



The Norman VOTER

December 2007

League of Women Voters of Norman

Established in 1925

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All-Member Study Session December 5, 2007 National LWV Immigration Study

Members of the LWV of Norman are urged to attend a brown bag study session at the Memorial Presbyterian Church, 601 24th Ave. SW on Wednesday, December 5, 2007 at 11:30 am to discuss the consensus questions related to the National LWV study of immigration issues. Drinks and cookies will be provided.

Responses by local leagues to the consensus questions are due in the national office in February and will be the basis for a new position statement and plan of action regarding immigration policy. Interest in immigration policy has increased among local leagues in Oklahoma since passage of a state immigration law.

Members who attend the meeting on immigration on December 5 will discuss and try to reach consensus on the following immigration issues:

Rate each of the following "High Priority," "Lower Priority," "Disagree," or "No Consensus."

Question 1: Federal immigration laws should take into consideration criteria such as the following (not listed in any particular order or hierarchy):

Part a:

- a. Ethnic and Cultural Diversity
- b. Economic, Business and Service Employment Needs
- c. Environmental Impact/Sustainability
- d. Family Reunification of Authorized Immigrants and Citizens with Spouses and Minor Children
- e. History of Criminal Activity
- f. Humanitarian Crises/ Political Persecution in Home Countries
- g. Immigrant Characteristics (health and age)
- h. Rights of All Workers to Safe Working Conditions and Liveable Wage
- i. Rights of Families to Remain Together
- j. Rights of all Individuals in U.S. to Fair Treatment Under the Law (Fair Hearing, Right to Counsel, Right of Appeal, and Humane Treatment)
- k. Education and Training

Part b:

Select the three most important criteria and list them, in order (1, 2 and 3, with 1 being the most important).

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Immigration Study Consensus Questions *continued*

Rate each of the following “High Priority,” “Lower Priority,” “Disagree,” or “No Consensus.”

Question 2: Unauthorized immigrants currently in the U.S. should be treated as follows:

- a. Deport Unauthorized Immigrants
- b. Some Deported/Some Allowed To Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Length of Residence in U.S.
- c. Some Deported/Some Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Needs of US Employers
- d. All Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status by Doing Things Such as Paying Taxes, Learning English, Studying Civics, Etc.
- e. If Deported, Assess Fines Before Possible Re-Entry
- f. Assess Fines Before Allowed To Earn Legal Adjustment Of Status

“The probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just.”

—Abraham Lincoln

Rate each of the following “High Priority,” “Lower Priority,” “Disagree,” or “No Consensus.”

Question 3: Federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the U.S. for immigrants who are:

- a. Immediate Family Members Joining Family Member Already Admitted for Legal Permanent Residence in the U.S.
- b. Entering the U.S. to Meet Labor Needs
- c. Entering the U.S. as Students
- d. Entering the U.S. because of Persecution in Home Country

Rate each of the following “High Priority,” “Lower Priority,” “Disagree,” or “No Consensus.”

Question 4a: In order to deal more effectively with unauthorized immigrants, Federal immigration law should include:

Social Security Card or Other National Identification Card with Secure Identifiers for All Persons Residing in the U.S.

Question 4b: Federal immigration law dealing with unauthorized immigrants should be enforced by including:

- i. Physical Barriers (such as Fences) and Surveillance at Borders
- ii. Increased Personnel at Land, Air, and Sea Entry Points
- iii. More Effective Tracking of Persons with Non-Immigrant Visas Until They Leave the Country
- iv. Verification Documents, such as Green Cards and Work Permits with Secure Identifiers
- v. Improved Technology to Facilitate Employer Verification of Employee Visa Status
- vi. Improved Technology for Sharing Information Among Federal Agencies
- vii. A Program to Allow Immigrant Workers to Go in and Out of the U.S. to Meet Seasonal and Sporadic Labor Needs
- viii. Significant Fines Proportionate to Revenue for Employers Who Fail to Take Adequate Steps to Verify Work Authorization of Employees

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Immigration Study Consensus Questions *continued*

Question 5: Federal immigration law should address and balance the long-term federal financial benefit from immigrants with the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

Consensus or No Consensus?

