

**LWW**

A thick, red, brushstroke-style graphic that starts under the 'L' and 'W' and curves upwards and to the right, ending under the second 'W'.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup>**  
OF BUCKS COUNTY

Program Planning 2023-24

**Speak Up! Take Action!**

# PROGRAM PLANNING: WHAT IS IT?

Program Planning is the heart of the League's commitment to grassroots participation.



Program Planning is an opportunity for members to recommend to their local, state, and national boards which issues are most important to them.<sup>2</sup>

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League "Program" is the issue or issues that will be the central focus of work for a League for a specific time period.

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Leagues at each level—national, state, local—select a "program."

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Why? Selecting a program keeps the League focused. Focusing brings results.

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If other needs arise, the League will adapt and the focus may change.

## WHAT'S PROGRAM?

**Education and Advocacy**

**Membership**

**Voter Services**

**Development**

**DEI**

**Our Mission**

# PROGRAM PLANNING PROCESS

## How it works...

Local leagues across the nation gather.

Members discuss and weigh issues.

Discussion leads to recommendations.

Recommendations are sent to the relevant board—LWVUS, LWVPA, or LWV of Bucks County.

Board makes recommendation for program adoption to convention delegates or at local annual meeting.

## Did you know?

- LWVUS holds its convention in even years.
- LWVPA holds its conventions in odd years.
- LWV Bucks County holds annual meetings.

# CURRENT POSITIONS

## LWV of the US

- Citizen's Right to Vote
- DC Self-Government & Full Voting Representation
- Money in Politics
- Apportionment
- Redistricting
- Selection of the President
- Congress
- The Presidency
- Voter Representation/Electoral Systems
- Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation
- Constitutional Amendment Proposals
- Constitutional Conventions
- Individual Liberties
- Public Policy on Reproductive Choices
- Privatization
- United Nations
- Trade
- Developing Countries
- Arms Control
- Military Policy & Defense Spending
- Natural Resources
- Resource Management
- Transfer of Federal Public Lands
- Air Quality
- Solid Waste
- Nuclear Waste
- Climate Change
- Water Resources
- Nuclear Issues
- Public Participation
- Agriculture Policies
- Equality of Opportunity
- Employment
- Fair Housing
- Nondiscrimination & Affirmative Action
- Pay Equity
- Equal Rights for Women
- Same Gender Equality
- Education
- Federal Role in Public Education
- Fiscal Policy

# CURRENT POSITIONS

## LWV of Pennsylvania

- Apportionment and Redistricting
- Election Laws
- Government Authorities
- Initiative and Referendum
- Judiciary
- the Legislature
- Municipal Government
- Land Use
  - Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Extraction
  - Pooling
  - Pipelines
  - Great Lakes Concurrence
- Child Health and Welfare
- Juvenile Justice
- Collective Bargaining in the Public Sector
- Education
- Family Issues and Laws
- Fiscal Policy
- Gambling
- Transportation
- Criminal Justice



# SO MANY ISSUES, SO LITTLE TIME

**You can see why FOCUS  
is so important!**

**Read full the positions  
when you have a chance.**



- Electoral College Reform
- Rules Reform in Harrisburg
- Education Equity
- Open Primaries
- Voter Access
- Mis- and Dis-information
- Gun Safety\*
- Reproductive Rights\*
- Climate Change\*

\* Non-recommended

## OPTIONS TO CONSIDER

# WHAT TO CONSIDER FOR EACH OPTION

- Is this an issue you want to learn more about?
- Will it generate interest among Bucks Countians?
- Is it timely and relevant?
- Does the issue impact underrepresented individuals and communities?
- Is this an issue where the League can take the lead?
- Are there opportunities for action on the issue?

