



**It's Transparent:
League is FOR Open Government!**

Open Government Caucus

Saturday, May 20th

5:00-5:50 PM

Sculptor Room, 3rd Floor



Introductions



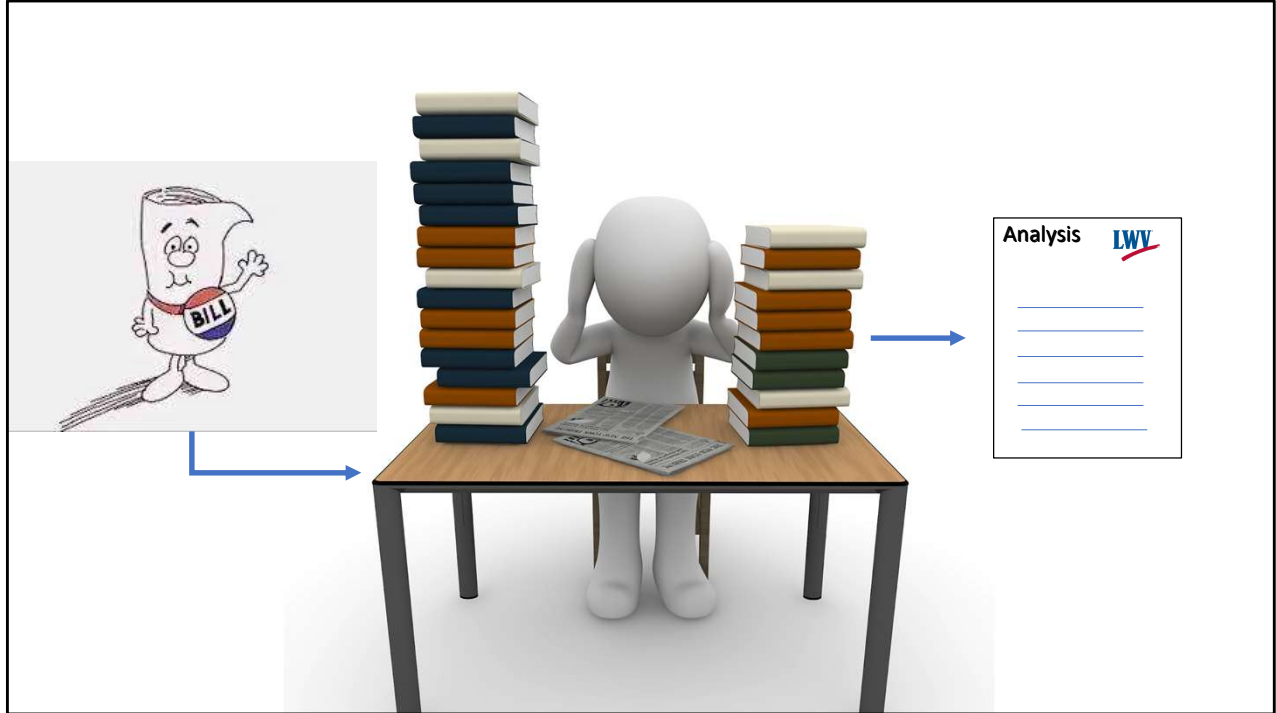
Martha Beattie is Advocacy Team Position Director and Legislative Analyst for Open Government bills.

Helen Hutchison is Advocacy Team Area Director for Government and LWVC Board Member.



Possible topics:

- Discuss the current open government bills being considered for support or opposition.
- Discuss and contribute to analyses of these bills before being considered by LWVC and LWVC Legislative Committee discussion and endorsement.
- Dive into some of the little-understood details of the legislation that governs our work.
- Discuss what's going on in local Leagues; answer questions, provide support, suggestions, ideas



What Does a Legislative Analyst Do, Anyway? -- Nuts and Bolts

Receive bills to be analyzed from the Position Director

Find bill at <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/home.xhtml>

Add bill to your list on the CA Legislative Tracking site

Go to legislator's website for fact sheets, news releases

Fill form from Advocacy Dashboard

Current law, Bill's changes, **Arguments that justify LWV action**

Write support or oppose letter (or support/oppose if amended)

Submit to Legislative Committee for analysis

This is important work for the LWVC – basis of all action is work of analyst. It's also great training for advocacy at the local level. The discipline of reading legislation, finding the positions & arguments that support or oppose it, important part of League work at all levels

Open Government LWV/LWVC Positions Used

LWVC Position on Intergovernmental Relationships

#7 [Support] Active participation by the public in state and local government, which entails the right and responsibility to be informed, to be heard, and to be involved not only in, but beyond elections; and which requires that officials make decisions openly and that they provide broadly publicized, convenient opportunities for participation by the public in the process.

LWVC Vision (in part)

We are a nonpartisan political membership organization, which:
acts after study and member agreement to achieve solutions in the public interest on key community issues at all government levels
builds citizen participation in the democratic process.

Read slide

State Laws

- Brown Act
- Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act
- Grunsky-Burton Open Meeting Act
- California Public Records Act
- California Constitutional Sunshine Amendment



Before I discuss specific bills, we should know about statutes that apply to them.

Brown Act: Applies to legislative bodies of local governments

Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act: Applies to state boards and commissions.

Grunsky-Burton Open Meeting Act: Little-known act that applies to the state legislature and committees.

California Public Records Act: Applies to both state and local bodies, except the legislature which has its own statutes.

California Constitutional Sunshine Amendment: Approved by voters November 2004, strengthening some open meeting statutes to become Constitutional amendments. Applies again to everyone but the legislature but they're covered elsewhere.

Also – lots of local laws – Sunshine ordinances, other noticing requirements

Sampling of Bills Being Tracked

AB-469	California Public Records Act Ombudsperson
AB-558	Fresno County Transportation Authority.
SB-400	Peace officers: confidentiality of records.
SB-544	Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act: teleconferencing.
SB-769	Local Government: Fiscal and financial training.

3 analyzed:

AB-558: changes the composition of Fresno's transportation authority; analyzed at the request of their LWV. This is failing to advance to the Senate but may come back next year.

SB-544: continue pandemic teleconferencing regs indefinitely, both committee members of state bodies and the public can participate remotely; only a staff member at a physical location where public can participate. members disclose others present in their remote location. I suggested support if amended, LWVC Leg Committee has not approved, considering again 6/8. Has passed to Senate.

SB-769: requires local officials to have specified fiscal and financial training on their duties and responsibilities; analysis was requested by Senator Gonzalez. on the Senate floor, 3rd reading.

Others:

AB-469: Currently if request for a public record is denied, must go to court. This bill adds Ombudsman to receive requests for review. On the Senate floor.

SB-400: a minor addition to law regarding confidentiality of peace officer records – agencies that formerly employed a peace officer may disclose the termination for cause of that officer. In 2018 we strongly supported SB 1421 (Skinner) - a huge shift in policy, allowing access to previously completely confidential peace officer personnel records. This is going to Assembly.

Reminder: state legislature is working first on BK Act (revisions based on pandemic experience), a major revision came last year to Brown Act via AB 2449 which went into effect in January.

Also: legislature puts lots of requirements on others – but fewer on themselves



QUESTIONS, DISCUSSION:

Are there transparency and open government issues you are seeing on the local level?

Questions about an Open Government Interest Group?

What would you be interested in doing there?

Would you want to contribute to analyses?

Would you want to research certain topics we might, or should, cover?

Please feel free to raise your own issues.