by private health insurance. Some experts blame companies cutting back on employee insurance coverage, rising private health-insurance costs and the spike in unemployment.

"(Medicaid) is a safety-net program," said Alina Salganicoff, vice president for women's health policy at the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

Issue never came up

Over the past four years, Arizona lawmakers have aggressively cut the state's budget, slashing \$3 billion in programs and services, even selling Capitol buildings, to save money. The rising costs of Medicaid-funded births, which do not appear as a line-item in the state budget and are paid for with a combination of state and federal money, never came up.

A spokesman for Maricopa Integrated Health System, which runs the hospital, said the program reimburses the hospital based on the number of days mom and baby stay. The average is 21/2 days for mothers and two days for newborns, he said.

Based on those averages, the AHCCCS-covered fees for delivery and care at all hospitals immediately after the birth for mom and baby are \$4,386 each, and add up to \$198 million for all of the 2011 covered births in Arizona. The state's Joint Legislative Budget Committee puts the 2011 costs at \$262 million. But neither of these totals includes other care that's covered, such as pre- or postnatal doctor visits, pregnancy tests, ultrasounds or treatment for any problems that may arise before, during or shortly after delivery. Women in the program are covered during pregnancy and for 60 days after. Babies are covered for a year, and then can stay on AHCCCS if they qualify under the separate program for children.

Sen. Sylvia Allen, R-Snowflake, estimated that including pre- and postnatal care, it costs Arizona about \$7,500 per birth for a delivery with no complications. Using those estimates, the 2011 deliveries would have cost Arizona taxpayers nearly \$338 million.

Behind the numbers

The demographics of Arizona women seeking assistance from AHCCCS for care during pregnancy has changed over the past decade, reflecting broad societal birth trends. A lower percentage of teen mothers and a higher percentage of mothers age 30 and older are enrolled in the program. During that same period, there's been an increase in the percentage of White mothers giving birth on AHCCCS and a decrease in the percentage of Hispanic mothers. For example, 54 percent of the mothers in 2010 were Hispanic, compared with 59 percent in 2000.

Arizona covers pregnant women with incomes at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level, or \$28,635 annually for a family of three. Most states cover women whose family's annual income is higher.

More people are unemployed with no access to private insurance, more companies are electing to not offer insurance and more employees are choosing not to pay the rising costs of private insurance when it is offered, experts say. And Stoll said women of childbearing age tend to fall into the category of those most likely to be hurt by an economic downturn. "Generally, they are young women, maybe starting out in a new career who may or may not be married," she said. "Their income is low."

State response

While states including Arizona have cut some Medicaid services, they have generally maintained and even increased aid to pregnant women. Over the past 20 years, the Arizona Legislature has several times raised the income level required to qualify, and the state is above the federal minimum.

Studies over the past couple of decades show that mothers who receive early prenatal care have lower maternal-mortality rates, lower infant-mortality rates and give birth to healthier babies who grow into healthier kids and adults.

"There has been a lot of research that shows that an investment in prenatal care is extremely cost-effective," Salganicoff said. "For each dollar of prenatal care, you save \$4."

But in Arizona, the reason for protecting the AHCCCS birth program may be as much about politics and a lack of awareness as any far-sighted plan to save the state money.

Sen. Linda Gray, R-Glendale, who for years has led the Senate human-services committee, also was unaware of the numbers. "Wow," she said when told of the increase in Medicaid-covered births. But she said she believes this is more of an issue for the state's religious community to address than the Legislature. It's a matter of values, she said.

Allen said with nine months' notice, families should be able to come up with money for some sort of co-pay or to pay at least some of the expenses.

"This is a situation where you have nine months to plan that child," she said. "You are making a choice to have a child."

Dana Wolfe Naimark, president of the Children's Action Alliance, said she finds that stance ironic coming from a Legislature that this session cut women's access to contraception services. The Republican-led Legislature also refused to hear bills proposing to expand sex education in schools and further limited abortion access. Naimark said several years ago there had been some discussion among children's advocacy groups to try to seek more federal funds for family planning. But she said in Arizona's current political climate, it's no longer discussed.

"It is a very, very sensitive question," Naimark said. "We have a lot of families in this state that earn very low incomes and it would be completely un-American to say those families don't deserve children."

