

# AAUW-NYS GOTV Counterpart Newsletter Get Out The Vote!



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## **The NYS Congressional primary is June 26!**

The League of Women Voters has published Voter Guides for those NYS Districts who have a Primary next week. Work with your local League to distribute copies to local media and voters. If there is no local League in your area, you can find out more from their website for NYS at: <http://onyourballot.vote411.org/race-index.do?c=10236874>

## **There are primaries in these Congressional Districts in NYS on June 26:**

1. US Senate - Republican Party Primary
2. New York Congressional District 5
3. New York Congressional District 6
4. New York Congressional District 7
5. New York Congressional District 8
6. New York Congressional District 9
7. New York Congressional District 13
8. New York Congressional District 16
9. US Congress, District 17 - Republican Party Primary
10. US Congress, District 18 - Democratic Party Primary
11. US Congress, District 19 - Democratic Party Primary
12. US Congress, District 21 - Republican Party Primary
13. US Congress, District 22 - Republican Party Primary
14. US Congress, District 27 - Republican Party Primary
15. US Congress, District 23 - Democratic Party Primary

In addition, don't forget the state-wide Republican primary for the junior US Senate Seat currently held by Kirsten Gillibrand.

Remember that in these Guides, all statements and videos are posted directly by the candidate, unedited by the League of Women Voters and do not express the views of the League. The League never supports or opposes candidates or political parties. These guides (and others to follow) are part of the Vote411.org project. More information about this project at: <http://www.vote411.org/home.php>.

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## 2012 Congressional Maps:

You can find the **new district lines for your Congressional district** by going to the **2012 New York Congressional Maps** of the New York State Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment (LATFOR).

<http://www.latfor.state.ny.us/maps/?sec=2012c>

There is a map listing all the towns and counties in the new district, as well as a breakdown of the population information for the district.

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## What is your branch doing to Educate Voters and Register them for November?

### Mississippi AAUW Member Targets Students for Voter Registration

Beverly Joyce, a member of the Columbus, MS AAUW branch has voter registration drives scheduled throughout the summer at Mississippi University for Women. She had her first drive last Friday for in-coming transfer students and has already scheduled a second drive to target incoming freshmen. She also has more drives scheduled in July. Beverly's drives are just some of the fantastic work being done by AAUW members nationwide to turn out the women's vote.

To have your or your branch's events featured in Washington Update or at [www.aauwaction.org](http://www.aauwaction.org), email them to [advocacy@aauw.org](mailto:advocacy@aauw.org). Share your efforts with AAUW and with NYS!

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## What at Stake for Women (and their families) in 2012:

### Issue Updates:

#### Steeper penalties on domestic violence await Gov. Cuomo's signature

The state Senate and Assembly passed legislation Tuesday intended to protect victims of domestic violence and establish stronger criminal penalties for those who commit acts of domestic violence.

#### Highlights of the domestic violence legislation include:

- Establishing a domestic violence fatality review team to examine factors involved in deaths related to domestic violence;
- Expanding factors for bail consideration including prior violations of orders of protection;
- Creating a new felony-level crime of aggravated family offense, where the defendant and victim are members of the same family or household;
- Elevating the crime of harassment from a violation to a Class A misdemeanor, where the defendant and victim are members of the same family or household; and

- Prohibiting a person who was served with an order of protection or charged in the death of a decedent from controlling the disposition of the person's remains.

The governor is expected to sign the measure.

<http://tinyurl.com/87yfpf7>

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## **'When Workers Work Sick, It's Unhealthy for All of Us': New York's Battle for Paid Sick Leave**

An estimated 1.4 to 1.6 million working New Yorkers have no paid leave whatsoever, for sickness or vacation. Workers who are most in need of paid sick leave are low-wage workers, women and people of color, according to Joe Dinkin of the Working Families Party New York, a paid sick leave (PSL) legislation supporter. A Community Service Society [report](#) published last year shows that 64% of low-income workers in New York do not have a single day of PSL, compared to 35% of higher-income workers. Among those lower-income workers, mothers (70%), who often must take care of sick children, and Latinos (76%) were found to be more likely to lack PSL.

<http://www.alternet.org/story/155799/>

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## **NYS Reproductive Health Act ([S. 2844](#) / [A. 6112](#))**

Last month, the **Bipartisan Pro-Choice Legislative Caucus** held a roundtable on the **Reproductive Health Act ([S. 2844](#) / [A. 6112](#))**. I co-chair the caucus, and passage of the Reproductive Health Act is one of my top priorities for the final weeks of the legislative session. The roundtable offered an opportunity for legislators and experts to discuss the reasons we need the Act on the books, as well as strategies for building support. I am proud that the Caucus has brought together members of both houses and both parties to stand firm on access to reproductive health services in New York State.

