



THE VOTER

President's Podium

Hello,

Happy New Year!

After a brief hiatus we are back with more news and exciting programs. This month we are focusing our attention on the important topic of regionalism. More information is located in this newsletter. Do plan on attending.

Best regards,
Julia Spiker

NOTICE

Due to the snowy weather, February's Board meeting had to be rescheduled.

The new meeting date is

February 13

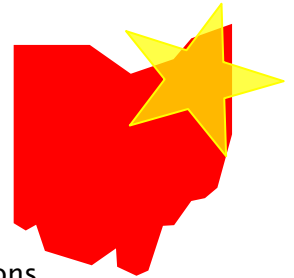
at 9 a.m.

Tallmadge Library.



Topic of February Meeting

Regionalism to Improve Northeast Ohio



Attend the February League meeting to hear how Northeast Ohio organizations and political entities are **working together to create a synergy for helping fragmented local governments begin to pull together to coordinate economic development and smart growth for the region as a whole.**

Lynda Mayer will discuss how regional tax-base revenue sharing and intergovernmental collaborative agreements **reduce costs, foster transparency and accountability, improve efficiencies and maintain service standards.**

This presentation will provide an update on the much-anticipated **Regional Prosperity Initiative**, the unprecedented effort coordinated by Northeast Ohio Mayors and Managers toward government reform at the municipal, county and regional levels.

Further information on the NEO Regional Prosperity Initiative can be found at: <http://neo-rpi.org/>

February 18, 2010
6:30 p.m.
Tallmadge Library

LWV CUYAHOGA REGIONALISM STUDY: POINTS FOR CONCURRENCE

LWV Cuyahoga Area conducted a two-year study on regionalism. An edited version of their study report follows. Other Leagues in Northeast Ohio are asked to consider adopting by concurrence either or both of their positions (see box). The LWV Cuyahoga Area report deals with two kinds of regionalism: **collaborative agreements** between neighboring jurisdictions to share **functions or services**; and **regional tax-base revenue sharing** -- one large scale strategy for municipalities across Northeast Ohio to promote the mutual benefit of all.

BACKGROUND:

The Cleveland Foundation and 80+ other funders backed a 16-county study that resulted in *Advance Northeast Ohio* (ANEO), an action agenda, calling for 1) *business growth and attraction*, 2) *talent development*, 3) *racial and economic inclusion*, and 4) *government collaboration and efficiency*. The LWV Cuyahoga Area joined Advance Northeast Ohio to focus on that which can be addressed by public policy and governmental solutions.

The funders also backed a study conducted by the Northeast Ohio Mayors & City Managers Association, which has proposed a Tax Base Revenue Sharing for adoption by all Northeast Ohio municipalities.

"MICRO"-REGIONALISM:

Many forms of "regional" cooperation are already happening on a relatively small scale.

- 1) Authorities, Boards, Commissions or Special Districts. Examples are *countywide libraries or hospitals, board of health, metro-park, regional transit or sewer system*.
- 2) Councils of Governments. COGs are confederations of municipalities formed to deal with one or more issues. An example would be the Suburban Water COG, made up of all Cuyahoga County municipalities, which works with the Cleveland Water department.
- 3) Joint Economic Development Districts. JEDDs are inter-municipal districts focused upon economic development projects, often across county lines.
- 4) Bilateral Revenue Sharing. This takes several forms. For example, Independence and Cleveland recently agreed to share revenue from practice facilities for the Cleveland Cavaliers, which moved to Independence from Cleveland.

LWV Cuyahoga Area

POSITION ON REGIONALISM

1. **Voluntary intergovernmental, collaborative agreements which reduce costs, foster transparency and accountability, improve efficiencies and maintain service standards.** Such agreements: are appropriate at local, county, metropolitan, multiple-county or regional levels; should be practical and of manageable size and scope; and should demonstrate the interconnectedness of all neighboring communities.
2. **Regional tax-base revenue sharing as a constructive form of intergovernmental cooperation for the mutual benefit of participating communities.** Such a program should: advance smart growth, economic development and fiscal equity within the target area; impact positively upon infrastructure, housing, education, recreation, inclusion and/or shared public facilities; set standards for finance, staffing and administration that are consistent, accountable, transparent and efficient; pool contributions from an agreed portion of new growth in local commercial and industrial tax revenue; distribute that revenue pool among participating communities to further fiscal equity across the area; honor local sovereignty and school funding resources; be flexible and grow with time. Formulas for collection and allocations should be determined by the participating communities and periodically reviewed.

