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## What will a lieutenant gov do?

BY ANNE MAIESE

For the first time, New Jersey voters will select a lieutenant governor along with a governor in November, but many are unaware or confused about the role the lieutenant governor will play. Soon candidates for governor will announce their picks — and speculation abounds — but not much has been said about the responsibilities and powers of a lieutenant governor.

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey is concerned about the lieutenant governor's responsibilities, which were undefined in the amendment, as well as the fiscal impact of having another executive officer.

The main job of the lieutenant governor is to fill in when the governor is absent or cannot complete his or term. The governor can make the lieutenant governor part of the Cabinet by naming him or her the head of a state agency (with the exception of attorney general), but is not required to do so.

While candidates have hinted at what their possible lieutenant governor might do, the emphasis has been on who they will choose and not what they will do once elected.

New Jersey needs to know: What will the lieutenant governor do when not subbing for the governor? Will he or she head an agency and assume a Cabinet position? If so, which? What will voters get for the cost of an additional executive office? This is a new position. It is undefined, and New Jerseyans should demand to know what they are paying for.

The discussion from our candidates needs to concentrate on the responsibilities and powers the lieutenant governor will possess before the candidates can find the best person for the now undefined position. How can the candidates pick the best person for this state if they have not yet figured out what role that person will play?

The League does not want the office of lieutenant governor to become another costly layer of bureaucracy. It can be a meaningful job — not mere window dressing — if the governor makes it so. We all need to demand that the candidates step up to the plate and shed some light on their plans.

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