In 1970, New York led the way for the reproductive rights movement and became the first state to provide broad legal protection for a woman's right to abortion. Unfortunately, our laws are now outdated, and we still regulate abortion as a potential crime instead of as an issue of public health and medical practice. Seven other states have already passed versions of the Reproductive Health Act, and it is time for New York to reclaim its place as a leader in the development of progressive reproductive health policies.

The Reproductive Health Act would also fix a troubling gap in New York's law and ensure that when abortions are necessary late in a pregnancy to protect the woman's health, upon advice of her doctors, she can make her own personal, private health care decision without worrying that it will be treated as a criminal matter. While some have claimed that the Act creates an unfettered right to abortion, in fact it maintains the current restrictions on abortions after 24 weeks, simply adding an exception in cases where the health of the woman is endangered.

Abortion opponents have made a number of other inaccurate claims about the Reproductive Health Act, including that it will require health care providers who receive state funding to provide abortions. In fact, the bill does nothing of the sort. It specifically states that nothing contained in the new law alters any existing legal or regulatory protections – state or federal – that permit a health care provider to refrain from providing abortions due to the provider's religious or moral beliefs. The Act also affirms New Yorkers' right to use (or refuse) contraception, regardless of what politicians in Congress decide.

Without a doubt, access to reproductive health care is under attack across the country. In 2011, more than a thousand provisions to restrict or ban reproductive health care services – including basic contraception – were introduced across the country. The U.S. House of Representatives held eight votes on choice-related issues (the most since 2000). So far, anti-choice House leaders have lined up five separate bills with anti-abortion provisions for floor action this session. By passing the Reproductive Health Act, New York can help stem this anti-woman agenda.

In his State of the State message, Governor Cuomo stated his support for passage of the Reproductive Health Act this year. I will be working with the Caucus and advocates to keep up the pressure for action on this critical issue.

From New York 26th District State Senator **Liz Krueger's** *Standing Up and Speaking Out* Community Bulletin for June 2012

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**Action Alert Opportunity! On behalf of the [FamilyPlanningAdvocates.org](http://FamilyPlanningAdvocates.org)**

### **Today is Planned Parenthood Call-In Day for the Reproductive Health Act**

We need your help **today**. This is our last chance to get the Reproductive Health Act passed before the Legislature recesses. There are just four days left in this session for Governor Cuomo to prioritize passage of this important women's health bill—a measure that seven out of 10 New York voters support. We need Governor Cuomo to take a leadership role in making the Reproductive Health Act law, so it's critical that he hear from you right away.

**Call NOW.**

Simply call the number below. Whether you speak with someone directly or get voice mail, convey the importance of passing the Reproductive Health Act this week.  
Gov. Andrew Cuomo's office: (518) 474-8390

Here is an example of a short message you can use, or personalize it as you see fit.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I live in \_\_\_\_ (city/town) \_\_\_\_. I am one of the seven in 10 New York voters who support the Reproductive Health Act. I am calling to urge you to prioritize passage of the Reproductive Health Act in this legislative session. Thank you! Many thanks for your help in impressing upon the Governor how important it is that he take action on behalf of New York women's health.

- Learn more about the **Reproductive Health Act** at: <http://tinyurl.com/7876jr4>.
  - For more information about the FPAs, visit [www.familyplanningadvocates.org](http://www.familyplanningadvocates.org)
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## Hydro-fracking Update

### **Cuomo Said to Want to Limit Fracking to 5 New York Counties**

Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Steuben and Tioga counties

<http://tinyurl.com/7gpy6nw>

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### **The 10 Richest -- and Poorest -- School Districts in America**

The average income of Americans differs by state, county, city and ZIP code, obviously. At each level, the amount residents earn every year impacts available government services, health and overall quality of life. This is especially true when education is examined by school district.

24/7 Wall St. analyzed Census data from 2006 through 2010 for each of the more than 10,000 unified school districts in the United States. Wealth appears to have an outsized effect on education at the local level. Residents that live in wealthy school districts have among the best schools in the nation based on graduation rates, test scores and independent ratings of academic success. Children who attend these schools are more likely to earn a college degree than the national average. To illustrate the influence wealth and poverty have on educational attainment, 24/7 Wall St. examined the wealthiest and poorest school districts in the country.

Nearly all of the wealthiest school districts are within a short distance of one of the richest cities in the country. Other than one suburb of Portland, Ore., all of the wealthiest school districts are commuter towns of New York City, located in either Fairfield County, Conn., or **Westchester County, N.Y.** The poorest districts are rural communities scattered all over the country, from Ohio and Kentucky to Texas and Mississippi.

