



# VOTER

Nov/Dec 2008  
Volume 58, Issue 5

## League Positions on Constitutional Amendments

The League of Women Voters of Florida has reviewed the proposed Constitutional Amendments and has taken the following positions. For detailed reviews of each proposed amendment with pros and cons go to: [hclwv.org](http://hclwv.org) and click "issues." Amendments 5, 7, and 9 were removed from the ballot by the courts.

	YES	NO	NO Position
<b>AMENDMENT #1:</b> RELATING TO PROPERTY RIGHTS/INELIGIBLE ALIENS	<u>X</u>	—	—
<b>AMENDMENT #2:</b> FLORIDA MARRIAGE PROTECTION AMENDMENT	—	<u>X</u>	—
<b>AMENDMENT #3:</b> CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS AFFECTING THE ASSESSED VALUE OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY	<u>X</u>	—	—
<b>AMENDMENT #4:</b> PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION OF PERPETUALLY PRESERVED LAND: CLASSIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF LAND USED FOR CONSERVATION	—	<u>X</u>	—
<b>AMENDMENT #6:</b> ASSESSMENT OF WORKING WATERFRONT PROPERTY BASED UPON CURRENT USE	<u>X</u>	—	—
<b>AMENDMENT #8:</b> LOCAL OPTION COMMUNITY COLLEGE FUNDING	—	—	<u>X</u>

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# President's Message

Well, here it is. The fourth day of early voting and already 35,027 of Hillsborough County's 704,492 have already cast their votes in the General Election! The League phone has been ringing off the hook with voters requesting information about the proposed constitutional amendments and questions about where they can go to vote early. Our "Postage Budget" will certainly be out of whack due to the many copies of the special edition of the Florida Voter we have mailed out to voters who want more information!

In addition, many of our members have been busy participating in voter education events. You should all know that Liana Fox, Rich Brown, Mary Figg, Brenda Menendez, Kathy Betancourt, Mark Hart, Patricia and Tim Moran, Cathy and John Teti, Greg Vawter, Carole Mehlman, MaryEllin Territo, Barbara Steidemann, Jan Platt, Mike McKinney, Sandy Sroka, Marguerite Rich, and Tony D'Aquila are some of the many League members who have been supporting our events, representing the League and speaking to many and varied groups throughout Hillsborough County over the past two months.

And we're not finished yet . . . we have two more events scheduled for October:

1. The League and the Kiwanis Club of Tampa are co-sponsoring another luncheon on October 29. The luncheon will feature three familiar League speakers. Dr. Liana Fox, Dr. Rich Brown, and former state representative Mary Figg will discuss the pros and cons of the proposed constitutional amendments and the League's position on each. If you have not had the opportunity to join us for one of these co-sponsored lunches with the Kiwanis please try to come to this one - - they are a lot of fun.

2. The League and the Tiger Bay Club of Tampa are co-sponsoring a luncheon/candidate forum on Friday October 31 at Maestro's. Speakers include:

- a. Congressional District 12 candidates, Congressman Adam Putnam and Doug Tudor.
- b. Candidates for State House District 56 Rachel Burgin and Lewis Laricchia;
- c. State House District 57 Faye Culp and Yolie Capin;
- d. State House District 60 Ed Homan and E J Ford.

NOTE: Congressman Putnam and Mr. Laricchia have not yet confirmed their participation.

And start thinking about the spring as we make our way past the elections and through the holidays . . . Who will you nominate for the Lifetime Achievement Award and the Sydney and Thalia Potter Civic Leadership Award? Right after the holidays we will begin to solicit sponsors and start planning our biggest fundraiser of the year (and we'll need your help). Now is the time to carefully consider our community's leaders for these prestigious awards.

Finally, I want to enlist your help in making sure that our League continues to grow and provide education, voter service, and advocacy in Hillsborough County. Here is how you can help:

1. Make a connection: Tell your personal story.
2. Ask: Extend an invitation to join the League. Don't assume that it's implied. Ask someone to join us at one of our events.
3. Make it easy: Have a membership brochure handy. Our Membership Co-chairs, Shirley Arcuri and Mike McKinney, have edited and produced beautiful new ones for your use. Let us know and we'll send you some!

