

# VOTER

League of Women  
Voters of Indiana  
County, Pennsylvania



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

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## WHAT IS REAPPORTIONMENT?

**One person, one vote.**

The United States Constitution directs Congress to count the total population in a federal census every ten years to determine representation in Congress. The 435 Congressional seats are then reallocated based on states' populations. It is possible for states to gain, lose or maintain the same number of Congressional seats after each census and reapportionment. Equal population is the primary criteria for Congressional districts.

### LWVPA Position in brief

LWVPA will support apportionment based substantially on the population in all voting districts, with additional consideration given to compact and contiguous territory and with respect given to municipal boundaries.

**How Redistricting Works** In Pennsylvania, legislative district boundaries are drawn by the Legislative Redistricting Commission. This Commission is made up of the majority and minority leaders of the PA House and Senate and a chairperson they choose who is not a legislator. If they cannot agree, the PA Supreme Court does the choosing. The Commission has "final authority" which means that they alone decide how district lines are drawn. This process, which is enshrined in the Pennsylvania Constitution, means that the leaders representing the two major political parties must usually reach a bipartisan agreement on creating a map.

In contrast, the boundaries of Pennsylvania's congressional district are determined through legislation approved by both houses of the General Assembly and signed by the governor. When both branches and the governorship are under one-party control, as will be the case when lines are drawn in 2011, that party has total control of the congressional redistricting process.

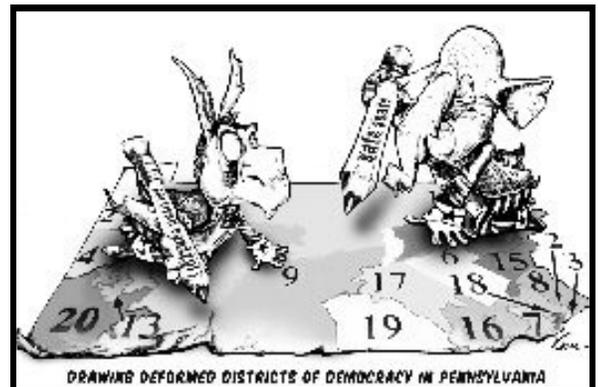
Anyone who disagrees with a redistricting decision can appeal it directly to the PA Supreme Court. To be successful, an appeal must show that the map does not meet the legal requirement of "one-person, one-vote" or that it violates the "Voting Rights Act" which protects the voting rights of minorities.

## REDISTRICTING WILL HOLD CENTER STAGE IN 2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### Lora Lavin, Issues and Policy Committee, LWVPA

A little discussed but highly important outcome of the 2010 General Election races for governor and state legislature is the impact the outcome will have on many important national and state public policy decisions in the coming decade. This is because those who take the oath of office in January will be in charge of redrawing the boundaries of Pennsylvania's congressional and legislative districts. This process, called redistricting, occurs every ten years after the Federal census to ensure that all districts which send representatives to a governing body such as Congress or the state Legislature have an equal population.

**Why it matters** Few people appreciate how redistricting affects their right to vote for a candidate of their choice and impedes progress on addressing



**Save the Date!!**

\*\*\*\*\* June 3, 4, 5, 2011\*\*\*\*\*

PA League of Women Voters State Convention  
**Hosted by the Bucks County LWV**  
 at the  
 Sheraton Bucks County Hotel  
 400 Oxford Valley Road  
 Langhorne, PA

**DEP Makes Oil and Gas Operations More Transparent with New Online Resources**

HARRISBURG -- For the first time, Pennsylvania's oil and gas industry production and compliance information is available online as part of the commonwealth's ongoing effort to make the industry's operations more transparent. Department of Environmental Protection Secretary John Hanger said the oil and gas public reporting website, which debuted recently, allows access to production statistics for oil and gas wells in the state, including historical data. A new, separate webpage also lets users view violation data by operator, as well as the department's enforcement measures. The public reporting site can be found at:  
[www.marcellusreporting.state.pa.us/ogrereports/](http://www.marcellusreporting.state.pa.us/ogrereports/)

Another site for lots of great information on Marcellus Shale development is:  
<http://extension.psu.edu/water/marcellus-shale>

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the public policy issues they care about; therefore, it is an issue that does not get much public attention.

The way district lines are drawn puts voters together in groups – some voters are kept together in one district, and others are not. Whichever group within a district has the most votes usually decides which candidate wins election to represent that district. For example, a district composed mostly of farmers will fight for farmer's interests. A district composed mostly of city dwellers may elect a representative with different priorities. Redistricting can keep a community together or split it apart, changing whether it has representatives who feel responsible for its concerns. Ultimately, the outcome can change who controls Congress or the Legislature and affects which policies get passed into law.

**In Pennsylvania and most other states, district lines are drawn by the very lawmakers whose political careers will be affected by the changes.** Without strong intervention from the voting public, redistricting in Pennsylvania could be a replay of the 2001 process which, by some measures, made Pennsylvania one of the most gerrymandered states in the country. Gerrymandering is defined as the process by which district boundaries are drawn to manipulate the outcome of elections. In other words, **politicians choose their voters** rather than the other way around.