Study: Free birth control leads to fewer abortions

Taken from Oct. 4, 2012 Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- Free birth control led to dramatically lower rates of abortions and teen births, a large study concluded Thursday, offering strong evidence for how a bitterly contested Obama administration policy could benefit women's health.

The project tracked more than 9,000 women in St. Louis, many of them poor or uninsured. They were given their choice of a range of contraceptive methods at no cost -- from birth control pills to goof-proof options like the IUD or a matchstick-sized implant.

When price wasn't an issue, women flocked to the most effective contraceptives -- the implanted options, which typically cost hundreds of dollars up-front to insert. These women experienced far fewer unintended pregnancies as a result, reported Dr. Jeffrey Peipert of Washington University in St. Louis in a study published Thursday.

The effect on teen pregnancy was striking: There were 6.3 births per 1,000 teenagers in the study. Compare that to a national rate of 34 births per 1,000 teens in 2010.

There also were substantially lower rates of abortion, when compared with women in the metro area and nationally: 4.4 to 7.5 abortions per 1,000 women in the study, compared with 13.4 to 17 abortions per 1,000 women overall in the St. Louis region, Peipert calculated. That's lower than the national rate, too, which is almost 20 abortions per 1,000 women.

In fact, if the program were expanded, one abortion could be prevented for every 79 to 137 women given a free contraceptive choice, Peipert's team reported in the journal *Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

The findings come as millions of U.S. women are beginning to get access to contraception without copays under President Barack Obama's health care law. Women's health specialists said the research foreshadows that policy's potential impact.

"As a society, we want to reduce unintended pregnancies and abortion rates. This study has demonstrated that having access to no-cost contraception helps us get to that goal," said Alina Salganicoff, director of women's health policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation.

"It's just an amazing improvement," Dr. James T. Breeden, president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, said of the results. "I would think if you were against abortions, you would be 100 percent for contraception access."

The law requires that Food and Drug Administration-approved contraceptives be available for free for women enrolled in most workplace insurance plans, a change that many will see as new plan years begin on Jan. 1.

The policy is among the law's most contentious provisions because it exempts churches that oppose contraception but requires religious-affiliated organizations, such as colleges or hospitals, to provide the coverage for their workers. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and many conservative groups say that violates religious freedom, and Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney has voiced similar criticism.

This week, a federal judge in St. Louis dismissed a lawsuit challenging the contraception mandate; nearly three dozen similar suits have been filed around the country.

Thursday's data didn't sway the critics. Jeanne Monahan of the conservative Family Research Council suggested contraceptive use can encourage riskier sexual behavior. "Additionally, one might conclude that the Obama administration's contraception mandate may ultimately cause more unplanned pregnancies since it mandates that all health plans cover contraceptives, including those that the study's authors claim are less effective," Monahan said.

Here's why this is a public health issue: Nearly half of the nation's 6 million-plus pregnancies each year are unintended. An estimated 43 percent of them end in abortion. Low-income women are far more likely to have an unplanned pregnancy than their wealthier counterparts.

"We shouldn't have, in my view, a tiered system where the women with money can get family planning and the women without cannot," said Peipert, noting that 39 percent of the women in his study had trouble paying basic expenses.

About half of unplanned pregnancies occur in women who use no contraception. As for the other half, condoms can fail and so can birth control pills or other shorter-acting methods if the woman forgets to use them or can't afford a refill.

In contrast, you can forget about pregnancy for three years with Implanon, the implant inserted under the skin of the arm. An IUD, a tiny T-shaped device inserted into the uterus, can last for five to 10 years, depending on the brand. Change your mind, and the doctor removes either device before it wears out.

Only about 5 percent of U.S. women use long-acting contraceptives, far fewer than in other developed countries. Peipert said insurance hasn't always covered the higher upfront cost to insert them, even though years of birth control pills can add up to the same price.

Yet three-quarters of his study participants chose an IUD or Implanon, and a year later 85 percent were sticking that choice -- compared to about half who had initially chosen the pill, patch or other shorter-acting method.

Cost isn't the only barrier. Doctors don't always mention long-acting methods, maybe because of a long-outdated belief that IUDs aren't for young women or just because they assume women want the most commonly prescribed pill.

