



The VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM
<http://www.lwvgb.org>

MARCH-2012



MARCH MEMBERSHIP MEETING

We are planning to discuss our 2012 Sunshine Week Study of Government & Municipal Websites at our March meeting. At the time of publication, the date, time, and location were not known. Please stay tuned to your email and to the LWVGB website for more information (<http://www.lwvgb.org>).

Mark Your Calendars for our Annual Meeting

We will meet on Tuesday April 17, 2012 at 6:30pm, location TBD. Please review the proposed 2012-2013 Budget online at <http://www.lwvgb.org/members/lwvgb-business-2012/12-13-proposed-budget.xls>.

Other documents relevant to the Annual Business Meeting will also be posted in the folder: <http://www.lwvgb.org/members/lwvgb-business-2012/>.



Constitutional Reform

All who are hoping for Alabama Constitutional Reform are grateful for the Constitutional Revision Commission that the legislators approved last year. The Commission has approved revisions to the Banking Article which is now HB358 and the Corporation Article which is now HB357. They will both go to the House Constitution, Campaigns and Elections Committee during the first week of March.

Information about the Constitutional Revision Commission meetings is available at <http://ali.state.al.us/constitutional-revision.htm>.

The transcript of the January 18th Public Hearing is available at <http://ali.state.al.us/documents/transcriptjan1812.pdf>.

The Commission will debate Article IV, the Legislature, in May after this Session ends. At that time, they will consider the inclusion of home rule for counties. Ruth Ott (representing the League) testified in favor of home rule to the Commission last year. Former Speaker Pro Tem Demetrius Newton offered a constitutional amendment to provide home rule for counties this session. It was patterned after home rule constitutional amendments offered in 2003 and last year. It is HB302 and you can view it by pasting this link in your server:

<http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/acas/searchableinstruments/2012rs/bills/hb302.htm>

This will not diminish the work of the Commission; rather it will keep the subject before the legislators, as well as the public, and will provide guidance to the Commission when they begin the discussion of article IV in May. HB302 will go to the Counties and Municipal Governments Committee of the House the first week in March. Members of that Committee are as follows -

- Steve McMillan, Chair, from Bay Minette. Home 251-948-5575 Montgomery 334-242-7723 bclld07@gmail.com
- Randy Wood, Vice Chair from Anniston. Home 256-820-6700 Montgomery 334-242-7700 rwoodsr36@cableone.net
- Demetrius Newton from Birmingham. Home 205-324-6053 Montgomery 334-242-7546 demetrius.newton24@yahoo.com
- George Bandy of Opelika Home 334-749-0051 Montgomery 334-242-7721
- Alan Boothe of Troy Home 334-670-3203 Montgomery 334-242-7710
- Napoleon Bracy of Pritchard Phone 251-622-8118 Montgomery 334-2427756 napoleon@napoleonbracy.com
- Richard "Dickie" Drake of Leeds, home 205 281-4428 Montgomery 334-242-7600 ddrake1080@aol.com
- Allen Farley of McCalla, home 205 477-5617 Montgomery 334-242-7767 allenfarley@bellsouth.net
- Dexter Grimsley of Newville Home 334-889- 0602 Montgomery 334-242-7740 wimdex@hotmail.com
- Jeremy Oden of Vinemont Home 256-734-3188 Montgomery 334-242-7722 info@mocold.com
- David Sessions of Grand Bay home 251 865-4275 Montgomery 334-242 0947 d.r.sessions@att.net
- Patricia Todd of Birmingham home 205-599-2856 Montgomery 334-242-7718 reptodd@gmail.com
- Kurt Wallace of Maplesville, home 334-366-4689 Montgomery 334-242-7772 representativewallace@gmail.com
- Dan Williams of Athens, home 256-232-8993 Montgomery 334-242-7741

Earth Day is on April 22, 2012!

Help the League celebrate at the Auntie Litter Day Celebration from 9am-1pm at Kelly Ingram Park. Contact Joyce Lanning if you can help (email: joyce.lanning@gmail.com).

The task now is to convince those members to give HB302 a favorable vote so it can move on to the Rules Committee and then to the floor of the House. Please contact Nancy Ekberg (email: nanekberg@aol.com) if you have any questions.

Public Transportation

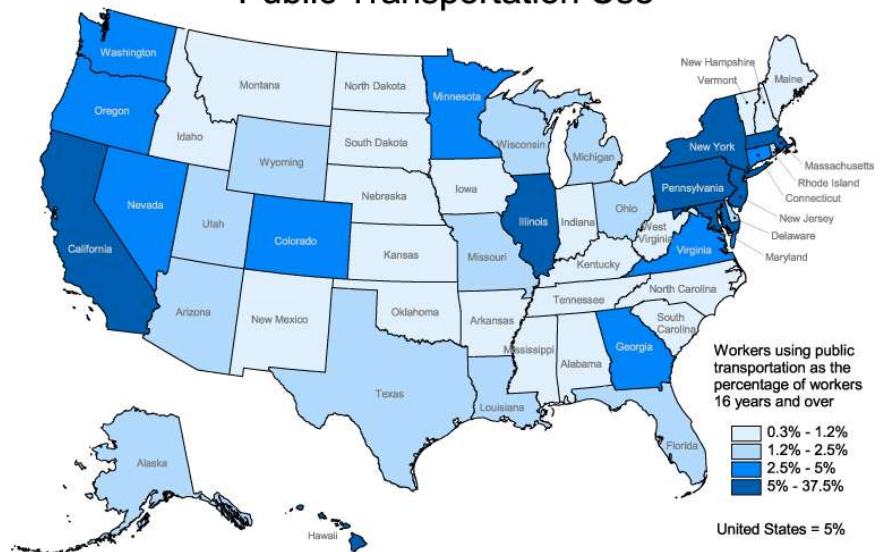
There are a few bills in the Legislature this Session pertaining to public transportation.

Rep. Patricia Todd has offered HB109 that will allow cars, boats and trailers to carry the standard 4% sales tax that our groceries, clothes and other things carry. Currently, those items carry only a 2% sales tax. The new 2% that will bring cars, boats, and trailers up to a par with other purchased items will be dedicated to public transportation. This bill is in the Ways and Means Education Committee of the House.

She has also offered HB108 that will establish a motor vehicle tag fee for Jefferson County not to exceed 5% of the license fee. This fee will be dedicated to public transportation.

We all heard the Governor refer to the Alabama Infrastructure Bank offered by Senators Orr and Allen that will allow the State to buy bonds to provide funding for roads and bridges. These are GARVEE Bonds borrowed from the Federal Government. On page 2 of the Legislation, (SB150) line 22, are words stating that the bonds would also include public transit. Although this borrows against the future and commits the State to a debt, the bill will probably pass and fortunately DOES include public transit. It is in the Utilities, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee of the Senate.

Public Transportation Use



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2002 American Community Survey.
Note: Alaska and Hawaii are not to scale.



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QUOTABLE QUOTES

"Liberty doesn't work as well in practice
as it does in speeches."

~**Will Rogers**

"Brains are an asset, if you hide them."

~**Mae West**

"A vote is like a rifle; its usefulness
depends upon the character of the
user."

~**Theodore Roosevelt**

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