Now, get out there and cast your vote! And if you can, don't forget to extend a hand to those who need help getting to the polls.

*Linda D'Aquila, President  
Hillsborough County League of Women Voters*

# Early Voting Rally & March Brings out Leaguers

By Patricia Moran and Greg Vawter

On Monday, October 20, our League joined with the Florida ACLU, the Florida Immigrant Coalition, the NAACP of Hillsborough County, the Redlands Christian Migrant Association, the George Edgecomb Bar Association and other groups to encourage and celebrate early voting. Nine League members (FL Rep. Betty Reed, Becky Steele, Barbara Steideman, Liana Fox, Tim & Patricia Moran, Greg Vawter, Carole Mehlman & Maryellin Territo) met at Cyrus Greene Park for a rally and marched with the LWVHC banner and signs saying “TODAY WE MARCH TODAY WE VOTE” with the Spanish “HOY MARCHAMOS HOY VOTAMOS” on the obverse side.

Our march took us to the College Hill library, one of the sites for early voting. There, we were gratified to see a large turn-out of citizens taking advantage of the opportunity to vote early. The rally was an enjoyable way to meet others working to increase citizen participation in government.

The League had not previously supported early voting because we believe we can continue to learn about candidates and ballot issues right up until voting day. However, we are seeing more barriers from the state legislature to voting in Florida. Our latest concerns stem from the new state “no-match no-vote” law. We now believe that early voting will give voters more time to rectify any problems with identification, getting to vote a regular ballot and having one’s vote count. Another reason to vote early is the expectation of a large voter turn-out for this election and the complexity of the ballot with all the constitutional amendment proposals. Increasing the days you can vote makes sense when you consider how long the lines would be otherwise on Election Day. So, encourage family and friends to vote early; they may save time and trouble.



League Members pictured from left: FL Rep. Betty Reed, Rebecca Steele, Barbara Steideman, Liana Fox, Tim & Patricia Moran, Greg Vawter, Carole Mehlman & Maryellin Territo

photo by MJ Williamson

# LWVFL Open Letter to Governor Charlie Crist: Delay “No Match/No Vote”

As the “people's Governor” we hope you will reconsider the recent directive from the Florida Department of State to Supervisors of Elections to implement the “Verification Override Procedures”, commonly referred to as “No Match/No Vote”, for this election cycle.

To roll out this policy at the eleventh hour - on top of all the other changes our election Supervisors are continuing to absorb - with only six weeks before to go before November - puts trust in our elections at risk. And it will be the Voters of Florida who will suffer.

Registrations for tens of thousands of new Voters across all party lines continue to pour in. This is not the time to implement an additional policy, additional complexity. There is no time to process all the matches, to trouble shoot the procedures, to contact effected voters, to educate poll workers. This is a recipe for disaster.

The match process in the past has proven to be very flawed. The Florida directive outlines multiple bureaucratic steps to attempt a match. Most non-matches are primarily due to typos and common data problems - not due to any Voter attempt at fraud. Yet ultimately the No Match/No Vote policy puts the burden on the Voter.

With the implementation of No Match/No Vote, Florida is one of only four states to adopt this approach. We run the risk, yet again, of having trust in the fairness of our election systems eroded - as it was with the notorious felons list when thousands of legitimate voters were disenfranchised.

Yes - we understand that under the Florida “No Match/No Vote” a rejected Voter who goes to their polling place, may cast a provisional ballot. Even though they will have shown a driver's license at the polling place, they are required by this directive to take the extra duplicative step of having to present their driver's license in person or via fax/email to the Supervisor of Elections office by 5pm on the second day following the election. Why require this step? Why not allow the Voter to satisfy this requirement by showing their driver's license at the polling place and then being allowed to cast a regular ballot - as is allowed in most states?

