

1. Study of Emerging Media and Internet-Related Issues proposed by LWVCT Board

Background

After the LWVCT spearheaded a successful resolution supporting “Net Neutrality” at last spring’s LWVUS Convention, the Connecticut League has become aware of several media and Internet-related issues that are now moving to the state legislative arena.

We’d like to keep up with the changing media and technology landscape.

LWVCTEF has authorized a state-level Interim study of several issues that will affect Connecticut residents — access to the Internet, the availability of public access television and public affairs programming, and the way in which Connecticut residents receive their news — who owns what media in this state.

So far in the 2007 state legislative session, there have been at least 10 bills introduced that would have been appropriate for the LWVCT to comment on if we had had positions on emerging media and Internet-related issues. Depending upon the findings of the study group, Connecticut Leagues may be able to take a more active role in future legislation relating to media and communications.

Scope

Study topics will include Net Neutrality, community access television, media ownership/consolidation, and universal Internet access in Connecticut.

Study begins in April 2007 and continues through October 2007.

Materials for local League concurrence with the study group’s conclusions as well as consultation from study group members will be made available to local Leagues during November/December 2007 — after completion of the study.

Study group membership is open to any interested League member.

Membership

Jara Burnett, LWVCT President; Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Communications VP; Pua Ford, LWVCT Secretary; Christine Horrigan, Government Director. Local League members are encouraged to join the committee.

Time Frame/Process

March/April 2007

Board approves study plan

Semi-monthly meetings—telephone conferencing or in-person or as needed.

Written records of meetings and research

May/June 2007

Progress Report to LWVCT Board and to LWVCT Convention

October/November 2007

Completion of study and concurrence materials sent to local Leagues

January/ February 2008

Member Review of concurrence materials

LWVCT Board evaluates whether concurrence achieved

Resources

Research & Personal Contacts

Printed and online materials

CT DPUC , The Connecticut Network (CT-N), The CT Attorney General, Citizens Cable Councils

Telecommunications companies

Relevant LWVCT Positions/LWVUS & CT Principles

Principles: Support for individual liberties in The Constitution, citizens’ right to informed participation in government.

Resolution: 2007 Net Neutrality Resolution.

LWVUS Position: Citizen’s Right to Know.