Adopted May 2009

-continued-

LWV Cuyahoga Regionalism Study Report....continued

5) Miscellaneous collaborations. Seven Cleveland suburbs plan to combine resources to create a regional fire and ambulance service.

"MACRO"-REGIONALISM

Regionalism on a "macro" scale covers a wider geo-political landscape than the examples above. LWV Cuyahoga Area focused only on the Regional Tax-Base Revenue Sharing being formulated by the Northeast Ohio Mayors and City Managers Association.

Regional Tax-Base Revenue Sharing programs have 5 features in common: 1) *Jurisdiction* 2) *Objectives* 3) An existing or new *Administrative Mechanism* to run the program 4) *Source of Contributions* to the common revenue pool must be chosen; and 5) *Criteria for Allocations*. The League addressed each of these five features in its consensus process.

The NEO Mayors and Managers found three regions in particular that faced economic conditions similar to those of Northeast Ohio - Montgomery County Ohio and Allegheny County Pennsylvania and the 7-county region surrounding the Twin Cities in Minnesota. The Ohio and Pennsylvania regions are single counties with hub cities (Dayton & Pittsburgh) having similar economic hardships to Cleveland. In both, outmigration caused loss of business and deterioration of cultural amenities. Environmental problems slowed development of old industrial sites. Political leadership commissioned studies that documented loss of revenue and assets. As a result, both counties instituted Revenue Sharing plans based on increases in county sales taxes. Montgomery's .5% increase was earmarked for Economic Development. In Ohio, the sharing of tax monies between municipalities was not even legal at the time. Allegheny's increased by 1% to establish a Regional Assets District.

In Minnesota, the Metropolitan Planning Agency encompasses a 7-county region begun in 1957 to address urban sprawl and improve infrastructure. Their first project was a regional sewer district. The Revenue Sharing component evolved slowly. Since 1971 when the Minnesota Fiscal Disparities Act was passed, 40% of NEW commercial and industrial taxes goes into a regional pool that is redistributed on a per capita basis and adjusted by a measure of local property wealth.

In all examples, strong business advocates lobbied legislators. Support from key organizations such as LWV was necessary. Each project bogged down or even failed at first, until compromises were struck. Even after the legislation passed, there were lawsuits by holdout municipalities, the lawsuits again failed. In all three case studies, Revenue Sharing is given much credit for improving the economic climate of the entire region.

CONCLUSION:

Regionalism is an issue with many faces. This report has described just a few, and has also confined itself as well to only one corner of Ohio. We believe that there have to be additional creative ideas in our state and around the country which Leagues ought to be sharing. But it is especially important that separate Leagues within Northeast Ohio be encouraged to share information and conduct joint studies and action on potential measures. We hope that a growing number of concurring NEO Leagues will want to play a role in the many-faceted campaign to revive the economy and promote smart growth of Northeast Ohio.

In addition, we have not addressed the possible need for new enabling legislation or incentives at the state level, in order to encourage or even to compel intergovernmental cooperation.

LWVUS President Speaks Out

“Supreme Court Made Tragic Mistake...Undermines Basic Pillar of Democracy”

In response to the recent US Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*, Mary Wilson, national president of the League of Women Voters, issued the following statement, ***“The Supreme Court has made a tragic mistake. Their decision in Citizens United v. FEC is constitutionally irresponsible and will surely bring about an anti-democratic revolution in how we finance elections in this country. (With this decision) ... basic pillars of American democracy have been undermined – that elections should not be corrupted by vast corporate wealth and that the voters should be at the center of our democratic system.”***

In creating a new constitutional right for corporations to spend unlimited amounts of their shareholder’s money to determine the outcome in candidate elections, the Court has unleashed into our elections tremendous sums of money from for-profit corporations that cannot possibly be matched in quantity by contributions from ordinary citizens.

