

LEAGUE EDUCATION and ADVOCACY DAY  
**Making Democracy Work**  
Columbia, South Carolina

**January 28, 2017**

Observers: Macy Adams and Barbara Griffin

**Welcome & Announcement** – JoAnne Day & Julie Hussey, LWVSC – Co-Presidents

**Call to Convention** – Holley Ulbrich, LWV

Invited attendees to the upcoming LWV State Convention on April 29 and 30 in Columbia

**Nominating Committee** – Linda Blanchone, LWVof Spartanburg

Attendees were invited to nominate members to serve on the State Board

**Health Study and Consensus** – Lynn Teague – VP of Issues and Action

Proposals in flux; Not documented or recorded

**Behind the Scenes at the Statehouse** – **Patrick Dennis**, Speaker of the House's Counsel and former Chief Counsel of the House Judiciary Committee

Mr. Dennis spoke on:

*How to Effectively Engage with the South Carolina General Assembly* – Highlights included:

\*Relatively small number of registered voters engage elected official and thereby have a substantial and disproportionate impact on legislative priorities and actions.

\*Most effective strategies in engaging elected officials:

Be persistent; be heard

Be personal and keep calling until you are successful

Only reach out to your representative (Legislators focus almost exclusively on their own constituents)

Tell them when you approve (appropriate to compliment and thank)

Telephone calls are the most effective and efficient way to communicate with State elected officials

*Dark Money* – Highlights included:

\*There is likely no substantive anticipated attempt in the coming session to regulate "Dark Money" in South Carolina

\*There are First Amendment issues in play that complicate potential action

\*The legal and operating definition of “contribution” or “committee” governs interpretation of how so-called “Dark Monday” is addressed

\*If you are not a candidate or a campaign, you are unregulated regarding contributions

Redistricting – Highlights include:

Outside of impact of having elected officials draw voting district lines, there are three major complications:

\*Population Movement – The dynamic nature of population growth and population movement constantly impacts how voting districts should/could be drawn;

\*Voter Composition – The composition of voters is not stagnant. As a result it is exceedingly difficult and complicated to draw lines that provide a more even distribution of voters forming a balance of political parties

\*Provision of Civil Rights Act – There are provisions contained in the Civil Rights Act that require some District lines remain consistent with the prior lines.

***Note: Mr. Dennis stated he drew the current district lines in South Carolina so his comments may be reflective of that personal experience.***

**Amelia A. Thompson – Staff Attorney for South Carolina Environmental Law Project.** The South Carolina Environment Law Project is an organization that has been established to protect the natural environment of South Carolina by providing legal services and advice to environmental organizations and concerned citizens and by improving the state’s system of environmental regulation.

Ms. Thompson spoke re:

\*Dam Safety Bill

\*Automatic stay-super – This is an important issue as it impacts the ability to stay a real estate project for further review.

\*Plastic Bag Ban -H3529 – This issue is being argued on the basis of a Home Rule dispute

\*Environmental Bill of Rights

\*Solar legislation-H309 S44

**Update from National League – Julie Hussey, LWVSC Co-President**

No notes included

**Finding Our Voice Discussion – Introduction – JoAnne Day, LWVSC Co-President**  
Facilitator – **Shayna Howell** on behalf of **Melinda Hamilton**

Questions were posed to the attendees:

## FINDING OUR VOICES

**OVERALL QUESTION:** How does the League of Women Voters at the local, state and national levels motivate members and the public to “Make Democracy Work”

*Examples of responses include: Strengthening sense of community; Dining for Women events; Promoting Days of Services;*

**ISSUES:** Top priority issues for your League that you expect to come up at Program Planning? Do any of these issues/priorities need the tweaking of state positions? How do you see these issues supporting/challenging a League focus on “Making Democracy Work”?

*Restore Civics as a priority in school*

**ADVOCACY:** What is the role of advocacy in your League – issue studies, meetings with government officials, advocacy alerts, social media campaign, observation corps, issue forums? Do most members work on advocacy? Why or why not?

**VOTER SERVICES:** What is the role of voter services in your League – ie registering, get out the vote, candidate forums, candidate guides. Do most members work on voter services – why or why not.

*Pat Allan described the business card that is handed out to prospective voters to help facilitate on-line registration.*

How can the Local Leagues better work together and help each other?

*Time expired*