

*To the wrongs that need resistance  
To the right that needs assistance  
To the future in the distance  
Give yourselves*

*Carrie Chapman Catt*



November 26, 2012

Dear Supporter of the League,

As we reflect on our recent election successes and the challenges still in front of us, we must ask: What is the **future in the distance**? What lies ahead for California and our democracy?

Since joining the League in 2000, I've been privileged to work with women and men who resist wrong, assist right, and give the very best of themselves. In the coming year, the League of Women Voters of California will rely on this grassroots force for good as we implement ambitious new plans. These plans embody our legacy while positioning us to lead the charge for a better California.

Since our founding, we've championed the power of collective decision making. This model is dependent upon empowerment of the grassroots, both within the League and in our larger community. We must challenge ourselves to broaden our outreach and build deeper relationships with communities traditionally marginalized in civic life. Together we are creating an environment where every Californian is vitally connected to our democracy. **We need your continued commitment to make this future a reality. Will you support our work with a generous gift today?**

### **Victory at the Polls! Onward into 2013!**

On November 6, all three of our priority ballot measure campaigns succeeded! **The passage of Prop 30** will ensure California can invest in education and protect vital services—helping keep the California Dream alive for the next generation. In 2013, we will launch a **California Budget Education Project**—designed to educate voters on the impact of our state budget process and increase voter willingness to explore strong, meaningful reform.

We are proud to have been a leader and public face in the No on 32 Campaign. Our television spot and statewide mailer were instrumental in voters recognizing Prop 32 as sham “political



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1107 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 300 • Sacramento, CA 95814-3608 • 916 442.7215 • [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org)

reform” designed by corporate special interests to silence their opponents while leaving their own influence virtually unrestrained. **The defeat of Prop 32** was a great victory and now we must continue the fight to reduce the influence of money in California politics. Next year, we’ll be pushing the state legislature to secure concrete **campaign finance reform**.

In a strong showing of support for the Citizens Redistricting Commission’s maps, the voters **approved Prop 40**. Their firm endorsement is a testament to the **independent redistricting process** we fought so hard for. Research we’ve commissioned (sponsored by the Irvine Foundation) will soon be released as an inspiration to Leagues across the country who long for their own fair, transparent redistricting reforms.

### **A Growing Electorate = a Growing Democracy**

This year Californians watched as states across the nation battled aggressive voter suppression efforts, but here at home justice and inclusion won out! After years of grassroots and legislative effort, we were successful in securing online voter registration and same-day registration—although the latter will not go into effect until 2016. Since September, over 544,000 Californians have registered to vote online; 30 percent are under the age of 26. We know that creative new tactics like this are essential if we want disenfranchised groups, like youth, to have a voice. Building off this success we will continue to **fight voter suppression** and ensure every citizen has a voice.

Voters need trustworthy, user-friendly information—and they need it at their fingertips. Using technology to reach the 21st century voter with customizable content in flexible formats empowers a diverse and healthy democracy. We upgraded League Easy Web, SmartVoter.org, CAvotes.org, EasyVoterGuide.org, and LWVC.org to display more content, simplify navigation, and make it easy to share content with local Leagues, social media, and partner sites on your cell phone, touch pad, and laptop. Research and writing of the revised **Guide to California Government** will continue; both the print and multi-media e-book versions of this esteemed resource will be available in the coming year.

### **Power through Partnership**

Perhaps our greatest success this year was the creation of new partnerships that amplify our impact and connect us with new communities. These partnerships need additional support to succeed statewide, so we’re putting more resources into communication and collaboration with local Leagues. This includes a new statewide communication committee and our **One Nation** project to provide grants to local Leagues for outreach to the Muslim community. Responding to the need for local League advocacy experts, next year we are launching the **Grassroots Lobby Corps** to support local Leagues’ advocacy efforts and increase our effectiveness on statewide legislation.

We’re also reaching outside the League to trusted experts who can help move our mission forward. With the California Channel, we are producing professional videos such as the 11 California proposition videos based on our trusted *Pros & Cons* publication. Responding to requests from members and the public, we are now **partnering with Maplight to provide**

**Votersedge.org campaign finance data. Cal Nonprofit's *Vote with Your Mission and PollVault*** have started disseminating our clear, succinct, and unbiased voter education materials, including the *Pros & Cons* and the *In Depth*, as well as *Easy Voter Guides* in five languages.

The California League's impact is great and continues to grow. Our leadership in the Federal Role in Public Education Study, Campaign Finance Task Force, and at the LWVUS convention influences the trajectory of national policy. Many California League members and staff are asked by the LWVUS to serve as collaborators and consultants on advocacy, technology, fundraising, membership, and the future of the League. Our own Susan Wilson, of the Redding Area League, serves on the board of the LWVUS.

### **Which Way Forward?**

What is our *Future in the Distance*? Our future is one where the influence of big money can't silence opposition or sway an election; where our citizenry votes in record numbers and our electorate mirrors the changing face of California; and where transparency and accountability are synonymous with government.

This future won't be easily won. Success requires we take the long view and invest accordingly to build our capacity, expand our impact, and elevate the League's reputation across California.

**With your continued support we can tackle the critical issues facing our state and bring our vision of the future closer to being a reality.**

**Thank you for leading the way** and ensuring the LWVC continues to grow and thrive.

Sincerely,



Jennifer A. Waggoner  
President, League of Women Voters of California

*P.S. I want to share with you the words of Lou Paulson, Chairman of the No on 32 Campaign: "League of Women Voters of California proved once again to be an invaluable ally in our campaign against the deceptive Proposition 32. The League and its members were on the front lines of the campaign, appearing in our news conferences and TV ads, authoring opinion pieces in newspapers around the state, hosting tele-town hall meetings, and making the case directly to voters that Prop 32 was not what its proponents claimed it to be. We look forward to working with the League in the future to enact real reforms that will make our political system work for all Californians."*

- *Over 3,600,000 people watched the ad on TV*
- *Over 450,000 people saw our Facebook post*

***We couldn't have this kind of impact in California without you, and by making a gift today you are helping ensure we can have this level of leadership in the year ahead.***