Question 6: Federal immigration law should be coordinated with U.S. foreign policy to pro-actively help improve economies, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations.

Consensus or No Consensus?

Question 7: If desired, add your brief comments. (Limited to 150 words.)

Public Meeting on Public Financing of Elections Scheduled for January 29, 2008

The LWV of Norman will hold a public meeting on the Public Financing of Election Campaigns on Tuesday, January 29, 2008 at 7:30 pm at Memorial Presbyterian Church, 601 24th Ave SW.

Lynn Howell, Chair of Common Cause Oklahoma, has proposed legislation for publicly financed campaigns for judges, the Insurance Commissioner, and Corporation Commissioners in Oklahoma and will be invited to participate in the discussion. We hope to hear from John Wood, Ph.D., a Political Science Professor at Rose State College regarding his recent paper entitled "*Is the Fox Guarding the Hen House?*" *Conflicts of Interest in the 100 Year History of the Oklahoma Insurance Commission.*" LWV member Mary Francis will report on Congressional legislation including the *Fair Elections Act* by Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Arlen Specter (R-PA) which provides for public financing for all U.S. Senate races.

Arizona, Connecticut, Maine, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, and Vermont have full state funding systems for at least some of their elected offices. Albuquerque, New Mexico and Portland, Oregon provide public funding options for citywide races.

The League supports the concept of public funding of elections under its LWVUS Statement of Position on Campaign Finance:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process.

This position is applicable in all federal campaigns for public office — presidential and congressional, primaries as well as general elections. It also may be applied to state and local campaigns. (LWVUS *Impact on Issues* 2006–2008, p. 18)

“The need for collecting large campaign funds would vanish if Congress provided an appropriation for the proper and legitimate expenses of each of the great national parties.”

—Theodore Roosevelt in a 1907 address to Congress

In the same address President Roosevelt also recommended that corporations be banned from contributing to presidential campaigns.

Oklahoma Immigration Law—HB 1804

The following is a summary of an article, *Immigration Reform Folly*, by Arnold Hamilton published in the *Oklahoma Observer* January 25, 2007 and ideas in parentheses from attendees of the Norman League meeting on Immigration held on October 16, 2007. Arnold Hamilton is now the editor of the *Oklahoma Observer*. Read about Mr. Hamilton at <http://www.okobserver.net/about.html>

Earlier this year the Oklahoma Legislature passed, and Governor Henry signed into law a strong immigration bill, HB 1804, probably the strongest immigration bill among the 75 new laws in about 30 states, as reported by the National Conference of State Legislatures. However, immigration is a constitutionally protected area of federal law, and state laws will probably not hold up in court. (You can read a commentary on HB 1804 by retired District Judge Janice Dreiling at <http://www.lwvok.org/>)

The Tulsa World conducted an Oklahoma poll in the fall of 2006 and showed that the number two issue of concern in Oklahoma is immigration, right after number one, education. A year and a half ago, only 2% of respondents considered immigration an important issue.

Immigrants are needed to fill 3,000 jobs at a new \$200 million beef processing plant in Hooker, a small Panhandle town of 1,800 people. (At the Norman league-sponsored immigration panel discussion on October 16, Juanita Vasquez-Sykes from LULAC, spoke about the inhumane treatment of workers at hog processing plants in Guymon, Oklahoma. Workers are hired by contractors, who drive them to Guymon, where some are put to work and paid in cash. The local police and sheriffs pick up these workers in town and put them in jail for not having papers. The jail charges the workers \$30 per day plus extra for food. When the workers' money is gone, they are released from jail and turned over to federal authorities. If a worker is injured on the job, he is dismissed because there is no health insurance to cover his injuries.)

