



**LWW** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF VIRGINIA

## **The Virginia Voter**

*100+ Years Strong*

League of Women Voters of Virginia  
1011 E. Main Street  
Suite 214A  
Richmond, VA 23219  
United States

**January 2025 | Vol. 73 No. 7**

### **President's Message**

Happy New Year!

Of course, it will be a busy New Year for the Virginia League because – not a spoiler alert-- we have major elections. This year the entire House of Delegates will be up, and we will have a gubernatorial election. As always, the League will be out in force providing non-partisan information and encouraging voters to do what all Americans should do in every election, use their voice in the form of a vote.

**I know that in recent years there are some who seem to think that encouraging people to vote makes us partisan.** Imagine that – telling people that casting a ballot, having a say in your government, is a partisan act! When I was in grammar school back when dinosaurs roamed, I remember the nuns telling us that it was the most patriotic thing an American could do. It was pounded into our head that voting was akin to a sacred act. I wonder what they would think now when people say it is a

bad thing or only available to those deemed acceptable because of the color of their skin, their religion or naturalization status.

In February, LWV will celebrate our 105th birthday. We have always been and always will be a progressive, nonpartisan powerhouse. There were few issues more progressive or controversial than the idea of women voting, so it should be no shock to anyone that we remain progressive. If some of our other issues appear too progressive and therefore somehow partisan for some, that is not our problem.

Nonpartisan means we make our decisions based on what our membership wants and not what any party wants. Whether we battle the Democrats on campaign finance or redistricting or the Republicans on voter purges and a woman's right to control their body, we remain focused on our issues.

**The beginning of the year is a good time to remind everyone of the Leagues member rights and responsibilities. You can read them [here](#).** If someone joins the League with the intent of being disruptive, they are in violation of these rights and responsibilities. If people come to meet and greet events and attempt to spoil the event, they will be asked to leave. If our material gets funneled to groups who disagree with our policies for use on social media - even if those actions bring us new, positive members - which they have, it is still a violation.

I guess I shouldn't be surprised that we are so feared by political operatives on both sides – it just proves how effective we are.

Thanks for all you do.

Joan

---

**Electing the U.S. President**



At the 2024 LWV National Convention the League launched the "Moonshot" project to abolish the Electoral College in favor of a one-person one-vote approach to the election of the U.S. President. LWV Virginia held a virtual session for members on December 11th to begin Virginia's activity. (You can view that [here](#).) The many resources that are available to help us convince our communities of the need for this were displayed and discussed.

In Virginia we can follow two parallel paths. The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC) has not yet been adopted in Virginia. This is the quickest approach to guaranteeing that the election of the President is by the vote of the people. The longer approach is an amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

LWV Virginia members who are interested in learning more and participating in this effort should sign up for the Electoral College Moonshot Issue Group on the state's website [here](#).

- Jane Newell

---

### **Nomination Committee: Consider Lending Some Time to the State Board**

The State Board doesn't run itself – we need people to join our efforts. The nominating committee is in full swing and is looking at some unique methods to share the work – including co-chairs and even teams of people. If you think you can't help because it requires too much time – think again and contact the chair, Les Solomon [here](#). He would love to talk to you about what you can give. There is no State Board without volunteers to assist.

The entire Board is up as usual. Read more [here](#).

Thanks,

- Joan

---

## **LWV-VA Advocacy: How Will You Make a Difference?**

After our country had one of the most divided and bitter elections, our non-partisan mission and our *issue-driven and party blind* advocacy work must continue to be at the core of our values. In order to empower voters and defend Democracy, we have to ensure that Democracy works for everyone. This is why we are supporting all three proposed constitutional amendments before the General Assembly, the *Right To Vote (Restoration of Returning Citizens Voting Rights-currently Virginia is the only state in the Union that the Governor has sole discretion on how and who gets their rights back)*; *Right to Marry*, and *Right to enshrine Reproductive Health Protections in Virginia's Constitution*. So far, seven states have voted to enshrine Reproductive Health Rights in their Constitutions.

Now more than ever, we must “*put our shoulder to the wheel*” and engage with our local and state leagues. Are you involved in your local leagues’ observer core? Have you registered for our Women’s Legislative Roundtable (WLRT’s)? The WLRT’S are a non-partisan forum that begins the first Wednesday (Jan. 8) on the opening day of the Virginia General Assembly from 8:30 am to 9:30 am. Each week, a different Legislative Priority will be discussed in depth and policy experts and legislators will attend as well. We will continue to be in the General Assembly building on Wednesday’s until the end of the session. The League has been conducting these sessions for more than thirty years. [Here is the link to sign-up - you can attend in person or virtually.](#)

Our Issue Group leaders and the members within the groups, have been working very hard to research and develop talking points in order to aid in our Advocacy efforts. Will you join them, attend their meetings once a month and become an **active** participant? Could you help them with testimonies remotely? Your help would be greatly appreciated. [Here is the sign-up link.](#)

Finally, will you commit to attending **League Day on January 22?** We are an organization that represents members from all of Virginia’s regions, and we need to converse with our legislators about our Legislative Priorities. The State League will assist any local league in making appointments. [Here is the sign-up link.](#) League Day is in person. Do you know who your Legislator is? You can check [here](#).