Compared to the national median income, the families in the most well-off districts are incredibly wealthy. In the 10 richest school districts, median incomes ranged from \$175,766 to \$238,000. By comparison, the national median household income from 2006 to 2010 was \$51,914. Among the 10 wealthiest districts, between 48% and 64% earned \$200,000. Nationally, only 5.4% of households earned more than that.

Median income in the poorest school districts was just as extreme. Annual median incomes in those districts ranged from \$16,607 to \$18,980, well below \$22,314, the national poverty line for a household of four. In San Perlita Independent School District in Texas, one of the poorest districts in the country, 30% of residents earned less than \$10,000 each year.

According to the National Center of Education Statistics, all of the wealthiest school districts spend far more per pupil than the national average. The Darien, Conn., public school district spends \$15,433 per student per year, more than 50% above the U.S. average of \$10,591. The Edgemont, N.Y., public school spends more than \$25,000 per student annually. Barbourville, Ky., the poorest school district, spends less than one-third that amount.

Not surprisingly, the richest schools are considered better than the poorest schools, based on measures used by the media to rank academic success. All of the richest school districts were included in the 2012 U.S. News & World Report Best High Schools list, except for Bronxville, which was ranked fourth in Newsweek's Top 20 High Schools in the Northeast. U.S. News based its rankings on state test scores and college readiness, while Newsweek's methodology included graduation rates, college acceptance and AP exams. The poorest school districts did not fare as well. Only two were included in the U.S. News rankings.

**On a national level, nearly half of all property tax revenue goes to public school funding.** As a result, most districts rely heavily on local funding. In the richest school districts, up to 90% of the school district budget is from residents' taxes.

Read more at: <http://tinyurl.com/7rshzcy>.

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## Reauthorization of the Farm Bill

The 2012 Farm Bill, which should be reauthorized by Congress this year (but current gridlock may forestall it until after the election), will set the course of federal agriculture and food assistance programs for the next five years. The Farm Bill has a major impact on farmers, consumers, rural communities, and the 40-plus million people receiving food assistance.

The last Farm Bill in 2007 was an extension of the 2002 Farm Security and Investment Act, which cost approximately \$300 billion. About 75 percent of that total went to food assistance. The remaining 25 percent went to conservation, energy, nutrition, education and, most importantly, farm safety-net programs, including payments to farmers and crop insurance.

Here's an in depth look at a little-known process by which **wealth is transferred away from local areas** via the SNAP program:

## **Are Corporations and Big Banks Making a Windfall From Food Stamps?**

By Christopher D. Cook and Michele Simon, AlterNet

Perhaps you've heard: At a time of record need for food assistance among America's poor, the U.S. Senate is poised to cut roughly \$4.5 billion from food stamps, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which 46 million Americans -- one in seven of us -- rely upon.

While Congress is obsessed with saving money by cutting assistance to our poorest citizens, there's been nary a peep about how major banks and food corporations profit from food stamps, and what that means for recipients and the rest of the taxpaying public.

With minimal oversight or accountability, banks such as JPMorgan Chase administer SNAP in each state, reaping big contracts that reveal little about how they turn a profit off these public benefits.

Read more at: <http://tinyurl.com/d9f4gvm>

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Another look at the rich legacy of social activism by America's foremost First lady!

### **Why We Fight for Democracy in the Workplace**

**Eleanor Roosevelt** understood that labor union fights are about giving people a voice -- not about partisan politics.

<http://www.alternet.org/story/155842/>

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### **New Report on Title IX at 40**

**Saturday marks the 40th anniversary of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972**, which prohibits discrimination in educational settings on the basis of sex, and while the landmark legislation has done much to level the playing field in academics and athletics, there remains work to be done. That's what the National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education, an alliance of more than three dozen national organizations including the American Association of University Women and the American Civil Liberties Union, says in [a lengthy new report](#) analyzing the state of **Title IX at 40**.

There's still room for improvement in how universities and the government apply and enforce Title IX in athletics, sexual harassment, the STEM fields and other areas, the report says. But it also identifies a handful of recommendations that span all the areas covered by Title IX.

In short, they are:

- improved public awareness of Title IX with active education efforts on the part of all stakeholders, including advocacy groups and the federal government;
- continued and enhanced enforcement by the U.S. Education Department's Office for Civil Rights, including compliance reviews in areas not currently monitored, such as the treatment of pregnant and parenting students;
- a requirement by Congress for schools and colleges to provide "enhanced" education data collection and reporting, including more detailed cross-tabulation by campus sub-groups;
- better identification, training, communication and transparency regarding Title IX coordinators; and restored federal funding to state education agencies for gender equity work, including funding state Title IX coordinators and programs and for technical assistance with compliance.

Download the report at: <http://www.ncwge.org/PDF/TitleIXat40.pdf>

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