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www.lwv.org

Contact: Maggie Duncan
202-263-1332
mduncan@lwv.org

***League Urges House Leadership to Seize Opportunity;
Secure DC Voting Rights***

Washington, DC- National League president Mary G. Wilson today issued this statement strongly urging the House leadership and other members of Congress to take immediate action on D.C. voting rights.

“With new leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives, legislation to provide voting rights in the House for citizens of the District of Columbia, H.R. 328, has a real chance of passage on the House floor,” said Wilson. “It is not only in the best interest of D.C. citizens, but in the interest of all Americans, that Congress strike while the iron is hot on this vital equal rights issue.”

“We call on the Speaker and the Majority Leader to schedule the bill soon, before the spring recess and before the House is consumed in other business,” she said.

Citizens of the District of Columbia pay U.S. taxes, fight and die for the U.S. during wartime, and are governed by the laws that Congress passes. And yet they have no voting representation in Congress. They have only a non-voting delegate in the House of Representatives. The League’s Lobby Corps members have been meeting with members of Congress on this issue since the new session began last month. Tomorrow, February 15, is Congress Day 2007, an event in which elected officials and other citizen advocates walk the halls of Congress to educate members of Congress and their staff on the D.C. Voting Rights Act.

“Citizens will be carrying a very strong message to Capitol Hill tomorrow: it is time for Congress to right this wrong,” added Wilson. “Only Congress can ensure that the democracy Americans have espoused and fought for across the globe becomes a reality in the nation’s capital.”

The “D.C. Fair and Equal House Voting Rights Act,” sponsored by Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton (D DC) and Representative Tom Davis (R VA), provides voting representation in the House for DC citizens by increasing the size of the House by two seats – one for D.C. and the other for the state of Utah, which is entitled to the next seat by size of population. This balanced approach provides voting rights for District citizens without upsetting the partisan balance of the House.

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.