



Clackson Voter



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CLACKAMAS COUNTY

APRIL 2021

LWVCC Leaders

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Clackson: Karan Kuntz

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Voter Service: Lynette
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Unit Leaders:

Monday: Betty Barber

Wednesday: Jean
Hoffman

Thursday: Katie Lu,
Sylvia Smith

Friday: June Routson,
Lea Wells

April General Meeting

“Rethinking Civics Education”

WHEN: Tuesday, April 20, 4:30 p.m. on Zoom

HOW TO RSVP: Send an email by April 19 to

lwvclackamas@lwvclackamas.org and type “RSVP April Program” in the subject line. We’ll reply with the Zoom link and also follow up with a reminder the day of the meeting.

After years of dismal reports about the lack of civics knowledge in our country, it’s certainly welcome news to hear there’s a renewed focus on K-12 civics education. However, reaching consensus on curriculum details has not been an easy process, given the politicization of nearly every aspect of our society today. We’ll hear from Chris Vogel, LWVOR Education Portfolio Chair, and Trish Garner, AAUW Public Policy Chair, about several civics-related bills introduced this legislative session and also examine some intriguing national initiatives, including “[Roadmap for Educating for American Democracy](#),” led by a group of academics, historians, political scientists, K-12 educators and administrators, civics providers, students, and others from around the country.

Below are some questions to ponder for the upcoming program discussion. We look forward to hearing your thoughts.

- Why is a basic knowledge of civics important in a democratic society?
- Who should decide what should be included in a K-12 civics curriculum?
- Do Oregon’s [current social sciences standards](#) adequately address the issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity in our society?
- Should civics instruction be mandatory in Oregon’s K-12 classrooms?
- Should proficiency in civics be a requirement for a high school diploma?



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Always Nonpartisan

Spring Elections are coming! Vote411.org goes LIVE April 11th.

Elections this spring are for Clackamas County Special Districts including: School, Fire, Water and Other such as Parks & Recreation. Given the year Clackamas County has had with disasters such as the fires and the pandemic, management of these districts is more important than ever. Clackamas County is lucky to have 161 candidates running in our County races. Let's do our part for democracy and elect the most qualified individuals for these positions. How? Create your personalized Voters' Guide, where you can learn about your candidate's platforms using the League's Vote411.org website. The information is direct from the candidates. Vote411 goes LIVE April 11th. While there, you can also register to vote, check your voter registration, find Candidate Forums, Ballot Drop boxes and more. Defend democracy, be an informed voter!

Many thanks to our Vote411 data team, Maureen Mader, Linda Rinnan, Diana DeMaria and Emma Burke, who entered all the county candidate invitation information into Vote411.

LWV Clackamas is starting a social media campaign to get important election information out to county voters. We will update voters with nonpartisan information on townhalls, candidate forums, deadline reminders and other elections news. We will also be buying ads in traditional media.

Take action: Ads and even social media are not free. Support the League's important work for democracy – [Make a tax-deductible donation](#) to the LWV Education Fund today. If you would like to mail a check, please complete the [Local League Donation form](#) and mail it with the check. Thank you!

Take Action – Help improve the visibility of the LWVClackamas work by following us on social media. LWV Voter Service Clackamas is now coming to you on:

NextDoor: LWV Voter Service – Clackamas County

Twitter: @VSClackamas

Instagram: VSClackamas

[Follow us- Be informed & Support your League!](#)

Important Election Dates:

Vote411 goes live – April 11th

Ballots are mailed – April 18th

Voter Registration Deadline – April 27th

Spring Election – May 18th

From LWVUS: Redistricting Watch: What the For the People Act Means for Redistricting

This blog post was written by [Maddie Schumacher](#) and [Dylan Vargas](#).

In a late-night vote on March 3rd, the House of Representatives passed, for a second time, the [historic democracy reform package](#), the *For the People Act* (HR1). With the intent to make voting easier, more accessible, and modernized, the *For the People Act* is the democracy reform bill the American people want and deserve. It will put power back in the hands of American voters, expand voting rights, and ensure a stronger and more inclusive democracy. But the bill doesn't just make voting simpler—it makes it fairer by outlawing the racial and partisan gerrymandering that keeps power in the hands of the few.

Gerrymandering is the process by which state legislators manipulate district maps to favor or disfavor a group of voters based on political affiliation or race. Certainly, every citizen gets one vote, but gerrymandered maps dilute voters' ability to elect their candidate of choice.