Rep. Randy Terrill, Republican from Moore, OK, and the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) claim that undocumented immigrants are costing the state around \$207 million annually in services. But there is evidence to show they are overstating state costs. Ernest Istook, Republican candidate for governor in 2006, claimed that thousands of undocumented immigrants were using the state's in-state tuition waiver. However, officials found only 37 of the 26,000 college aid recipients fell into this category. (A couple present at the LWWN October 16 meeting who attended several of the hearings before the OK Legislature voted on HB 1804 told us after the meeting was officially over, that there were many heads of Oklahoma social agencies present at the hearings, ready to present figures about their costs for undocumented immigrants they served - less than 1%. These agencies were ignored and not allowed to present information that might have affected the legislative vote. The final legislative vote was 84-14 in favor of the bill in the House, and 41-6 in favor in the Senate).

Many who support HB 1804 fail to recognize that undocumented workers and their families pay state and/or federal taxes every time they purchase gasoline, groceries or other goods. The Social Security Administration estimates that 75% of undocumented immigrants are paying payroll taxes via fake IDs and contribute up to \$7 billion annually to Social Security funds – for services they will never qualify to use.

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Oklahoma Immigration Law *continued*

Another strategy for states instead of passing their own laws would be to pressure the federal government to pass immigration reforms that would fix our immigration problems, according to Ray Lauser at the Center for Law and Border Studies at the University of Texas–El Paso.

No one in the federal government seems willing to try and change the real cause of undocumented immigrants: widespread poverty and corruption in Mexico and Latin America. Undocumented immigrants are so desperate for decent-paying jobs that they choose to live in constant fear of deportation and to be targets for exploitation by employers. We need a comprehensive, sensible and compassionate immigration policy and a realistic guest worker program, one that does not exploit immigrant workers.

—Submitted by Phoebe Schmitz

Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration

LWVUS Immigration Study Background Paper by Dorrit Marks



Because our workforce is decreasing due to retiring baby boomers and the reduced fertility rates of citizens, new immigrants are seen as a necessity to fill millions of jobs which will be created in the near future.

George Borjas, a Cuban immigrant and scholar in immigrant research at Harvard University, thinks that immigrants are responsible for fewer job opportunities and lower wages, especially for African Americans.

Another immigrant researcher and economist at the University of California, Berkeley, David Card, offers research that refutes Borjas' arguments. Card finds little wage difference between cities with large immigrant populations and those with few immigrants.

An article in *The Economist* concluded that studies by the above researchers is not decisive but states that when both are combined, there is only a small negative effect on the pay of native unskilled workers.

Over the last ten years, foreign workers, who filled a third of the new jobs in North Carolina, cost the state much less than what they contributed to the state's economy. The net cost of public services to the state was \$61 million, compared to the overall \$11 billion immigrants contributed to the state economy.

During the last ten years across the U.S., immigrants have filled more than half of all the new jobs – two-thirds in the Midwest and Southwest. The average tax burden per native household for immigrant services was about \$200 a year. In California the tax burden, however, was \$1,178 per native household, the highest in the country.

Both authorized and unauthorized immigrants pay into Social Security programs. Many unauthorized workers use fake ID numbers and pay Social Security taxes without being eligible to receive benefits. Food stamps are given to less than 3% of immigrants. Unauthorized workers support local school districts through the rent they pay. There is a financial burden to hospitals

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Economic Aspects of Immigration *continued*

arising from all low income, uninsured people, whether they are immigrants, authorized or unauthorized, or natives.

