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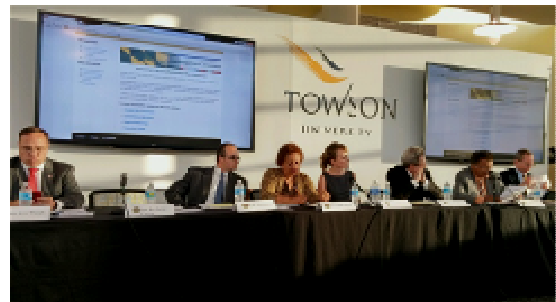
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Redistricting Reform Commission Submits Report to Governor

By Nancy Soreng, LWVMD Co-President

The Redistricting Reform Commission, appointed by Governor Larry Hogan in August, completed its work and submitted a report on November 3 after holding 5 public hearings around the state and 3 work sessions.



First of 5 public hearings

They received substantial background material, including information on redistricting processes in other states, academic analyses of redistricting, and recent federal and Maryland legislation proposing reform.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland applauds the
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Key Law to Reduce Maryland's Heat Trapping Gases Expires in 2016

By Betsy Singer, LWVMD Director

With the passage of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act in 2009, Maryland committed to reduce greenhouse gases to 25 percent below 2006 levels by 2020. Most excess greenhouse gases result from burning fossil fuels such as coal and oil. Electricity is the largest single category of those emissions in Maryland and most of our electricity comes from coal.

In addition to reducing the gases, the legislation requires the state focus on developing and using clean renewable

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energy such as solar, wind, geothermal and bio-energy sources. Importantly, the Act requires a net economic benefit to the State's economy and a net increase in jobs in the state. While the Act expires on December 31, 2016, LWVMD wants to support legislation in the 2016 General Assembly to increase the greenhouse gas reduction goal and continue the current reduction plan.

The 2015 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act Plan Update

In the years since the 2009 passage of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act, the Maryland Department of the Environment, with extensive public input, developed a plan finalized in 2012.

In October 2015, the Department of the Environment released *The 2015 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act Plan Update*. This new report documented progress made to date and found the state should meet the 2020 goal of a 25 percent reduction. Also, "Current analyses project the plan economic benefits estimated between \$2.5 billion and \$3.5 billion by 2020 and help create and maintain between 26,000 and 33,000 new jobs," according to the Update report.

This early progress is against a background of the past three years when Maryland experienced floods, heavy rains, heat and strong winds causing the loss of human life and millions of dollars in property. With 3,100 miles of tidal shoreline, the state is losing land to rising seas, which in the last 100 years have gone up over one foot. Significantly, 2014 was the hottest year in recorded history and 2015 is almost certain to break that record, according to the World Meteorological Organization. The MDE

Update report also finds a worldwide scientific consensus for greenhouse gas reduction as high as 72 percent by 2050 to minimize the impacts of climate change.

The current Plan contains 150 programs; however, the major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 are projected in the following ten programs:

EmPOWER Maryland - Enacted in 2008, the EmPOWER Maryland Energy Efficiency Act set a target to reduce peak load electricity demand and per capita total demand by 15 percent by 2015 through energy conservation programs.

Maryland Clean Cars Program - Enacted in 2007, this program adopted California's stricter vehicle emission standards.

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFÉ) Standards - Model Years 2008-2011- The CAFÉ standard increase fuel economy of cars and light trucks.

Maryland Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Program - Maryland adopted the standard in 2004. The law requires power providers buy more electricity from renewable sources, creating a market for mostly in-state renewable electricity and recognizing its economic, environmental and security benefits.

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - A cooperative effort by nine Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states to develop a regional power plant emissions cap-and-trade program. Revenues from the program help support EmPOWER Maryland.

