

VOTER REGISTRATION MORATORIUM
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What: At its March 2006 Board meeting, your state board unanimously established a moratorium on voter registration activities sponsored by local Leagues.

Why: Chapter 2005-277 amending the Florida Voter Registration Act, that became law effective 1/1/06, creates potential financial and criminal liabilities for the League and its members as a potential 3rd Party Voter Registration group.

Background:

- LWVF began monitoring the implementation of HB 1567, the legislation authorizing Chapter 2005-277, after the end of the 2005 session. This bill passed the last day of the 2005 Legislative Session catching all good government groups by surprise. These 3rd party voter registration requirements by-passed committee scheduling and hearings.
- As early as the final issue of *Capitol Report* for the 2005 session and at Convention 2005 in May, LWVF shared concerns about the impact upon the League of this new legislation with local Leagues.
- The Election Laws section of the 2006 Legislative Priorities packet distributed in the LWVF November Presidents Mailing (and repeated in the December Presidents mailing) included information about HB1567 as well as the Vice President's action report therein for September and October 2005..
- Even though the law was effective January 1, 2006 and implementing rules still were not forthcoming by that date, the LWVF continued to work in good faith with the Secretary of State and urged local Leagues to likewise work with county Supervisors of Elections in the Get out the Vote partnerships inaugurated in February 2006.
- Irrespective of multiple appearances by the LWVF Vice President at public hearings hosted by the Secretary of State's office since summer 2005, to date, the Division of Election has neither created in entirety nor clarified implementing rules regarding 3rd Party Voter Registrations for Chapter 2005-277 of the Florida Voter Registration Act. (The last of 4 hearings was March 13, 2006)

Next Steps:

- Continue the moratorium of League sponsored voter registration activities statewide until such time as the impact of the law on the League and its members is quantified.
- Issue a press release about the moratorium when LWVF can announce a plan of action in addition to the establishment of the moratorium.
- Direct any internal League questions concerning this moratorium that are not answered by this memo or the materials referenced herein to your local League consultant.
- Direct any external questions concerning this moratorium to the LWVF President.