

## LWVH 2014 STUDIES ON BALLOT ACCESS AND TERM LIMITS

At the NYS LWV convention in spring 2013, the delegates voted to conduct three studies of interest to league members. The subjects were term limits, ballot access and state constitutional conventions. The league's involvement emanated from a grass roots program and planning from this convention. (see *The Voter* article Nov-Dec 2013). These issues are not theoretical; they affect the way we are governed; impact the range of candidates who run for office; control the ability of voters to cast ballots in primaries; and can open the door to corrupt practices in our election system. Tonight we are going to discuss two issues: the primary process (including Fusion Voting and Wilson-Pakula) and term limits.

A number of local leagues suggested that we review LWVNY's existing position which opposes term limits for state wide officials and state legislators. Based on their expressed interest the NYS League Board recommended that we conduct this study and the delegates at the convention voted to do so. The ballot access study was not recommended by the LWV Board but the delegates at the convention requested that it be considered and it passed. As a result state locals (leagues) are considering both issues (term limits and ballot access) which impact on state government. (see *The Voter* May-June 2014)

The term limits issue is pretty straight forward: should we cap the number of years our state elected officials can serve? We on the East End are not unfamiliar with terms limits since they are in effect in the Town of Southampton and the Suffolk County legislature.

The ballot access study is multi-faceted. It explores cross endorsements (fusion voting), and a unique NY Statute termed "Wilson-Pakula", both of which impact the way candidates' names appear on the primary ballot.

The study also considers rules governing which voters are eligible to vote in the primaries. For example when Suffolk County Legislator Jay Schneiderman decided to change his party affiliation, he could not vote for himself in a primary run by his new party because NY State election laws says voters must change their party enrollment 30 days prior to the general election preceding the primary they wish to vote in. A section of the NYS election law (W-P) allows a candidate who wishes to run for office on a party ballot other than their own designated party to do so with the permission of the party officials.

### **This evening we will cover two issues**

- **The primary process;** The presenters Carol Mellor and Estelle Gellman. **Fusion Voting /Wilson-Pakula** : The presenters will be Judy Samuelson and Anne Marshall.
- **Term limits:** The presenters will be Judi with the PROS and Barbara McClancy with the CONS

The presenters will discuss the definitions of the different terms as well as the pros and cons. There will be time for questions after each presentation.

See [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org) to obtain further background information as well as links for other information sources.

Our Local league is having a consensus meeting in November for our members to vote on these issues which will then be send to the NYS league. All other NY leagues participating in studies will also send in their votes and a position will be established.