Building and Trade Codes in Maryland - Building Performance Standards are updated by regulation every three years following the cycle of the International

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commission's transparent deliberation and decision making in full public view. The report can be found on the Governor's web-site at: <http://1.usa.gov/1MZrPDL>

They recommended an independent commission made up of 3 members of the



Decision meeting, Nov 3

majority party, 3 members of the minority party, and 3 members from neither party. It would decide congressional and Maryland legislative district maps. The Maryland legislature then votes whether to accept the maps.

Rejection of either the legislative district map or congressional district map requires a supermajority vote (the level required to override the Governor's veto) by both chambers of the legislature. If the Governor vetoes the plan(s), the General Assembly may override the veto by a supermajority vote. If the legislature rejects either map, it goes back to the Redistricting Commission for adjustment. If at the end of this, there is still no agreement, the Maryland Court of Appeals creates a districting plan.

The Redistricting Commission will be selected from a pool of candidates who nominate themselves. Persons will NOT be eligible to apply for a seat on the commission if within the last 5 years if they have:

- resided in a place other than Maryland

- served as a member of the legislature or Congress
- run for the legislature or Congress in a primary or general election
- changed their registered party status
- if they are employed by any member of the legislature or Congress, are a registered lobbyist, or are an immediate family member of any person excluded under the above categories.

The pool will be narrowed down to 10 qualifiers in each of the three categories by a screening panel appointed from a branch of government service associated with neutrality, independence, and responsibility or by retired or (randomly selected) sitting judges.

From the 30, three people from each of the three categories will be randomly selected to serve on the independent redistricting commission. The Commission did not have time to research options for the screening panel, so it will be up to legislature to make a decision on the random selection process. However, the Reform Commission did recommend persons not be eligible to serve on the neutral screening panel should they fall into any of the prohibited categories for Commissioners, except for a recent change of party status.

The Redistricting Commission will draw legislative and congressional districts of substantially equal population as required by the U.S. Constitution, federal and state law. However, they did recommend the current standard of a plus or minus 5%

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deviation in population among legislative districts be strengthened to allow only the 1% deviation currently required for congressional districts. The Reform Commission also reiterated districts must comply with federal law, such as the Voting Rights Act.

They went on to recommend once these two criteria have been satisfied, redistricting must meet the following conditions:

Congruence: district lines must pay due regard to county and city boundaries;

Contiguity: districts must be of adjoining territory conveniently connected for purposes of travel and communication;

Compactness: districts must be compact in form;

Nonpartisan: districts must be drawn without regard to party affiliation or incumbent residency.

The above criteria are particularly significant for congressional districts because currently there are no standards other than the federal standards of equal population and compliance with the Voting Rights Act. In the past, a federal judge had no basis for rejecting a wildly drawn congressional map if it had equal population, and could not be proven to have intentionally discriminated against a racial group.

The Reform Commission also recommended “ample” public hearings on the proposed maps before submission to the legislature.

The governor will take this report and craft legislation for the 2016 General Assembly session. In the meantime, the League of Women Voters of Maryland, working with our partners in the Tame the Gerrymander Coalition, will continue to create a network of grass roots support for reform.

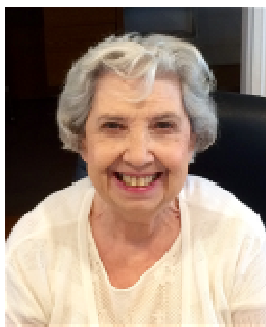
Please help. Contact us at info@lwvmd.org and if you haven't yet done so, sign the petition at http://www.lwvmd.org/redistricting_reform

Ed. note: For detailed background on Maryland Redistricting see Nancy Soreng's article in the August 2015 issue of The Maryland Voter at <http://bit.ly/1Ma5lab>

Spotlight on League Member

By Jane Hardy, LWVMD Director

It's the late 1950s. Picture a young woman, new to her neighborhood in Vienna, Virginia, who discovers her area has no nursery schools or even kindergartens. What does this mother of small children do? She posts flyers adorned with kids' drawings in grocery stores, makes phone calls, visits neighbors, gets a cadre of like-minded women behind her, finds a building, corrals a benefactor -- and starts a pre-school, one that is still operating fifty-plus years later. Her leadership, resourcefulness and high energy have served **Rebecca, “Becky,” Goode** and her community quite well over the years, just as they have benefitted the



Becky Goode

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Code Council. The long life of most buildings means energy efficiency requirements provide long-term greenhouse gas savings.