Today, unauthorized immigrants—an estimated 10-12 million—make up almost one-third of the non-native population. The large number of unauthorized immigrants is largely due to the U.S.'s need for low-skilled workers and the delays associated with legal immigration. The CEO of National Association of Home Builders estimates that up to 30% of construction workers are immigrants, authorized and unauthorized. If this 30% is removed from the work force, construction costs will rise and the demand for new housing will decrease, according to Chris Isidore, www.CNNMoney.com. According to Andrew Sum, director of labor studies at Northwestern University, Boston, immigrants have taken jobs from low-skilled native workers, but he does say we couldn't have grown as much as we did in the 1990s without immigrants.

Many immigrant experts believe that tax-paying immigrants, authorized and unauthorized, will help meet the labor needs of our declining native workforce and our growing economy. Immigration discussions should include the positive impact that immigrants are making on our economy, as well as the costs.■



LWVN Meets with City Manager

Steven Lewis, City Manager of Norman, responded to questions from League members on November 6, 2007. Several of the questions along with Mr. Lewis' responses follow:

Q: *What is the status of Norman's storm water master plan and the EPA mandates regarding run-off pollutants?*

Norman gets 70% of its water from Lake Thunderbird and 30% from ground water wells. Thunderbird serves Midwest City, Del City and Norman. There are some arsenic problems with some of the wells. Twenty new wells are being built on the east side of town.

The big issue is long-term water. The Sardis reservoir in southeast Oklahoma is fed by the Kiamichi River about 120 miles from here. It was built by the Corps of Engineers and the State of Oklahoma. It is 10 times as big as Thunderbird so it can meet the supply needs for a number of cities. That area gets 55 inches of rain per year compared with our 20 inches of rainfall.

The Dallas Ft. Worth area has 6½ million people and needs water. They want the water from southeast Oklahoma.

The problem is how to move the water. Edmond, Moore and Norman are looking at plans to hire an engineering firm to do a study. The water rights will cost \$68 to \$70 million plus money for a pipeline. The total cost to bring water to central Oklahoma is \$400 million. Oklahoma City already gets water from Sardis Lake. To add a 60 inch line would cost about \$400 million.

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LWVN Meets with City Manager *continued*

We also need to look at conservation, for example, the odd, even watering system. We now purchase needed water from Oklahoma City. It is expensive. In the future we will be competing with the DFW area.

There is up to \$10 million in the Congressional water bill that would be allocated to Norman; this would probably be used to upgrade the water treatment plant.

Construction hit an all time record in Norman this year, \$300 million—\$94 million was for the new hospital, and there have been commercial buildings, hotels and the North Park TIF. CNI has just approved a \$30 million new data processing center out by Saxon (former Saxon Publishing, Inc. facilities).

Q: Where does the run-off go?

Norman doesn't have a storm water master plan. The new City Council has formed a committee and hired a consultant to develop a plan for the next 25 to 30 years. There are 10 or 12 drainage basins in Norman. The plan would look at flooding, greenways, paths for walking and biking. There may need to be a storm water utility fund where citizens would be billed \$2 or \$3 a month for cleaning and maintaining creek ways.

Q: Is there an ordinance being considered for drainage of swimming pool water into the sewer system as opposed to the storm water?

There is at present an ordinance which requires draining pools into sewers rather than into storm water drains because of the chemicals in pools.

Q: What is the penalty?

(After checking on this Mr. Lewis reported the penalty to be \$75–\$200.)

Q: Are there any plans to develop wetlands in the Little River area to help improve the quality of water in Lake Thunderbird?

There are no plans at present.

Q: How is the city proposing to pay for needed increased public transportation?

The CART system is hiring 100 people. Money is needed for buses and operation because the system doesn't make money. The mayor is looking for new money, perhaps by increasing fares. The Imagine Norman Campaign by the Chamber of Commerce is looking at this. They may recommend a short-term tax increase for transit, art, recreation and safety, etc.

(Questions were raised about the long-term effects of our transportation policy.)

Q: What is the status of the city's emergency fund?

There is a legal requirement for an 8% Emergency Fund and the city meets this.

Q: Do you have something on your mind to share with the League that we can work on together?

