

The LWVAL Advocacy Committee
by
Anne Permaloff, Chair

The Advocacy Committee of the LWVAL is elected by the State Board. Its purpose is to advise the Board of action needed to support furtherance of the LWVAL positions and to take action as directed by the Board. Between Board meetings when immediate action is required, the Advocacy Committee reports to and is supervised by the Executive Committee composed of the LWVAL officers.

In July the new Board appointed a new Advocacy Committee. This year I will serve as committee chair. LWVAL President Mary Lynn Bates (Birmingham) and LWVAL Lobbyist Sue Flood (Auburn) are members of the committee as are Ruth L. Wright (Auburn)—immediate past chair, Becky Sylvester (Birmingham), and Charlotte Ward (Auburn). All served on the committee during the 2007 legislative session. Several of these members have had experience on the Program Committee which Ruth will continue to chair this year.

The Advocacy Committee performs several functions. It monitors sessions of the Alabama Legislature and various executive branch activities. Its members read and evaluate the content of proposed legislation placing greatest emphasis on bills related to those positions established as League priorities by the previous State Convention. It seeks to determine which legislation is consistent with League positions, the chances for passage, and recommends actions to be taken in the name of the League. Executive branch legislative proposals and rules may be monitored in a similar fashion.

Other activities may include assisting LWVAL lobbying efforts; monitoring political changes that may impact policy debates; drafting letters to the editor; drafting letters to executive and legislative branch personnel; issuing action alerts for the LWVAL membership; or seeking other assistance from the members. The written communications usually go out under the signature of the LWVAL President or the Advocacy Committee chair depending on what the Board or the Executive Committee has authorized.

Request for Member Involvement

The Advocacy Committee soon will send a request for assistance to all Local Leagues and to each Member-at-Large (MAL). The request is for assistance in interviewing members of the local state legislative delegations. To that end, three documents will be mailed to the President of each Local League and all MALs: the interview questions; guidelines for conducting the interviews; and a reporting form to be returned to the Advocacy Committee.

Because the Board realized that Local Leagues have a full schedule of activities for this year, let me stress that participation is voluntary. But, the information that can be received from the interviews may greatly help the State League and give Local Leagues

and MALs a chance to interact with and learn more about their local legislative delegations.

If you are interested in participating in these interviews, please let your Local League President know and get a copy of the documents needed to conduct the interviews. If they are unavailable, contact me for copies.

MALs are especially encouraged to conduct one or more interviews with their local legislators. Because legislators listen and respond readily to their constituents, every MAL can advance League advocacy in a significant way. If you can undertake an interview, just let me know of your interest so that we can coordinate in areas where more than one MAL lives.

I may be contacted at: grifton_mtgy@bellsouth.net OR 334 270-0539 OR 637 Horseshoe Curve, Pike Road, AL 36064.