Public Transportation Initiatives - More people are living beyond the reach of easy access to transit facilities. By 2020, public transportation initiatives in Maryland should contribute substantially to emission reductions.

Managing Forests to Capture Carbon – Promotes sustainable forestry management on both public and private lands.

Planting Forests in Maryland - Planting trees expands cover and associated carbon stocks of healthy forests.

Zero Waste – The near elimination of solid waste sent to landfills or incinerators in favor of reuse, recycling, composting or source reduction.

The Maryland Commission on Climate Change, originally created by Executive Order, was strengthened by 2015 legislation. Requirements in the new legislation include expanding Commission membership and maintaining a comprehensive plan to achieve science-based reductions in Maryland's greenhouse gases.

The Commission advises the Governor and General Assembly on ways to prepare, mitigate and adapt to climate change. The new Maryland Climate Change Commission, chaired by Department of Environment Secretary Benjamin Grumbles, recently voted unanimously to support a 40 percent reduction in greenhouse gas by 2030.

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League of Women Voters since Becky joined us in 1976.

Having moved to Kent County, Maryland by then -- and having started yet another pre-school in Manassas, VA -- with her youngest child only two-and-a-half, Becky attended a meeting of Kent's fledgling LWV, and quickly got involved, as once again she came across like-minded women. The League was working on the Equal Rights Amendment those days; Becky also enjoyed her work on a national study about energy use and conservation.

Becky's first board job with the LWV Kent County was secretary, but she also became enamored with the League's efforts to promote equal access to quality education.

In 1978, the Maryland League sponsored a statewide program for PTAs, and Becky served as Kent County's point person. "How impressed and inspired I was by the State League's well-thought-out and well-delivered program," she remembers.

She joined the LWVMD Board In 1982, and became its education chair, which led to her appointment to the **Task Force to Study the Funding of Public Education**, chaired by former U.S. Attorney General Ben Civiletti. Governor Hughes had charged the group to get the Maryland state government to commit funds more equitably to local schools; counties with the largest pensions received their unfair share of state education funds. Ten years later the goal was at least partially achieved when the Task Force's recommendations were adopted by then Governor Schaefer.

Along with heading up our LWVMD education program for several years, Becky performed a number of other jobs for our

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state league. In 1986, she made the arrangements for a primary election forum for candidates, one of which was Barbara Mikulski, vying for an open U.S. Senate seat. One Republican candidate arrived at the forum site, Loyola College in Baltimore, riding an elephant, which proceeded to eat the shrubbery in front of the college president's home. The general election forum had its challenges too, as both candidates had special requirements.

During the LWVMD Presidency of Lu Pierson, Becky became Voter Service chair. She also had several tours as a vice president.

Throughout her years of service to the state board, Becky was president of the Kent County League four times -- and is probably one of the few local League leaders who convinced her husband to serve as president! Becky often led voter service efforts in Kent.

In the late 1990s, Becky started a "Kids Vote" project in Kent County. As Becky explains,

"A local committee wanted to quiz the kids about the recreation programs they would like after school and on weekends. The League was asked to help. After first gaining the support of the schools' superintendent, our committee made boxes for ballots in all the schools, even private schools. We put questions in ballot form, and engaged high school students to help with the project. Kids all over the county participated; our first foray into getting kids to learn more about the voting process was a decided success."

Shortly thereafter, the State Board of Elections approached then LWVMD president Judy Morenoff, for help exposing

kids to voting. Knowing of Becky's work in this area, Judy asked her to be Maryland's representative to the **National Student Parent Mock Election Program**, a job Becky took on with high energy and continued during each presidential election year until 2008. Becky worked via schools' social studies curriculum advisors throughout the state, and felt especially pleased to finally persuade high schools in Baltimore City to participate.

