

Capitol Report

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Filed by: Debbie Harrison Rumberger, LWVF Governmental Consultant

OVERVIEW:

The second week of session has been filled with activity, including a national rally opposing Florida's Stand Your Ground law and the Women's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. The League was present at both events, with our own LWVF Director, Elizabeth Pines, presiding over the Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

On the legislative front, we are following dozens of bills that affect our League priorities for a full and participatory democracy. The following constitutes movement taking place on key issues this week:

ELECTIONS: A major elections bill (SB 7068) moved through the Senate Ethics and Elections Committee this week. The bill directs the Division of Elections to develop an online voting registration system by July 1, 2015. Executive Director Jessica Lowe-Minor testified on behalf of the LWVF, emphasizing the League's position in favor of online voter registration and suggesting that the bill be amended, per the suggestion of the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections, to allow remote absentee ballot drop-off locations to be used so long as acceptable security measures are in place. Senator Soto sponsored an amendment to the committee bill that would allow college facilities to be designated as polling places. Students from the University of Florida attended the committee meeting and spoke in support of the amendment, however Senator Thrasher asked for additional time to consider amendments, so this issue was not addressed.



LWVF Executive Director Jessica Lowe-Minor testifies before the Senate Ethics and Elections Committee on SB 7068.

SPRINGS PROTECTION: The long-awaited springs protection bill (SB 1576), which the League initiated, has been temporarily postponed. Working with all of the stakeholders, including the League of Women Voters of Florida under the guidance of our Natural Resources Director Chuck O'Neal, the language was finalized too late for presentation to the Senate Environment and

Preservation Committee this week. The League will be reviewing and preparing comments on the critical legislation as it moves forward.

GUNS IN SCHOOLS: Military veterans or retired law-enforcement officers with concealed weapons permits and special training could be designated to bring guns into elementary, middle and high schools under a proposal moving through the Florida Legislature.

The Senate Criminal Justice Committee approved the controversial proposal (SB 968) by a 5-2 vote on Monday over the objections of the Florida School Boards Association and the League of Women Voters of Florida. Under the bill, principals and school superintendents could appoint staff members or volunteers to serve as gun carrying "designees." They would be required to carry concealed weapons with them at all times on school property. The League will continue to oppose this bill, Stand Your Ground and other legislation that research shows would cause more violence.

IN-STATE TUITION FOR DREAMERS: The House Appropriations Committee passed a proposal (HB 851), sponsored by Rep. Jeanette Nuñez (R-Miami), that would allow undocumented-immigrants to receive in-state tuition rates at colleges and universities. LWVF Board Director Elizabeth Pines provided testimony in support of the bill, while including recommendations on suggested language changes to certain qualification criteria that would provide more flexibility for students. The bill has passed all committee stops and is headed to the House floor next for adoption.



Rep. Jeanette Nuñez (R-Miami) with LWVF Board Director Elizabeth Pines after HB 851 passed the House Appropriations Committee.

TRACKING LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS:

The link below will take you to the entire list of bills that LWVF is tracking. You may click on any bill and be taken to the state website where you can learn about the bills, committee stops, as well as members and the legislative process.

[Please click here to access the list of bills LWVF is tracking.](#)

Every Friday during session you will receive a *Capitol Report* in your inbox. Please share them with others. They will be brief, provide a progress report of League issues, and let you know **WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP!**

Get Involved!

Debbie Harrison Rumberger is the League's professional lobbyist for the 2014 legislative session. Updates on League legislative issues will be provided on a regular basis through *Capitol Report*, which is published every week during the session. Important information may also be accessed at www.leg.state.fl.us.

For updates on or copies of proposed legislation, call legislative information at 1-800-342-1827 or visit the Florida Online Sunshine homepage at www.leg.state.fl.us. For more information about the League's advocacy, check out <http://www.thefloridavoter.org>.