# ISSUE #1: Eliminating the Electoral College

- The Electoral College system of electing the President and Vice-President is the ONLY election where the candidate with the most votes may or may not win.
  - It is undemocratic
  - It leads to reduced voter turnout
- Abolishing the Electoral College would require a constitutional amendment. An alternative to abolishing the Electoral College is the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC).
  - States agree to award their electoral votes to the candidate who wins the popular vote in all 50 states and DC.
  - Goes into effect when states with 270 electoral votes have committed to the compact (currently 15 states +DC have agreed = 195 electoral votes). Pennsylvania with 20 votes has not joined.

# ISSUE #1: Eliminating the Electoral College (continued)

- LWVUS believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice President is essential to representative government.
  - Electoral College should be abolished
  - the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal
- LWVPA supports Pennsylvania joining the National Popular Vote Agreement Among the States that would award Pennsylvania's electoral votes to the winner of the popular vote nationwide.

# ISSUE #2: Rules Reform in Harrisburg

## The Problem:

- Both the Senate and House in the Pennsylvania General Assembly conduct their business according to procedural rules.
- The rules—as they’re currently written—give committee chairs all of the power to decide what bills are considered in their committee. The majority party leaders have total control over what bills get a vote on the floor, and who leads each committee.
- When they vote on the rules, legislators surrender control to a few party leaders. That limits the ability of our legislators to represent us. Most legislators have no say in what bills are given a vote. As a result, voters often have no voice on issues they care about most.

# ISSUE #2: Rules Reform in Harrisburg (continued)

## LWV/FDPA Solution - Update the PA Legislature Rules so that:

- Bills with demonstrated bipartisan support must be guaranteed a vote in committee.
- Bills voted out of committee with bipartisan support must be guaranteed a vote on the chamber floor.
- Bills passed in one chamber with bipartisan support should be given consideration in the other chamber.

# ISSUE #3: Education Equity

## LWVUS

- National positions on Education focus on:
  - Equitable Funding
  - Equitable curriculum for all students
    - Teaching inclusive history
    - Same Gender Equality

## LWVPA

“ Support equal access to quality public education, to be achieved by participation of government and citizens at all levels and by adequate financing based on an equitable and flexible tax system.”

# ISSUE #3: Education Equity (continued)

## LWV of Bucks County position:

- Support State and National LWV positions and ensure equal educational opportunities for our students
- Elevate School Board issues to the State and Local Level.
- Make a recommendation at the State Convention to create a Study focused on the role of School Boards in ensuring equity.



# ISSUE #4: Open Primaries

- **Pennsylvania is one of only nine states with fully closed primaries**
  - Only registered Democrats and Republicans may vote in primaries, leaving out nearly a million voters (10% of all registered voters) registered as unaffiliated.
  - Closed primaries = fewer voters participate, less competitive elections and reinforced political polarization
  - LWVPA testified at the House State Government Committee Public Hearing in support of HB 1369 (August 16, 2022) which would allow unaffiliated voters to choose, on primary election day, to cast their vote on either the Republican or Democrat ballot.

# ISSUE #4: Open Primaries (continued)

- **LWVPA position**

LWVPA supports abandoning the closed primary system in favor of either the semi-open or open primary. Either approach will allow electors, regardless of initial registration status, to participate in the primary of the major party of their choice. Elections for both presidential and state and local primaries should use the same system.

- Open Primaries is 1 of the 3 areas of focus for LWVPA in 2023

- LWVPA is one of 11 coalition partners of Ballot PA, a project of the Committee of Seventy, committed to open and free elections in PA

# ISSUE #5: Voter Access

- Support the State and National positions on Voting Rights and Representative Government
- Specific Goal: to track efforts to limit voter access or to make the election process more cumbersome

# ISSUE #5: Voter Access (continued)

- **LWVUS** promotes an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive. We encourage electoral methods that provide the broadest voter representation possible and are expressive of voter choices.
- **LWVPA** supports effective election laws that guarantee a citizen's right to vote, ensure that elections are accessible, transparent, fair, and secure, promote universal voter participation, and provide voters with meaningful choices when they go to the polls.

