



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS

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House Speaker Sal DiMasi is Keynote Speaker at the League of Women Voters' Annual 'Day on the Hill' on Wednesday, March 19, 2008. Lobbying Day's Focus will be on the Economic, Energy, and Environmental Effects of Casino Gambling and Other Legislative Issues.

House Speaker Sal DiMasi will be the keynote speaker Wednesday, March 19, 2008, when members of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts from across the state gather at the State House for their annual 'Day on the Hill'. The theme for this lobbying day is *Balancing Economics, Energy and the Environment*, a complex but important concept especially in regard to the controversial issue of casino gambling, which takes center stage this week.

Diane Jeffery, President of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, said, "The League is honored that Speaker DiMasi has agreed to address League members about legislative issues, and we are especially eager to hear his comments about the impending vote on whether Massachusetts will permit casino gambling in this state."

Casino gambling has been a critical issue for the League since Governor Patrick announced his intention to file legislation to allow Class 3 gambling in this state, paving the way for casinos. According to Ms. Jeffery, the League has been working tirelessly to educate the public and legislators about the myriad of problems associated with casino gambling,

She explained that although legalizing gambling may appear at first glance to be a "painless" source of badly needed revenue for the Commonwealth, the reality is it would be a disaster that would increase expenses for all taxpayers. Extensive research indicates that for every \$1 received in taxes from casino gambling, it costs taxpayers \$3. Small businesses near large casinos cannot compete with the heavily subsidized restaurants and shops at the casinos, causing many to close.

Casinos strain the infrastructure of a community, and roads and water supplies become overwhelmed.

In addition to the House Speaker, Senator Pam Resor, a long time League member and activist since her early work to hold W.R. Grace accountable for the pollution they caused in her community, will be the featured speaker at the Day on the Hill. Senator Resor has worked on strengthening the hazardous waste

law and on passing "Brownfields" legislation which facilitates redevelopment of urban waste sites, and she was instrumental in the passage of the Rivers Protection Act of 1996 and the Community Preservation Act of 2000. She is well qualified to address the issues of how to balance economics, energy and the environment concerns in the Commonwealth.

The League of Women Voters is a multi-issue organization, and League members will also be briefed on key legislation that deals with health care costs, patient care, mandatory minimum drug sentences, education financing, equitable coverage in annuity policies, safer alternatives to toxic chemicals, and Election Day Registration.

Ms. Jeffery stated, "The League of Women Voters has been advocating on public policy issues since its founding in 1920. Whether it was working on combating air pollution in the 1920s or fighting against casino gambling in 2008, the League has always been a voice for citizens and a force for change."