Election raises stakes for possible Supreme Court vacancies

from **Bill Mears**, CNN Supreme Court Producer, October 1, 2012

Washington (CNN) -- Barack Obama and Mitt Romney wasted little time rushing to the cameras when the Supreme Court narrowly upheld the president's sweeping health care reform law. Their remarks after the June ruling were a contrast of competing rhetoric over a contentious piece of legislation, and a prism into how each candidate hopes to quietly change the makeup of the federal courts.

"Americans are probably paying much more attention to the economy than the Supreme Court," said Thomas Goldstein, a top appellate attorney and SCOTUSblog.com publisher. "But they should be thinking about presidential court appointments, because they'll make a big difference in the future of the law. You think about things like same-sex marriage, affirmative action, voting rights -- all of these are issues that have very different ideological components to them, and the more conservative justices definitely have a different view," he said.

It is an unusual dynamic: the Supreme Court traditionally rates near the bottom when voters are asked to list the issues most important to them, but the high-profile issues the justices decide -- hot-button topics like health care, abortion, economic and tax reforms -- remain of consistent concern to the electorate.

The high court is poised to maintain a period of bench stability for at least a couple more years, barring an unexpected illness or personal crisis. This, after four court vacancies from 2005-2010 brought on Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Samuel Alito, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan. Still, many court watchers anticipate the man sitting in the Oval Office through 2016 could name at least one and perhaps as many as three members to the Supreme Court. And the recent health care decision may have raised the already high stakes on the makeup of the federal bench at large.

"Even more Americans are watching who is on the Supreme Court this election cycle, more so perhaps they have in the past, because there's a clear connection between who is on the court and how that affects your daily life," said Elizabeth Wydra, chief counsel of the liberal Constitutional Accountability Center. "The Supreme Court and its ideological divide is really placing the Constitution and the country in many ways at a crossroads."

Ginsburg, who turns 80 next March, is the oldest. Justices Antonin Scalia and Anthony Kennedy are both 76, Justice Stephen Breyer, , turned 74 last month. Justice Clarence Thomas is 64, Alito is 62, while Roberts, Sotomayor, and Kagan are all in their 50s.

Mark your calendar for these dates:

LWVCYC General Meeting Program List 2012-13

October 20:	Centennial Celebration – AZ Women’s Right to Vote
November 17:	Juvenile Justice Update
December 5 (evening):	Meet & Greet – LWV, Non-profits, and governmental officials
January 19,2013	Local and State Program Planning, short Program

IMPORTANT WEBSITE REFERENCES

LWVUS Website
www.lwv.org

LWVAZ Website
www.lwvaz.org

LWVCYC Website
<http://centralvavapai.az.lwvnet.org/>
OR: <http://goo.gl/HxKph>

We recommend that you check these out monthly, or more often. Lots of good information! Bookmark them to save on typing, or go to lwvaz.org, where there are links to click on. Or Google LWVCYC!

Our website includes current and past VOTERS, and other great material.

Reminder – Members are always welcome to attend Board meetings - third Tuesday of the month, at 8:00 am at the home of Mary Mallory in Prescott Valley. To request placement of an item on the Board agenda and/or to receive the Board agenda packet, contact the LWVCYC President a week in advance.

LWV MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

2012-2013

Dues cover membership through June 30, 2012. Membership in the LWV is open to any person 18 and over who subscribes to the purposes and policies of the LWVUS. Dues for 2012-2013 cover payment for local (\$11.00), state (\$13), and national (\$31.00) memberships.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Note type of membership, and make check to “LWVCYC”:

_____ \$55/Yr Individual Membership

_____ \$82.50/Yr Household Membership

Plus suggested donation:

\$_____ Contribution to League (not tax deductible)

\$_____ *Contribution to Education Fund (tax deductible)

*Donations to the LWVAZ Education Fund must be made by separate check, to preserve tax deductibility. This supports our Webpage and Voter Service activities. Thank you!

Both new and renewal members, please include this form with your check.

New: _____ Renewal: _____

OR

Be a “Friend” of LWVCYC:

_____ \$50/Yr Individual or _____ \$75/Yr Household
(open to businesses and individuals)

Please mail this form and all checks to:

LWVCYC
PO Box 11538 Prescott, AZ 86304-1538



**League of Women Voters
of Central Yavapai County
P.O. Box 11538
Prescott, AZ 86304-1538**

A nonpartisan membership organization, the League of Women Voters neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates, but encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.