The library is an issue. The Pioneer Library system has asked the County

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*Go to
www.normanok.gov
for updates on
city construction*

LWVN Meets with City Manager *continued*

Commissioners to put the issue on the ballot in May 2008 to raise library millage. There are three counties involved. Norman needs a new building, better hours and more books. The city builds the building and the Pioneer system operates it. The amount needed for the library would be \$30 to \$40 million. Three sites have been proposed. It has been proposed that private money be raised for part of the cost.



The present library site might be used for a city court or to relocate the Senior Center. City offices are crowded. The police department and engineering spaces are crowded. The three sites currently being considered for the library are SE Main and Porter with a parking garage, by Food and Shelter for Friends with parking shared with the Baptist Church; and the current site.

Another issue is the proposed interceptor crossing on the Little River.

Q: Is our police force adequate?

The Norman police force is understaffed against normal ratios. There are problems with trash by Lake Thunderbird. There is a new litter law, and code enforcement is trying to keep up.

Crime follows I-35 and new construction. Homelessness is up, but there is a new method of counting.

—Submitted by Lois Hilbert

Proposed expansion of the Cleveland Area Rapid Transit system (CART)

By Edwin Kessler

Commentary

The Transportation Committee of the Norman City Council and CART staff have proposed expansion of the CART system, operated by the University of Oklahoma. Their proposal is based on studies of present and increasing use of CART as documented in part in an assessment of transportation needs performed by KA Associates, formerly of Kansas City, Missouri. A recent additional motivation for expansion of public transportation facilities comes from its potential energy efficiency and potential ability to reduce our nation's use of petroleum-based fuels.



This matter was discussed during a Mayor's Town Hall meeting last October 25th and presented on the front-page of *The Norman Transcript* on October 27th. Your author joins the great majority of citizens who attended the Town Hall meeting in their support for CART expansion.

CART presently has five routes in central Norman, of which the Main Street and Alameda Street routes operate on hourly schedules on weekdays. It is proposed initially to increase hours of operation and to provide Sunday service with the current route system and to increase frequency of service to half hourly on two routes. In Phase 2, the number of routes would be increased to eight and the frequency of service on additional routes would be increased to half hourly. Phase 3 would add six more routes and increase the frequency

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Proposed expansion of CART *continued*

of service on all routes from hourly to half hourly. Corridor routes among those added would facilitate connections and transfers. All corridor routes would be traversed within fifteen minutes at intervals of thirty minutes.

The present CART system transports four to five thousand passengers daily, about half of the total from the Park and Ride facility at the Noble Center to and from classes at the University. Of the remainder, most usage occurs on the Main Street, Alameda, and Lindsey East routes. The regular fare is 50 cents and just 25 cents for those over the age of 65 or with disabilities, and University fees cover charges for O.U. students, staff, and faculty. It is important that every enhancement of public transportation in other places has produced dramatic increases in ridership.

CART includes Metrolift, wherein persons needing help can make an appointment a day in advance and for payment of \$1 each way, obtain a ride to the destination of their choice within the Norman core. Those who demonstrate that they cannot afford the fee are provided this service (and all other CART service) at no cost to themselves. Users of Metrolift number about 3000 per month.

The operating cost of the present system is about \$2.1 million annually, of which \$1 million is provided by the University from student and faculty fees, \$230 thousand by the City of Norman, \$25 thousand by a Community Development Block Grant and the balance from the federal government. A small part of the cost is defrayed by fares, about \$60 thousand annually. The proposed expansion through Phase 3 would require approximately \$2.75 million in capitol costs for additional buses and access improvements, and the operating costs of the expanded system are projected at about \$3.75 million annually.

Most of the above is presented with additional detail in a report prepared by CART staff and Norman's Transportation Committee and available at the Norman Public Library and Norman and CART websites.

