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2010 Session of the General Assembly Women's Roundtable Report

Legislative Forum

*meets every Wednesday during session 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. 3rd floor conference room West
Notes by Amy Burgett of Richmond*

February 3, 2010

Lynn Gordon, 1st Vice President of the LWV-VA convened the forum in the absence of, President , Olga Hernandez. She briefly explained the Format of the WRT to those assembled.

Marilyn Puris, an advocate for the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) presented the aims of the AARP:

- Promote economic security- encouraging small business to offer retirement benefits, etc.,
- Strengthen the protections for Seniors against elder financial abuse, and the reporting of same to the Department of Social Services (DSS), by educating bank personnel to be alert for signs of elder fraud,
- Work to stop predatory lending,(i.e. car title loans) by capping interest at 36%
- Work for health and supportive services to enable Seniors to enjoy life in the least restrictive settings
 - By supporting policies to increase the number of nurse educators
 - Maintain access to long-term care (LTC) services via Medicaid
- Work with the community
 - To improve mobility options such as mass transit, transport services for the elderly and handicapped
 - To insure that community plans consider the impact of rates and services on Seniors

Delegate Vivian Watts, (D, Fairfax) gave the assembly some background information on the way in which the VA Code considers abortions and miscarriage as the same. And therefore, the distinction of services for spontaneous (miscarriage) vs. elective abortion is blurred. Virginia is one of only 9 states that require 2nd & 3rd trimester abortions to be preformed only in hospitals. Bills that require licensure of all health facilities that treat 25 or more abortions annually unnecessarily penalize clinics and offices where women suffering miscarriages are treated. Noting that ultrasound has been less than reliable in determining gestational age, she asked those present to be follow

- **HB1042, Informed consent; includes ultrasound to determine gestation age.** (Patron Byron) At the time of her visit, the bill was being heard for the third time. *On 2/3, the bill passed the House, and sent to the Senate, where it was referred to the Committee of Education and Health.*

Becky Bowers Lanier, a Nurse Practitioner and Lobbyist urged the audience to support the following, which has among its aims to change the relationship between physicians and nurse practitioners from oversight to collaboration

- **SB 263 Nurse practitioners; moves responsibility for licensure and regulation to Board of Nursing** **Nurse practitioners; licensure.** Moves responsibility for licensure and regulation of nurse practitioners from the Boards of Medicine and Nursing jointly to the Board of Nursing. Also, creates the Advisory Board on Nurse Practitioners and removes certain physician supervision requirements.” (Patron Whipple) The bill is in the Senate Committee on Education and Health, subcommittee on Health Licensing.

Ms. Lanier also noted that Prochoice Lobby Day is on February 11, and is being organized by a coalition of groups led by Planned Parenthood of Virginia (PPVA).

Anne Sterling, LWV-VA Legislative Coordinator recognized members of Zeta Phi Beta, present as guests of their Sorority Sister, Senator Yvonne Miller for their annual Zeta Day at the G.A.. **Misti Goodson**, greeted the

WRT and explained that members have assembled for this event from around the state. She noted that the organization is a community service national sorority which has undergraduate and alumni branches statewide.

Ben Greenberg, Virginia Organizing Project (VOP) outlined a list of concerns that VOP and coalition partners are closely watching:

- HB392 (Patron, Lohr), **Vehicles damaged by water**. Increases threshold for reporting water damage from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The bill further provides that if such vehicles are damaged to the extent that they meet the definition of salvage vehicle, they shall be titled as such. The bill has passed the House, and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Transportation.
- SB539 (Patron Newman) **Water-damaged vehicles**. Adds definition of water-damaged vehicles and exempts them from the salvage vehicle exam process. Also adds a \$50 processing fee to the application process.

The result of these bills would permit automobiles with significant water damage to be sold used in Virginia without disclosure that they are water damaged.

- HB735, **Virginia Fair Housing Law; civil penalties for violation**. (Patron Albo) Provides that in a civil action for fair housing violations any civil penalties assessed by a court shall be paid into the State Literary Fund.
- HB681, **Law-enforcement officer; discretion of officer to arrest or issue summons for jailable offense**. (Patron Miller) “Gives a law-enforcement officer discretion to arrest or to issue a summons to a person in his custody for having committed a Class 1 or 2 misdemeanor. Currently, the officer must issue a summons unless the person refuses to cease his criminal activity, is a danger to himself or others, or indicates he will disregard a summons.” Has passed the House, and has been referred to Senate Courts of Justice.
& Companion,
- SB 539, **Discretion of law-enforcement officer to arrest or issue summons for a jailable offense**. (Patron Reynolds) “Gives a law-enforcement officer discretion to arrest or to issue a summons to a person in his custody for having committed a Class 1 or 2 misdemeanor. Currently, the officer must issue a summons unless the person refuses to cease his criminal activity, is a danger to himself or others, or indicates he will disregard a summons.” Now in Senate Courts of Justice.

Delegate Betsy Carr (D, Richmond) introduced herself with apology for not being able to attend WRT regularly due to committee meetings. She noted that she is serving on the House Committees on General Laws, Subcommittee Professional Occupations, and on Transportation. Her office number is 414; Mimi Herington is her Aide, and she welcomed all to stop by. She is especially interested in clarifying the code regarding use of Social Security numbers, and prevention of identity theft. She also is following with interest on Restorative Justice, and alternatives to incarceration.

Delegate Kaye Kory (D, Fairfax) quickly followed suit by noting that the committees to which she has been assigned meet at the time the WRT is convened, she greeted all assembled, and expressed hope that she could join WRT at an upcoming session.

Session adjourned at 9:40 am.