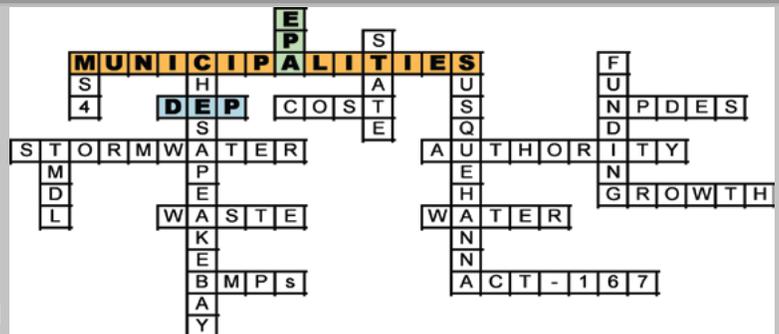
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**Protecting Pennsylvania's Rivers and Water: Tying It All Together- Where Are We Headed?**

In the October issue of Stormwater magazine, a Guest Editorial by Phillip Brath gives a good summary of Pennsylvania laws and regulations as well as pending legislation that will help clean up the Chesapeake Bay and all of PA's water resources.

The US Environmental Protection Agency and the PA Department of Environmental Protection Agency are driving forward with a set of separate programs that are related in order to Guide PA down the road toward cleaner water and more comprehensive regulations. The author takes a look at the programs and presents short summaries about where PA water resources are headed based on the realities of our government's processes and the evidence presented.

The author ends his editorial by suggesting the following to those who care about water protec-



tion but don't know what they can do: Get involved by first being aware of regulations and policies under development; participate in or attend advisory committee, stakeholder, regulatory, negotiation or public information meetings on regulations; comment on regulations when they are formally published for review; and present comments at public hearings. These are fundamental activities of the League of Women Voters and the way the organization makes an impact on policy.

This editorial has been posted on the Water Resources Education Network website at [http://wren.palwv.org/library/General Water.html](http://wren.palwv.org/library/General%20Water.html).

## Running for Office Workshop to be Held

Want to serve your community and country? Consider running for local office. In our county we need 900 people to serve on school boards, in county and municipal offices, and as election officials. You can make a difference for your children and grandchildren.

The League of Women Voters of Indiana County will hold a Running for Office Workshop aimed at those who plan to run for office or are thinking about running for office. Join us January 22, 2011, at the Rustic Lodge from 9 am to 2 pm. To learn more and register, visit [www.palwv.org/indiana](http://www.palwv.org/indiana) or call the League at 724-349-2718.



Speakers include representatives from the PA School Boards Association, the PA Association of Township Supervisors, the PA Boroughs Association, and the Local Government Academy. Come yourself, and bring someone else whom you think would make a good official. Your community needs you!

## LWVUS Privatization Study Committee

In accordance with direction from Convention 2010, the LWVUS will undertake a study of **“Privatization: the policy agenda to transfer government functions, services and assets to the private sector.”**

This study will focus on the impact of privatizing government services on local communities. Committee members will be responsible for developing study materials and consen-

sus questions and reviewing/tabulating responses submitted by participating Leagues.

Based on the submitted responses, the Committee will recommend position language to the Board. If you are interested in being a member of the Study Committee, please complete the [online application form](#) and submit it along with your resume no later than December 16, 2010.

BUILDING A VOTER FRIENDLY  
ELECTION SYSTEM: A NEW BEGINNING  
**The Third Annual Pennsylvania Voters  
Coalition  
Elections Symposium**  
Thursday, December 2, 2010  
9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Harrisburg, PA

**THE PENNSYLVANIA VOTERS COALITION**  
is a network of more than 70 organizations and issues experts who work to protect and expand Pennsylvanians' voting rights, to make the voting process more voter-friendly, and to enhance the integrity of our election systems.  
Cost: \$15. For additional information and/or to register, contact:  
Bonita Hoke, LWVPA Executive Director, 717-234-1576; [bchoke@palwv.org](mailto:bchoke@palwv.org), or Lora Lavin, 610-328-3746, [lavin@steuber.com](mailto:lavin@steuber.com).

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Read more about redistricting at LWVIC's website: <http://www.palwv.org/indiana>:

- The Outlook for Redistricting in Pennsylvania
- How Gerrymandering is Done
- When the Lines are Drawn
- How to Get Involved: Building a grassroots campaign aimed at educating the public and encouraging participation

A newsletter of the  
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We're on the  
Web!

[www.palwv.org/indiana](http://www.palwv.org/indiana)



## CALENDAR of UPCOMING EVENTS

**November 15, 7:00 pm**—Board Meeting, All Members Welcome, Diane Duntley's home (204 Greenview Court, Indiana)

**December 13, 2010, 7:00 pm**—Board Meeting, All Members Welcome, Diane Duntley's home (204 Greenview Court, Indiana)

**January 22, 2011**—School Board & Local Government Candidate Workshop, Rustic Lodge

Also coming up in 2011: Program Planning, Legislative Interviews with PA House and Senate legislators and more. Keep in touch with the League for fact-based discussions and programs on keeping government transparent and accountable.

Know someone who may be interested in membership? Let President Sherene Hess know at 724-762-4162 and she will send a brochure & short letter describing LWVIC's activities.

### Our Mission Statement

*The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*