On February 3rd, Wilson testified before a Congressional committee in a hearing entitled *Defining the Future of Campaign Finance in an Age of Supreme Court Activism*. She stated, “After *Citizens United*, we urgently need enhanced disclosure. This is the most basic step toward protecting the role of the voter in making decisions in elections.” “It is now possible for corporations to secretly provide funds that another corporation uses to intervene in an election through independent expenditures. This is not acceptable. The League of Women Voters supports strong disclosure requirements for both those who receive election funds and those who provide such funds.”

From LWVUS website

Background: In *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5-4, that corporate funding of independent political broadcasts in candidate elections cannot be limited, because doing so would be in noncompliance with the First Amendment. The decision resulted from the non-profit corporation *Citizens United's* case before the court regarding whether the group’s film that was critical of political candidate Hillary Clinton could be defined as a campaign advertisement under the 2002 [Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act](#), commonly known as the McCain-Feingold Act. -The Court’s decision struck down a provision of the McCain-Feingold Act that banned for-profit and not-for-profit corporations and unions from broadcasting “electioneering communications” in the 30 days before a presidential primary and in the 60 days before the general elections. The decision upheld the requirements for disclaimer and disclosure by sponsors of advertisements, and the ban on direct contributions from corporations or unions to candidates. The LWVUS filed an amicus brief in this case.



**Make Plans For
Statehouse Day
April 14
9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

Tallmadge
League of Women Voters
PO Box 435
Tallmadge, Ohio 44278

Officers

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Vice President Nancy Treichler
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Appointed Board

Marlene Fire
Susan Schunk
Sue Yatsu

Ex Officio Members

Kim Marfy –Membership Chair
Tammy Shomo – Past President

LWV of Ohio Liaison

Ardith Keck

The Board of the Tallmadge League of Women Voters meets on the first Saturday of the month. General membership meetings are on the third Thursday of the month September thru November and February thru April. December and May meetings are held on Saturday. No meetings are scheduled in June, July, August or January.

THE VOTER

Published monthly by the Tallmadge League of Women Voters

Contributions to our local THE VOTER are always welcome. Please e-mail articles by the 30th of each month to Nancy Wack @ njtpw@yahoo.com

We're on the Web!!
For more information, visit
www.lwvtallmadge.org

Board of Education Update

By Valorie Prulhiere
President. Tallmadge BOE



Happy New Year! Thanks to the positive outcome at the polls, the schools are starting the new year with a positive energy. The success of the levy campaign was a prime example of a city uniting for a common goal. **The Board is grateful for this League's endorsement and advocacy.**

2010 has brought changes to the Board.

After a decade of selfless service to the schools, **Thom Craig** has ended his participation on the Board. During Thom's tenure the schools achieved the rating of "Excellent with Distinction" from the State. **Amy Goodson-Beal** resigned from the Board due to a change in her residency. Brad Croskey was elected to the Board in November. After a community wide search, **Timothy Bryan was appointed to the Board on February 3rd**. Tim is Chief of Staff at Hiram College and brings a variety of strengths to the table: budgeting, strategic planning, employee relations and operations. Tim's wife, Jackie, is a 5th grade teacher in Barberton . Their son, Alex, is a freshman at THS.

A new academic program is beginning with the new semester. **A dual credit Honors Physics course will enable THS students to simultaneously earn 1 required science credit AND 5 college credits.** Grant monies are underwriting the cost. The course will be taught by a current THS science teacher who is also qualified as an adjunct professor at KSU.

Mark Your Calendar for Remainder of League Year

February 18	Regionalism in NE Ohio	6:30 p.m.	Tallmadge Library
March 6	Board Meeting	9:00 a.m.	Tallmadge Library
March 18	Cuy.Valley Ntl. Park	6:30 p.m.	TBA
April 3	Board Meeting	9:30 a.m.	Tallmadge Library
April 15	"Iron Jawed Angels"	6:30 p.m.	Tallmadge H.S.
May 8	Board Meeting & Annual Lunch/Meeting	11:00 a.m.	River Brasserie
		11:30 a.m.	(formerly LeFever's)