Municipalities provide essential services that individual citizens cannot well provide for themselves. Thus, the City of Norman includes a system of general governance, a municipal water system, fire and police protection, systems for waste disposal, a system of elementary and secondary schools, a major hospital with emergency services, and roads and streets to facilitate transportation. Except for the hospital, most of this is paid for by locally assessed and collected taxes and a small portion by federal taxes that are returned to our city via specialized pathways, and state government also has a role. Other municipalities and states throughout our land also recognize the need to provide public transportation in the form of buses and trains and other facilities of special importance to those who cannot afford a car or who are unable to drive or simply prefer not to drive. When well used, buses and trains greatly reduce dependence on diminishing hydrocarbon fuels, and it is very much in the national interest for towns and states across our country to reduce oil consumption rapidly.

It should be noticed that the cost of car ownership is a serious economic issue for many, since costs of purchase, fuel, maintenance, taxes, and insurance are now calculated at about \$7 thousand annually, on average. And congestion on roads associated with growth of population is wasting much time

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LWVN Statement of Position:

Public Transportation

In order to reduce highway congestion, fuel consumption and vehicular pollution, and to provide better access to housing, jobs, recreation and medical care, the LWVN advocates the development and maintenance of energy-efficient and time-efficient public transportation systems within the City of Norman and connecting with other communities in Oklahoma. Priority should be given to government-funded transportation projects that are directed toward better public access to fuel-efficient transportation and the reduction of single occupancy vehicles on the roadways.

Proposed expansion of CART *continued*

that can be better devoted to work, play, or simply relaxation.

Opponents of public transportation often object to the subsidies necessary to maintain it. Some aspects of this matter are therefore discussed here. Subsidies come in different forms including trade barriers and special tax structures as well as direct appropriations, and the following simple discussion does not do justice to this complex subject. Subsidies should be emplaced where they provide net social benefits, but some subsidies are damaging and reflect little more than influence from powerful special interests. We give just three examples, and do not argue benefits and damages.

Concerning aviation, the Transportation Security Agency presents an example subsidy. TSA was formed after 911 and is now within the Office of Homeland Security. Its 2007 budget for aviation is about \$4.7 billion, and a little more than half of that is paid by passenger and airline fees. The balance of \$2.3 billion is one of several subsidies to the aviation industry.

In 2004, the federal government appropriated \$1.2 billion to passenger rail AMTRAK to augment receipts from passengers. This helped pay salaries, maintenance, and improvements and was a subsidy to passenger rail.

Concerning highways, Oklahoma is among ten states that levy a lower tax on diesel fuel than on gasoline. (The tax is higher on diesel fuel in sixteen states and the same in twenty-four states.) The Oklahoma tax on diesel fuel, used primarily by heavy trucks, is 14 cents/gal, 3 cents/gal less than the tax on gasoline. Yet each truck imposes road maintenance costs of thousands of cars, this because vehicle impact is proportional to the fifth power of axle weight. According to the Oklahoma's Office of State Finance, diesel fuel tax receipts during fiscal year 2007 amounted to \$97.5 million, corresponding to nearly 700 million gallons of taxed fuel. If the tax had been at the same rate attached to gasoline, then \$21 million more would have been paid. This presents a subsidy for trucks in Oklahoma, and, of course, it relates only to equality in taxation.

Thus, it is not valid to argue against public transportation simply because it receives subsidies. Public transportation should be broadly supported because of the great social good that results from its provision as a basic service offered to all. Such provision does not take our cars away, and when well used, public transportation reduces congestion and fuel use, and it is a godsend to those of us who cannot afford to drive a car, are unable to do so, or prefer not to do so. Good public transportation improves the economic well-being of communities and supports businesses that benefit from effective and economical transport of workers to jobs.

