

League of Women Voters Of Wood County WV

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LWVWV www.lwvww.org LWVUS www.lwv.org



Mark Your Calendar

Monday, Feb. 25 6:00 p.m. Membership Meeting
Parkersburg City Building see below
Monday, March 11 noon LWVWC Board Meeting
Parkersburg/Wood County Library
Friday, March 22 6 p.m. LWVWC Annual Meeting
Colombo's Restaurant



Meeting on WV Economy

Monday February 25 at 6 p.m.
Parkersburg City Building
2nd floor Executive Conference Room
Open to the public

Ted Boettner, Executive Director of the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, will discuss "Is the WV economic comeback real?"

Mr. Boettner brings a wealth of experience and understanding of state fiscal and economic issues. He is the author of numerous reports on state tax and budget issues, economic development, and family economic security, including the annual state of working West Virginia. He frequently presents policy proposals to the West Virginia legislature and testifies before committees. He also regularly addresses statewide civic groups on state tax budget and economic policies and is frequently quoted in news stories from a variety of state and national publications. In 2011, The State Journal named Mr Boettner one of the most influential Business Leaders in West Virginia.

He also serves on the board of directors of Legal Aid of West Virginia, the Dunn Foundation, and serves on the steering committee of the state priorities partnership. He has also taught at WVU Institute of Technology and WVU. Mr. Boettner holds a bachelor's in journalism from WVU and a master's in political science from the University of New Hampshire.

Reminder – New members who join the LWVWC now pay only \$25 for the first year. For new members joining after January 1, their first year lasts through March of 2020. Ask a friend to join!

Voter

February 2019

LWVWC Annual Meeting

Friday, March 22, 6:00 p.m.

Colombo's Restaurant

Guest speaker will be Will Hosaflook, Superintendent of Wood County Schools. A graduate of Marshall University Mr. Hosaflook was formerly the principal of Ripley High School, where he had been a teacher and vice-principal. He was hired as Wood County Superintendent in May of 2018.

Those attending will order dinner from the menu. There will be a brief business meeting following the speaker. Those planning to attend will need to let the president know so the restaurant can set up adequate places. More information will be in the March Voter.



An updated edition of the **Your Government Officials** flier is included in snail-mailed Voters and attached to the email for those who get it via email. It is (or soon will be) available in local libraries and municipal buildings and at League meetings.



WV Legislature

Friday, February 15 was Day 38 of the 60 day session. As of Feb. 12 (the last day to introduce House bills) 1713 bills had been introduced, 1123 from the House, 590 from the Senate. The Senate may offer bills until Feb. 18. In the 2018 session, a similar number were introduced; less than 15% completed the legislative process.

At this point much of the attention has focused on **SB451**, the omnibus education bill passed by the Senate and House after the House made substantial amendments. Both local senators voted for the Senate bill and all local delegates voted for the House bill. Unless the Senate accepts the House version, a conference committee will be appointed to try to work out the differences. Both houses would need to adopt the conference version.

The Governor has said he would veto the bill that was initially offered. If both houses do agree on and pass a version during the session, the Governor has five days to act. Once the session adjourns, he or she has 15 days to act. A simple majority vote in both houses is needed to override a veto.

More on Legislature on page 2

Action on LWVWV Legislative Priorities

►LWVWV supports maintaining West Virginia's water standards to reflect EPA recommended human health criteria. The Senate passed **SB163** after removing 60 chemicals that EPA and the state DEP wanted included. The bill then went to the House Energy Committee, which has not yet taken it up. Note: *Local Delegate Bill Anderson chairs this committee, John Kelly is vice-chair, and Tom Azinger is a member. League members are urged to contact them and urge them to take up the bill, restore the eliminated chemicals, and pass out the bill as DEP requested it. See www.wvrivers.org*

►LWVWV supports strengthening disclosure requirements for the sources of political campaign expenditures, including Dark money. **SB 115** would be an improvement, but it has not been taken up by the Judiciary Committee.

►LWVWV supports establishment of an independent commission to draw up redistricting plans for representatives to the US House of Representatives and the WV Legislature. **SB118 & HB2445** would do this, but neither has been taken up by Judiciary Committee.

►LWVWV supports measures that encourage investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency in West Virginia's homes, businesses, and industries. **SB409** would allow third-party ownership of renewable and alternative generating facilities. For example, a third party could install solar panels on a building owned by a non-profit and sell the energy to the owner at rates lower than the power company's rates. No action by Senate Energy Committee.

►LWVWV Supports maintaining expanded Medicaid coverage for the hundreds of thousands of West Virginians who rely on it for health care. **SB559** and 2 similar bills would raise income limits for Medicaid coverage for pregnancy and postpartum care of mother and infant. No bill has been taken up in committee.

SB491 extends the deadline for DMV to implement Automatic Voter Registration to allow DMV time to implement the program. This is good thing, because when in effect it will automatically register people to vote at DMV unless they decline.

This is not a League issue, but is of importance to our municipalities: The Home Rule pilot project expires this year. **SB4** would make it a permanent program. The Senate has passed it by a wide margin, but the House Government Organization Committee has not yet taken it up. This is the law that allowed local governments to impose a 1% sales tax. If not made permanent, this authority would go away and cause major cuts to the budgets of cities all across WV that have had it in place.

HB2008 would require a run-off in the general election if no candidate for the Supreme Court of Appeals receives at least 40% of the votes cast. On second reading (amendment stage) in the House Monday, 2/18.

SB236 restores voting rights to ex-felons after they complete their sentence, including parole. Passed Senate, in House Judiciary.

SB429 would allow a voter to register and vote on the same day during the early voting period. SB 438 would require the Secretary of State to publish an online Voters Guide. Neither has been taken up in committee.

At least seven bills were introduced to add sexual orientation and gender identity to groups protected by WV's anti-discrimination laws. None has been taken up by a committee.

There is room for only a selection of bills here. To keep up with more, use www.wvlegislature.gov. Other sources are www.lwvww.org, Citizen Action Group's *Capitol Eye* at www.wvcag.org, WV Metro News www.wvmetronew.com, WV public television's *Legislature Today* at 6 and 11 p.m. weeknights and www.wvpublic.org. Others to try include Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, www.ohvec.org, WV Environmental Council, www.wvecouncil.org, and WV Center on Budget and Policy www.wvpolicy.org and the web sites of other interest groups or media outlets that you follow.



LWV of Wood County
25 Lynnwood Dr.
Vienna WV 26105

Meeting: "Is the WV economic comeback real?"

Monday, February 25, 6 p.m.

Parkersburg City Building

Free and open to the public

Membership in the LWV is open to all.

To join the LWVWC, send a check payable

to LWVWC for \$45 (plus \$25 for each additional

member at the same address) to the LWVWC Treasurer,

1 Fox Hill Dr., Parkersburg WV 26104

Write "dues" on the memo line.