The impact of gerrymandering makes the redistricting process increasingly flawed, corrupt, and undemocratic. Over the decades, we have seen the consequences of heavily gerrymandered districts that prioritize political power over representation. The *For the People Act* sets out to change that by instituting independent commissions, standardizing criteria, and requiring transparency. These reforms would rewrite the rules of the electoral process and ensure that voters choose their representatives, not the other way around. Now that the *For the People Act* has passed the House, it's critical that the Senate move immediately to pass the bill.

There is little to no incentive for legislators to draw fair and representative maps.

Independent Redistricting Commissions

In most states, redistricting is controlled by state legislatures, which, by nature, means that the maps are manipulated to favor the people in power who draw them. This status quo is unfair, biased, and undemocratic. We shouldn't be putting map-drawing power in the hands of the people whose power is map-determined. There is little to no incentive for legislators to draw fair and representative maps that effectively diminish their power.

Fortunately, the *For the People Act* challenges this system. The bill would transfer redistricting power from legislatures and authorize independent redistricting commissions to draw the maps instead. These commissions would have an equal number of Democratic, Republican, and Independent commissioners to balance political power and ensure no one party dominates the process.

Putting control of redistricting in the hands of independent commissions would limit the incentives that lead to gerrymandering and would ultimately create more representative maps. (Continued on page 4.)

Redistricting (Continued from page 3.)

Currently, state legislatures can change map drawing criteria unilaterally and arbitrarily as it suits them.

Standardized Criteria

There are also no standard criteria used across all states to determine and draw districts. Across the country, we see countless variations in the criteria considered when drawing maps. This makes the process unnecessarily complicated, inaccessible, and vulnerable to manipulation.

Currently, state legislatures can change map drawing criteria unilaterally and arbitrarily as it suits them. The *For the People Act* would end this by establishing standardized criteria to govern redistricting in all states and ensure that all maps meet basic standards of fairness. These criteria include greater protections for racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, a ban on partisan gerrymandering, and a mandate to protect communities of interest.

With these criteria in place, the districts drawn will be inherently fairer, more representative, and formulated with less bias.

It's really that simple: the more people who are aware of and informed about how redistricting is done, the more representative and inclusive our maps become.

Transparency

In recent years, partisan or racially gerrymandered maps were drawn in secrecy, behind closed doors. The only way to have a truly accountable redistricting process is to make it open to the public.

The *For the People Act* introduces federal transparency provisions into the redistricting process for the first time. These include requirements that redistricting meetings be open to the public, have public input hearings to allow community voices be heard, allow publicly submitted maps, and make all data files used to draw maps accessible. It's really that simple: the more people who are aware of and informed about how redistricting is done, the more representative and inclusive our maps become.

The *For the People Act's* reforms to the redistricting process will go a long way towards ending gerrymandering. They challenge inherent partisan bias, racial discrimination, voter suppression, and rampant secrecy in the current redistricting process. Our communities will once again feel heard and be valued under the fair and equitable redistricting process provided by the *For the People Act*.

It is time to fight for our democracy in the Senate. [Contact your Senator*](#) to ensure they support the *For the People Act*. The American people deserve a democratic redistricting process led by the people and for the people.

2021 Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of Clackamas County

The 2021 Annual Meeting will be held on Zoom on **Saturday, May 22 at 10:00 am**. The meeting is expected to last one hour. Further instructions on registration for the meeting will be provided in the May Clackson.

The Program booklet will be provided online this year. Anyone who prefers a printed copy can request that one is sent to them by emailing lwvclackamas@lwvclackamas.org.

Who's Who in Clackamas County Government

The updated 2021 [Who's Who in Clackamas County Government](https://my.lwv.org/oregon/clackamas-county) is now available online in the Voting/Election of LWVCC's website (<https://my.lwv.org/oregon/clackamas-county>). It provides extensive information on districts across the County as well as School contact information.



Plan to attend the LWVOR state virtual convention, with events comfortably ZOOM-stretched from May 10-16. In addition to each local League's voting delegates, members are invited to attend as observers.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
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lwwclackamas@lwwclackamas.org
www.lwwclackamas.org
<https://my.lww.org/oregon/clackamas-county>

Join the League of Women Voters!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email

- I am renewing my membership.
- This is a gift membership. (Please provide the recipient's contact information above.)
- I am interested in volunteering for the League. Please contact me.

Annual dues: \$70 Individual. \$105 Household. Full-time student attending an accredited institution or adult under age 25 free! Membership grants are available. Pay online (<https://my.lww.org/oregon/clackamas>) or mail this form.

Total Enclosed

Please make checks payable to League of Women Voters of Clackamas County.