What do other states do? Many take a common sense national Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) compliant approach where if a first time Voter isn't matched, they are still registered and can vote a regular ballot so long as they show proof of identity at the polls before voting. In addition, a total of 9 states have adopted on-site Election Day Registration (and more are studying it) making it easier for voters to exercise their franchise and resulting in 10% greater voter turnout.

No Match/No Vote is a solution in search of a problem. There is a real question as to whether a problem actually exists. After a five year “crackdown” on voter fraud, the Justice Department has turned up virtually no evidence of any organized effort to skew federal elections, according to court records and interviews done by the New York Times (April 11, 2007). The few isolated voter fraud cases that have made it to prosecution have been typically due to human mistakes - a person convicted of check fraud who didn't understand that they weren't allowed to vote under the terms of their parole; a person that filled out two registration cards (though they only voted once); a teenager who voted in place of his father who was out of town; a handful of convictions involved people who voted twice for payment, generally in local sheriff's or judge's races.

The real problem - which we should work to resolve - is the lack of robust databases.

We urge you to freeze the implementation of No Match/No Vote for this election cycle. Then let's have a community dialogue on how to move forward in a way that is in the best interest of all the citizens of Florida.

**(Edited to fit space available))**

# The Truth About Voter Verification

## By Secretary of State Kurt S. Browning (from Web Site)

There have been many misstatements and confusion over the recent implementation of the Voter Verification law otherwise known as the “No-Match-No Vote” law. The Division of Elections' mission along with local supervisors of elections is to register voters and make sure that they can cast a ballot on Election Day that will be counted.

And just to clarify, this law will not affect the status of the 10.7 million already registered voters. The law will apply to all NEW applications received on or after September 8, 2008.

The Voter Verification law regarding new voter registration applications became effective January 2006. It was in effect until December 2007 when a court first ordered the Department to stop the almost 2-year old process. That ruling was overturned on appeal. The law was re-implemented September 8, 2008. The law is being implemented now because the court order denying the injunction became final in July. The implementation was delayed by pending litigation until June 2008, waiting for U.S. Department of Justice preclearance in July 2008, time needed to reprogram the system to automatically notice voters and set up revised procedures, and the time needed to prepare Supervisors who were otherwise engaged in administering the 2008 Primary Election.

Unlike what activists are saying, obvious errors, including nicknames or typos will be resolved and that applicant will be registered to vote. Every voter registration applicant must provide (if issued) a Florida driver's license number, state identification card number or the last 4 digits of the social security number. The identification number is automatically cross-checked against the Florida driver's license database (DHSMV) or the Social Security Administration database.

If the number still cannot be matched, the applicant is notified to provide a photocopy of their identification by mail, by fax, or by e-mail; or the applicant may show their identification in person. If proof is provided before the election, the applicant becomes registered and the person is able to vote a regular ballot. If proof is not provided before the election, the person may vote a provisional ballot. The person may provide proof up until 5 p.m. of the 2nd day after the election for the ballot to be counted. Keep in mind, this is just for new applications since September 8, 2008.

This law does not keep any person with an unverified number from being able to vote. This law is about verifying identity at the time of registration, so that when the voter goes to the polls the voter can vote a regular ballot, not a provisional ballot. A voter can show a driver's license, a Florida identification card from DSHMV, a passport, a debit or credit card, military identification, student identification, retirement center identification, neighborhood association identification and public assistance identification on Election Day.

This law does not target specific groups. The U.S. Department of Justice reviewed the law in 2005, and after revisions to the law in 2007 and 2008, found that the law did not deny or abridge the right to vote on account of race, color or membership in a language minority group.

I.D. required and checked at the polls is used solely to confirm the voter's identity, not to verify the voter's ID number or address. The photograph on the ID is compared to the person standing before the poll worker and the signature on the ID is compared to the signature on record.