# ISSUE #6: Mis- and Disinformation

## The Problem:

- Mis- and disinformation are undermining our democracy and the value of every person's voice. Mis- and disinformation have eroded the public trust in our democracy and the electoral process.
- Recent public opinion research of Americans shows:
  - only 20% are “very confident” in the integrity of the election system
  - 56% have “little or no confidence” that elections represent the will of the people
  - 42% of participants in a youth poll believe their vote does not make a difference.
- Decreased confidence in the electoral process decreases civic engagement.

# ISSUE #6: Mis- and Disinformation (continued)

Goal: LWVUS *Democracy Truth Project* aims to counter mis- and disinformation and educate the public about the democratic and electoral process.

- Target vulnerable voters and communities more susceptible to mis- and disinformation to combat the influx of lies, with trusted and accurate information.
- Build and restore the public trust in our democracy using educational resources focused on the foundational elements of a healthy democratic system.

Possible Goal: Undertake a study and reach a position on teaching media literacy in schools

- **Electoral College Reform**
- **Rules Reform in Harrisburg**
- **Education Equity**
- **Open Primaries**
- **Voter Access**
- **Mis- and Disinformation**

## **OPTIONS TO CONSIDER**

# **BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSION:**

- **Why should we pick/not pick this topic?**
- **Would you join a group to learn more about this topic and help plan educational and advocacy activities?**



**Electoral College Reform**      **Room 1**

**Rules Reform in Harrisburg**      **Room 2**

**Education Equity**      **Room 3**

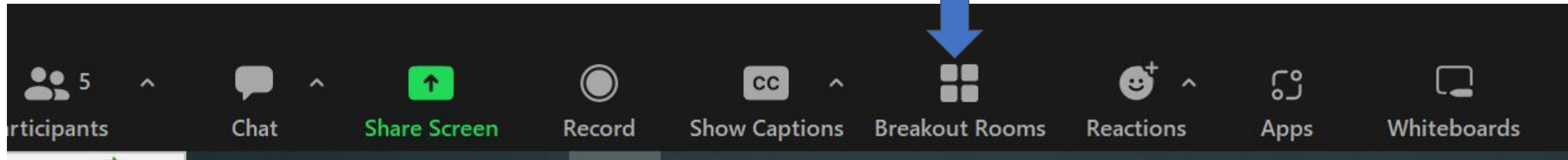
**Open Primaries**      **Room 4**

**Voter Access**      **Room 5**

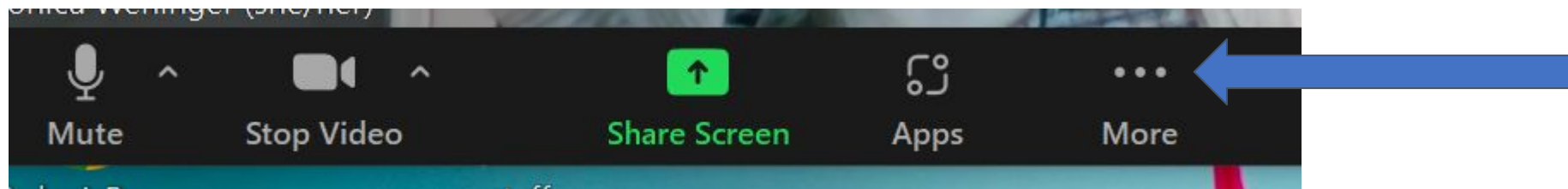
**Mis- and Disinformation**      **Room 6**

## **BREAKOUT GROUPS**

# How to Self-Select a Breakout Room



OR



# How and When to Vote on your choices

## LWVBC Program Prioritization for 2023-24

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Issue Prioritization

Which 3 issues should LWVBC prioritize in 2023-24?

	1st Priority	2nd Priority	3rd Priority
Electoral College Reform	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rules Reform	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education Equity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Open Primaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Voter Access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mis-/Disinformation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank  
You

for participating in  
today's discussion