

CAPITOL REPORT

Session Moves Past Midway in Week 5



League of Women Voters of Florida legislative interns meet with Senator Jeff Clemens to help make online voter registration a reality.

Capitol Report 2015

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Overview:

As we move into the second half of session, we saw quite a few key bills move through their remaining required Committee stops, and a great deal of advocacy work by volunteers across the state, as well as our Lobby Corps.

Affordable Health Care for All Floridians: To show how contentious the issue has become, two Senators were sent back from Washington with the message that negotiations between the state and federal government would not resume for two weeks. There continues to be a \$5 billion shortfall in the budget, with Senators including \$2.2 billion in Low Income Pool funding and \$2.8 billion to create the Florida Health

Insurance Affordability Exchange, which is the coverage expansion plan. The House has yet to consider a bill that would extend health care to the poorest Floridians. The LWVF continues to work to bring Florida's tax dollars back to Florida to provide health coverage for our hard working low wage earners on which this state's economy depends.

Gun Safety:

House Bill 4005, which would overturn the current ban, and allow guns on college and university campuses across the state, passed the Judiciary Committee on Thursday by a vote of 12-3. The bill's next stop is the House floor to be voted on. An identical Senate bill has yet to be heard by the Judiciary Committee in the Senate. We will continue to monitor this dangerous piece of legislation. This week, Chair Patti Brigham drove up to Tallahassee to join me at a committee meeting, where we had the FSU chapter of the League in full attendance, and at which I delivered testimony expressing the League's continued opposition, highlighting that every state university president opposes this legislation.

Online Voter Registration: A bill proposed by Senator Jeff Clemens' to allow online voter registration unanimously passed through the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development on Thursday.

The language would implement a system of online voter registration by October 1, 2017. We will continue to monitor the House for movement on an identical bill. A League action alert was sent out this week to contact House members..we thank all of those who responded and contacted their House reps!

Women's Health: A Senate bill sponsored by Senator Flores (R-Miami) that would require a 24 hour waiting period for a woman seeking to terminate a pregnancy passed the Health Policy Committee by a vote of 5-3 on Tuesday. The vote was along party lines. It will now head to the Judiciary Committee. A similar bill in the House passed the Health & Human Services Committee on Monday by a vote of 12-5. The House bill will now head to the floor.

Land and Water Policy:

As a response to the loud criticism of underfunding by us and our coalition partners, the Senate boosted funding for land acquisition from \$2 million to \$37 million on Wednesday. This is at least a positive step in the right direction in order to fulfill the Constitutional obligation that was voted for overwhelmingly by the people of Florida. On going advocacy by members across the state will be important to support the work we are doing up here continuing to keep the pressure on to fund the purchase for land acquisition.

Get Involved!

Debbie Harrison Rumberger is the League's professional lobbyist for the 2015 Legislative Session. Aply supported by our very active volunteer Lobby Corps, and our Legislative Interns Cathy Barrios and Abdelilah Skhir. 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. Watch for your Capitol Report each Friday of the session for news on priority issues and what you can do to help. 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 www.thefloridavoter.com

Thank you,

Debbie Harrison Rumberger
LWVF Legislative Liaison