The courts have held that the Voter Verification law is valid because the state has a “compelling” interest to have accurate voter rolls. And despite what others have said, the state provided examples of fraudulent applications that had come through the system because the law had been temporarily stopped. This is a good law that will help our voter rolls achieve more accuracy and less fraud, while creating minimal inconvenience for prospective voters. We encourage you to register now, review your application before submission, and call your local supervisor if you have any questions. See you on Election Day.

**(Edited to fit space available)**

# League of Women Voters / Kiwanis Club of Tampa Co-Sponsored ELAPP Meeting of October 8, 2008

By Linda D'Aquila

On October 8, 2008 the LWV of Hillsborough County co-sponsored the regularly scheduled Kiwanis Club of Tampa meeting at the St. Pete Times Forum. League member and former Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners member, Jan K. Platt and the President of Tampa Bay Conservancy and the Preserve Hillsborough Campaign Heidi McCree, were our featured speakers. Both Jan and Heidi spoke movingly about the history and mission of the Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program (ELAPP). Since ELAPP was approved by the voters in 1988, Hillsborough County has purchased over 40,000 acres of land. These preserved areas are now in public ownership for all to enjoy. Management responsibilities include prescribed burning, invasive species control, wildlife inventory, and habitat improvements for endangered and threatened species of plants and animals.

Jan and Heidi emphasized that even with the current economic situation, the time to purchase additional land is now. The opportunity to find additional land may be gone if we don't continue to purchase and conserve available property now and in the near future. Future deals may be more complex and expensive. Our speakers encouraged the audience to support the local county public land acquisition programs which foster partnerships with the water management districts, the State, and other public and private land conservation entities.

**NOTE: Your opportunity to cast your vote for the renewal of ELAPP will be at the end of your ballot. Here is the wording from the ballot.**

TO CONTINUE FINANCING ENVIRONMENTAL LANDS  
ACQUISITION AND PROTECTION PROGRAM (ELAPP) TO  
PRESERVE ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS

Shall Hillsborough County continue ELAPP to acquire and preserve environmentally sensitive lands which protect wildlife habitat, natural areas, drinking water sources, and water quality of rivers, lakes and bays, by issuing general obligation bonds, in one or more series, at interest rates not exceeding the legal maximum, maturing in not more than 30 years from issuance, not exceeding \$200 Million aggregate principal amount, payable from ad valorem taxes, without limitation, to finance related capital projects?

# Off-Shore Drilling Panel Discussion

By Tony D'Aquila

A capacity crowd was treated to a robust and informative debate at the recent LWV - Kiwanis Luncheon held October 8, 2008 at the St. Pete Times Forum. Mr. David R. Mica, representing the Florida Petroleum Council, and Mr. David J. White, representing the Ocean Conservancy, presented the pros and cons of more open implementation of off-shore drilling off the coast of Florida.

Mr. Mica forthrightly clarified what some would consider misconceptions concerning off-shore drilling. He stated that modern design, engineering, and technology for today's off-shore platforms are a quantum leap from the older rigs, with a commensurate significant increase in safety, performance, and environmental sensitivity. Additionally, he indicated that while some petroleum resources may take years to market, the natural gas fields off the coast of Florida's panhandle could be on market in mere months.

Mr. White, for his part, took a more global perspective, and argued that the bigger question facing Floridians is how appropriate further exploitation and dependency on petroleum may be, considering the global warming crisis, Florida's risk from sea level rise, and the continued economic impacts from an ever-expanding deficit related to petroleum imports. He would rather see energy conservation, better fuel efficiency in the transportation sector, and further development of alternative energy sources.

Time for discussion and questions was just too short, but the speakers left their audience with plenty to think about.



David R. Mica, Florida Petroleum Council



David J. White, Ocean Conservancy



**Icon Restaurant at the St Pete Times Forum provided a comfortable venue for a panel discussion on off-shore drilling, an issue that is likely to impact Florida in the near future.**

# OTHER ELECTION SEASON ACTIVITIES

## Sept. 10: Television Panel on Constitutional Amendments

Hillsborough Television taped and broadcast a panel discussion by Leaguers Mart Hart, Dr. Rich Brown and Kathy Betancourt regarding pros and cons of the proposed constitutional amendments on the November 4 ballot.