In Kent County, Becky arranged it so kids actually voted by ballot in a private space, as though they were in voting booths. According to Becky, "If I could get the kids to vote in school maybe this would prompt them to vote from then on." For several years running, thousands of Maryland kids took part in the mock election program for each presidential election cycle.

One of Becky's favorite moments during her years with the League was being presented with a suffragette doll by LWVMD for her work to bring a Suffragist Choir to LWVMD's 2007 Convention in Easton.

A lover of music and singing, Becky participates in the Chester River Chorale and has a part time job, as a resource person and greeter at the Kent County Visitors' Center.

Becky and her husband, Vance, just celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. They are the parents of six (an architect, an archeologist, a media specialist, an archivist, a beer brewer, and a romance novelist) and grandparents of eight. Their secret to a long and happy marriage? "Finding each other interesting to talk to," says Becky.

Thank you, Ms. Goode, for your selfless service on behalf of voters in Maryland!

Republic of Georgia Delegation Visits the League In Annapolis

By Barbara Schnackenberg, LWVMD Co-President



Pictured clockwise from far left: Shota Murgulia, Mayor of Kutaisi; Giorgi Kirtadze, Chair of Sakrebulo and member of United National Movement; Giorgi Todua, Deputy Chair of Zugdidi Sakrebulo and member of Georgian Dream; Merab Kvaraia, Chair of Zugdidi Sakrebulo and member of Georgian Dream; Nino Beradze, Chair of Batumi Sakrebulo's Education, Tourism and Sports Affairs Commission and member of Sakrebulo's Free Democrats faction; Irina Rekhviashvili, Senior Program Officer from the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs in Georgia.

The identifications above are of the political party faction to which each person belongs. Several of these factions make up the Georgian Dream party. These make more organizational sense to us if you know the current president of Georgia is Giorgi Margvelashvili, elected in 2013, is from the Georgian Dream party, a coalition of the Democratic Georgia,

Republican, National Forum, Conservative, Industry Will Save Georgia, and Green parties. The United National Movement is another major political party. The members of the delegation sought information on how the League interacts with our state government. They want to transplant some ideas about citizen/government interaction to their country.

Nancy Soreng and I escorted the delegation to the House of Delegates where we saw a hearing room and the State House where we saw the House and the Senate chambers as well as other sites such as the recreated chambers of earlier decades. We took the picture of the delegation on the steps of the State House.

The National Democratic Institute (NDI for short) for International Affairs, with offices located in Washington, D.C., sponsored this trip. The Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to strengthen and support democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation and openness and accountability in government.

Try explaining redistricting to a group that does not speak English through a translator who is not conversant with our governmental structure. One member of the delegation talked to us about the terms of office of our delegations in the State House and Senate and in our national legislature. Her reaction was, "My goodness. You have elections all the time!" I agreed with her.

2016 Vote 411 Training



For our Maryland league voter services workers, remember to sign up for our Vote411 voters' guide training on January 9 at the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center, Columbia, Maryland. Complete information is at LWVMD.org under the Events menu.

“Love and Death in the Supreme Court” Theme of Constitution Day Program

By Andrea Morris Gruhl, LWVMD Director

We know our annual Constitution Day Program at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law is one of the highlights of our League year. But Professor Richard Boldt (Columbia, BA; Yale, JD) in his presentations on September 17 to the Leaguers in the noon program, and in the repeated program at 4 p.m. for the Law undergraduates from the College Park campus, said this event is a highlight the law school looks forward to every Fall.

This is the 9th year LWVMD has co-sponsored a Constitution Day Program with the University of Maryland’s law school and the University of Maryland, Baltimore. It is held in the law school’s Ceremonial Court Room on or about September 17, Constitution Day.

