

**Women's Legislative Roundtable
4TH Floor East Conference Room
January 27, 2016**

Carol Noggle, LWV-VA 2nd Vice President and Legislative Coordinator, opened the meeting at 8:30 am. and welcomed everyone who came down to the General Assembly for the Roundtable in the extreme cold weather.

Delegate Sam Rasoul [D - 11th] was the first legislator to speak. He said, "Today is Health Advocacy Day. He said he had a bill that would substantially reform continuing education volunteer care. **HB319** is a bill that authorizes the Department of Health to have written agreements with health care providers for low income individuals that provide health care services without compensation to be able to use their service to satisfy continuing education requirements. This bill passed in the House on 2/2/16 in Block vote [98 Y - 0 N]

Del. Rasoul has another bill, **HB1035**, which is a plan to help people save private funds in order to defray the medical and health related expenses in their later years. He said he would like people to be able to start saving at any age towards a health plan and get tax benefits. This bill was continued to 2017 in Finance by voice vote.

Delegate Ben L. Cline [R - 24th]

Del. Cline said, "In 2002 we tried to hear every bill. Now there are too many bills that are "tabled" and too many votes not recorded." He said he has a bill **HB1315** that LWV members will like. This bill requires that all legislation, introduced by a member of either the House or the Senate, be considered by the committee or subcommittee that it is referred to, and receive a recorded vote. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Rules.[1/ 21/16]. He finished his talk saying, "This is a good government bill. With your help we can get lots of support on both sides."

Delegate Vivian E. Watts D - 39th]

Del. Watts said she wanted to follow up on Del. Cline's bill. She repeated that too many bills get killed in subcommittees. Another idea she said she had, that would improve the chances of a bill being able to move on from subcommittee to full committee, is to change the number of votes required to a smaller percentage, for example 20 % instead of 50 %.

Del. Watts announced that an important event happening this day, [the 27th] was a chance for Justice Jane Marum Roush to have a hearing in the Courts committee. Former LWV-VA President, Anne Sterling thanked Del. Watts for, " spearheading the movement for allowing Roush to be heard. " Delegate Watts talked about Justice Roush's credentials and experience. She said that Justice Roush had 12 years experience in corporate law practice and 22 year's experience as a judge on the Fairfax Bench. Del. Watts explained, " Roush was put on the Fairfax Bench because we didn't have anyone else with as much experience. " Finally she added that Fairfax has a large number of corporations and a large percentage of the population in Virginia [18%] and yet does not have any representation on the Virginia Supreme Court.

Delegate Mark D. Sickles [D - 43rd]

Del. Sickles started by sharing that this is his 13th year on the Privileges and Elections Committee. He said, “ We struggle to do a lot of things that the League of Women Voters would like.” He continued, ‘ If you’re concerned about fraud , why not let everyone go to vote early so that there is time to check on I.D.s.?’ Then he added , We want to make sure that most people have the opportunity to vote. We want to make it easier to vote, for example, we could change the day to vote.

Del. Sickles stated that the main issue during the last election was the change to paper ballots which was done in an effort to eliminate the fear and risk of fraud with computers. He said he hoped that the March 1 Primary Election would go well.

He said that party loyalty registration is now paid for by the state instead of the party. He asked what the League position was on this. Carol Noggle said the LWV position is against having party registration.

Del. Sickles is Co-Patron of the bill **HB136** for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in Virginia.

He is on the Appropriations Committee and said, “ We are working a lot on appropriations. The Governor has said yes to a lot of people.”

He is on the Appropriations Subcommittee for Transportation. He made the following comments on the subject of transportation;

“ I’m surprised that Virginia has as good transit as it does considering how anti transit people are.

We want the B.R.T. [Bus Rapid Transit]

We want heavy rail in the future.

We need to get the Metro System fixed.”

The no.1 transportation project for the future is to build another tunnel across the Potomac in Arlington.”

Some additional bills;

HB185 This bill raises the threshold for reckless driving for speeding in excess of 80 mph to 85 mph , if the applicable speed limit is 70 mph.

HB1029 Critical National Security Language Grant Fund & Program

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am.