Oklahoma is far behind other states in provision of public transportation services. Oklahoma remains strongly focused on highway building even though high and rising gasoline prices produce economic hardship and foretell shifts of emphasis in modes of transportation. Such proposed programs as construction of a new Crosstown highway and I-35 expansion in the Norman area appear to your author as colossal wastes when governments at all levels should be focused on provision of more energy efficient means for both passengers and freight. More and better public transit is a critical need and CART expansion would be a move in the right direction. Eventually, CART should provide circulator buses that connect to enhanced rail service in Norman at "Park and Ride" facilities.■

Go to
<http://cart.ou.edu>
or phone
325-2278
for information about
METRO Transit/
CART

Oklahoma's Comprehensive Water Plan

by Mary Francis

Oklahoma Water Resources Research Institute (OWRRI) is holding public meetings in Oklahoma communities to gather citizen opinions and suggestions for developing a comprehensive water plan for Oklahoma as mandated by the Oklahoma Legislature in 2006. The Norman meeting was held July 19, 2007, and I attended the meeting for the Norman LWV. Mike Langston, Assistant Director of the OWRRI, facilitated and provided background information.

Stream water usage in Oklahoma is public and regulated while groundwater usage is considered private in most instances, and receives some regulation only when more than three acres and for commercial use. The state does not recognize the fact that heavy use of groundwater can affect stream water volume.



Public comments were meticulously recorded by OWRRI and corrections made by the speaker prior to next speaker's comments. Comments from public officials, water-issue professionals, NGOs and well-informed private citizens dominated.

Comments included Oklahoma retention of water resources, dangers of transferring water (Zebra mussel infestation, for example), purification and reuse of wastewater, separate use of gray water, merits and dangers of offering potable and un-potable water, wetlands as a solution to storm water and impaired lake problems, private rights to groundwater versus moving to regulation or public ownership of groundwater, general rejection of transfer or sale of water to Texas, pro and con positions on transferring water from the Kiamichi Aquifer (which uses less than 1% of available water) to Western Oklahoma where water usage is rapidly depleting the Ogallala and other aquifers, taxing groundwater use by volume, calls for credit for private and commercial use of rainwater and gray water and multiple calls for the practice of sustainability. All comments are available at:

<http://environ.okstate.edu/owrri/waterplan/index.asp>

Eleven Regional Citizen Groups will meet in Summer of 2008 to prioritize and summarize the comments. Oklahomans have an opportunity to shape the next water plan. It is my recommendation that the Norman League participate by nominating a member to serve on the Regional Citizen Group.■

League of Women Voters

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

Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a voting member of the League. Associate membership is available for students not yet eligible to vote.



LWVN Calendar of Events

Dec 5, 2007	Wed	11:00 am	LWVN Steering Committee Meeting Memorial Presbyterian Church 601 24th Ave. SW
Dec 5, 2007	Wed	11:30 am	Immigration Study Session Brown Bag Lunch Memorial Presbyterian Church 601 24th Ave. SW
Jan 29, 2008	Tue	7:30 pm	General Meeting Public Financing of Elections Memorial Presbyterian Church 601 24th Ave. SW

Dear Members and Friends,

Now is a good time to make a *year-end gift contribution* to the Norman League's *tax-deductible* Education Fund. We need more funds to continue to provide Norman citizens with the updated *Who's Who*, which has information about city, county, state and national public officials, as well as election information and phone numbers of officials and local committees. Copies of the *Who's Who* are continuously placed in the Norman Public Library and City Hall.

We also use Education Fund money for expenses of handouts at issue meetings, forums or for anything related to voter service, and we can now pay half of our per member payment (PMP) to national using this money. After we pay for state and national PMP out of dues (\$48 or \$63/household), we only retain \$9 to use for operating costs.

Making a *tax-deductible* contribution to the LWV Education Fund would be very helpful to the League and would be your way of contributing if you can't be an active member of the League. Please make your check out to "League of Women Voters of Norman Education Fund", and mail it to Joyce Collard, Treasurer, LWVN, P.O. Box 720621, Norman, OK 73070.

The Norman League thanks you.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORMAN

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