## Sept. 25: Temple Terrace Candidates Forum

Five LWVHC volunteers (Rich Brown, Brenda Menendez, Anne Ross, Rosalie Simms & Greg Vawter) facilitated the Temple Terrace Candidates Forum in cooperation with the TT Chamber. Eight races, were covered featuring questions from the audience of more than 100, in ninety minutes.

## October 14, 2008: Palma Ceia United Methodist Women's Group

Brenda Menendez and Mike McKinney discussed the pros and cons of the 2008 Positions regarding the proposed amendments to the Florida Constitution to a very receptive audience. The group voted the LWV presentation the best they have ever had from an outside group.

## October 17, 2008: Tiger Bay of Tampa

The League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County teamed up with the Tiger Bay Club of Tampa for a lively discussion that included the pros and cons of the Marriage Protection Amendment #2, Hillsborough County Commission races for District 6, and Hillsborough County School Board. Those participating were Stephen Gortham and Carol Kurdell representing the candidates running for the School Board and Kevin Beckner who is running for County Commissioner. Brian Blair did not attend.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### CONFUSED BY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS?

Come to the joint meeting of League and Kiwanis Club where panelists League members Dr. Rich Brown, Liana Fox and (former state representative) Mary Figg will give you the information you need

When: Wed., Oct 29 11:30  
Where: ICON'S at St Pete Forum  
Cost: \$15

#### RESERVATIONS BY OCT.28

Tel: 287-2669  
Fax: 287-2449  
E-mail: Admin@TampaKiwanis.com

### Joint Candidate Forums with Tiger Bay

Cong 12	Adam Putman Doug Tudor
FL House 56	Rachel Burgin Lewis Laricchio
FL House 57	Faye Culp Yolie Capio
Fl House 60	Ed Homan E. J. Ford

When: Friday, October 31, 11:30 Registration  
Where: Maestro's @TBPAC  
Cost: \$25 members, \$30 guests

RESERVATIONS: Tel: 741-0004; Fax: 741-3673  
<http://www.tigerbayclub.com/Meeting, by Oct 28.>

# CALENDAR

## 2008

- Oct, 20-Nov 1 Early voting for General Election
- October 29 Joint Lunch with Kiwanis (See page 8.)
- October 31 Joint Lunch with Tiger Bay (See page 8.)
- November 2 Day Light Savings Time Ends
- November 4 General Election
- November 11 Board Meeting, 12 noon, LifeLink
- November 14 Noon, deadline for filing Special Law proposals (See Oct, VOTER ([hclwv.org](http://hclwv.org)), click "last month's Voter.")
- December 2 Legislative Delegation Public Hearing on proposed Special Laws
- December 9 Board Meeting, 12 noon, LifeLink

Merry



Christmas

## 2009

- March 22 - 24 LWVF Legislative Seminar: - Tallahassee
- May 15 - 17 LWVF/LWVFEF State Convention: - Jacksonville, Hyatt Hotel

*The League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County is a nonpartisan political organization of men and women that encourages citizens to play an informed and active role in government. The League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy at the local, state, and national levels. The League does not endorse or support political candidates or parties. For more information about the League of Women Voters see [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) or call (813) 831-9774.*

Tampa, FL 33601-1801  
P. O. Box 1801

The League of Women Voters  
Of Hillsborough County



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM  
2008 - 2009**



Add my voice to yours. ***Please check appropriate box***

- I'm joining the League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County.
- I'm renewing my membership League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County

I enclose: (please check one)

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$60.00 Individual
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$85.00 Household
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$39.50 Student membership

Please consider sending an additional donation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Amount

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (FAX)

email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Your contact information will appear in our directory. \_\_\_\_\_ Check here to prevent publication.

Your areas of interest: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to the LWVHC and mail to: LWVHC Membership  
PO Box 1801, Tampa, FL 33601-1801. For more information, please call 813-831-9774.