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RESTORING FORMER FELON RIGHTS IS SUBJECT OF
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS MEETING MARCH 19

NAPLES, February 15—The League of Women Voters of Collier County will hear on March 19 about the effort to restore civil and voting rights for former felons and the fact that Florida is only one of three states in the U.S. that does not automatically restore these rights.

Dr. Howard Simon, Executive Director of the ACLU of Florida and a member of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition, will address the group at 12:30 p.m. at the Norris Center in Naples. The League of Women Voters Florida is one of almost 40 members of the non-partisan Florida Rights Restoration Coalition that was formed in 2003.

“Presently former felons in Florida need to be granted clemency by the authority of the Governor and the Executive Clemency Board (Cabinet) and must go through a complicated process that takes years and doesn’t guarantee rights restoration,” said Chris Straton, president of the League of Women Voters of Collier County.

“The loss of rights includes the right to vote as well as the right to run for office, serve on a jury or qualify for certain state licenses necessary for many jobs, including some in construction and medical fields,” Straton added.

Dr. Simon, who has led the ACLU in Florida since 1997 after serving as the Executive Director in Michigan for 23 years, will discuss the efforts of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition and ways in which local Leagues might provide support.

The public is invited to participate in a buffet luncheon at noon, preceding the rights restoration program. Cost is \$15 for members, \$20 for non-members; call the League at 239-263-4656 by 5 p.m. Thursday, March 15, for reservations.

For more information, visit www.lwvcolliercounty.org.