We select a different constitutional topic each year, and this year’s theme was

“**Love and Death in the Supreme Court.**”

It is a catchy title for a program that took a serious

look at two recent Supreme Court cases, one on gay marriage having a decision triumph for liberals, and the other case on use of a controversial drug execution method having a decision triumph for conservatives.



University of Maryland, Baltimore provided the reception's cake decorated with Preamble to Constitution.

The law school’s distinguished, new Dean Donald Tobin (Duke, BA; Georgetown, JD) welcomed attendees, who clapped with delight when he revealed his mother had been a League member in Howard County, Maryland. Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development, and Moderator of this and the two previous years’ programs, Professor Maxwell Stearns (U Penn, BA; U Virginia, JD) introduced dignitaries and asked the LWVMD Co-President to speak. Barbara Schnackenberg gave the League



Left to Right: Asst. Prof. Natalie Ram, panelist, Assoc. Dean Maxwell Stearns, moderator, and UMD Law School Dean Donald Tobin at LWVMD table outside Ceremonial Court Room.

welcome at the first program and Nancy Soreng welcomed at the second.

Prof. Stearns described the parameters of the panel

discussion before introducing the panelists. He showed a film clip from a 1975 Woody Allen movie that also had a theme of love and death. Prof. Stearns then introduced the three legal expert panelists in order of their speaking: Prof. Boldt (see above), Professor of Law at U MD Law, Natalie Ram (Princeton, BA; Yale, JD), Assistant Professor of Law at University of Baltimore School of Law, and Mark A. Graber (Dartmouth, BA; Columbia, JD; Yale, PhD), Jacob A. France Professor of Constitutionalism, U MD Law.

Prof. Boldt dealt with the Death decision and related circumstances and cases. Prof. Ram dealt with the Love decision citing relevant gay marriage issues.

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Prof. Graber, saying he was more a political scientist than a lawyer, discussed the Supreme Court’s history of liberal and conservative decisions and Justice appointments.



Reception table of hors d'oeuvres and desserts donated by Leaguers.

All panelists and the Moderator exhibited overwhelming intellect and were articulate and witty. All publish widely. You can find

their publications listed at their university websites. I particularly want you to be aware that on August 31, 2015 Mark Graber’s new book, **“The Oxford Handbook of the U.S. Constitution”** was published by top academic publisher Oxford University Press (\$125, hardcover, 1112 pages, also an ebook). This will be a valuable resource for our current LWVUS study on the constitutional amendment process.

Please enjoy the intellectual stimulation of the noon program by clicking on the hotlink below to the video of the 2015 Constitution Day Program. The Woody Allen film clip is deleted per copyright law.

9/17/2015 - Constitution Day Program - 12 P.M.

<http://video.law.umaryland.edu/OpenPlayer.asp?GUID=AA342CF3-AB27-4131-97BE-D1C0820E16D1>



LWVUS National Convention

Make your vacation plans now for our national convention, June 16-18, 2016 at Washington, DC.

LWVMD Legislative and Budget Priorities for the of 2016



By Ruth Crystal, LWVMD Director

While the League has many issues we follow based on positions we have reached at the state and national level, each year the Maryland League highlights the issues we believe are the most critical and require the most attention from our members. Our focus for the 2016 legislative session will be:

Protecting the Environment, including

- Mitigating climate change
- Increasing renewable energy
- Assuring clean water standards
- Adequate public transportation

Making democracy work, including

- Redistricting reform
- Open government
- Improved voter access
- Ending contested elections for judges

Adequate resources to meet the basic human needs of our citizens, including

- Full funding of Bridge to Excellence
- Corrections and sentencing reform
- Maintaining the safety net for vulnerable populations



If you shop on Amazon.com, connect your account to smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate .5% of your

purchases to a charity you select from a plethora of charities listed alphabetically. And you can change the charity at any time.

Hint: This space is all about selecting “League of Women Voters of Maryland Education Fund” No pressure.