- Denise Harrington

---

## **The League is Hiring**

### **Bookkeeper (paid position):**

As the League transitions to a new dues structure, the State Board is seeking to provide administrative support to Local Leagues and member-at-large (MAL) units. To more effectively respond to monetary matters the State Board is seeking a part-time bookkeeper. The State Board currently manages two entities, the LWV-VA Operations Fund a 501-c(4) (OP Fund) and the LWV-VA Education Fund a 501-c(3) (Ed Fund). We encourage members to consider applying for this paid and remote position.

#### Job Description for Bookkeeping and Data Entry:

- Maintain all records for Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, and Fixed Assets.
- Prepare monthly financial reports for both the ED and OP Funds.
- Maintain bank accounts, credit card statements and receipts.
- Prepare Donation Receipts for Ed Fund.
- Prepare all working papers for the Audit and work with the Treasurer and audit committee to assure it's done in a timely manner.
- Maintain W-9 records for subcontractors and prepare 1099s each January.
- Monthly and year end reconciliations.
- Maintain records and prepare renewals for State registrations and charitable requirements.
- Work with the Board and committee chairs on various reporting for annual fundraisers/fundraising etc.
- Other tasks as assigned.

#### Qualifications and Experience:

- Understanding and passion for League's mission.
- Post Secondary Degree with experience in non profit accounting/bookkeeping.

- Highly organized, intuitive and detail oriented.
- A team player with a positive attitude and professional demeanor.
- Proficiency in Google Workspace and Quickbooks.
- Experience with ChapterSpot or SaleForce preferred but not required.

TO APPLY: Send cover letter and resume to

Andrienne Konstas-Salvette [here](#).

---

### **Upcoming Events**

There are several important events coming up! Please take a look at these opportunities and join us.

### **Regional Budget Hearings Scheduled for Jan 3.**

There will be regional, virtual public hearings on the Governor's Proposed Budget Amendments on Jan 3. The regions will be Northern Virginia, Central, Hampton Roads and Western Virginia.

You can find and RSVP to your regional meeting [here](#).

Any comments you make are as an individual citizen, not a member of LWV.

### **Repro Rising Program on the Constitutional Amendment to Enshrine Reproductive Rights into the Virginia Constitution**

January 5, 2025 – 6:00 – 7:30 PM

We are at the beginning of the two-year process to pass a constitutional amendment to assure reproductive freedom into the Virginia constitution. We are the last Southern state that allows women the right to control their bodies.

Our partners at Repro Rising are holding a virtual program detailing the process and how we can make our voices heard during this crucial process.

RSVP [here](#)

This issue is going to be dealt with early on in the Session which begins on January 8. We have little time to lose!

### **Women's Legislative Roundtables 2025**

Join us for the 2025 Legislative Roundtables! All will be hybrid - the zoom link will be the same for each roundtable. The in person sessions will be held at the Virginia General Assembly 7th Floor Conference Room, 201 North 9th Street, Richmond. All begin at 8:30AM and end at 9:30 AM.

#### **Schedule:**

Jan 8 Voting and Elections

Jan 15 Gun Violence/Domestic Violence

Jan 29 -Education/Physical Health

Feb 5 Childcare

Feb 12 Environment/Housing

Feb 19 – Virtual Wrap Up (virtual only)

[RSVP here](#)

### **League Day - Jan 22, 2025**

Join us for League Day featuring the Constitutional Amendments supporting voting and reproductive rights!

9:00 - 11:00 AM Plated Breakfast and speakers

Then we go off to visit our delegates at the General Assembly!

Omni Richmond Hotel, 100 South 12th Street

\$35 per person

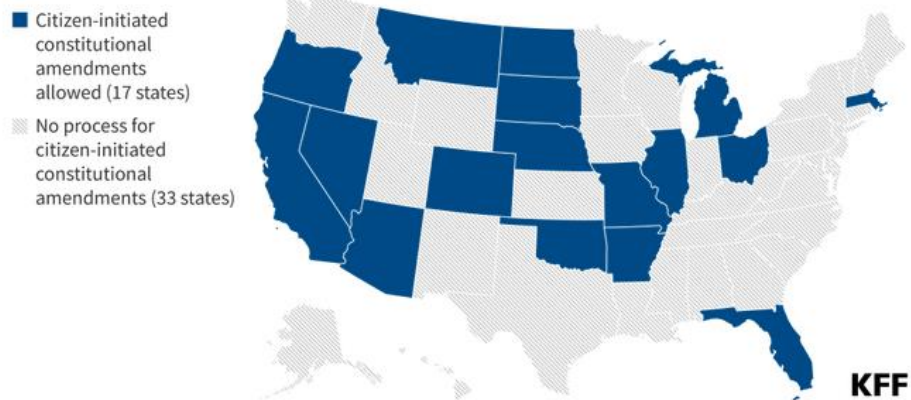
[RSVP here](#)

Omni is offering discounts of 10 percent off rack hotel rates - for more information, contact Joan.

---

### Maryland's Citizen Initiative Position: Should LWV-VA Consider Adoption at 2025 Convention?

#### In 17 States, Citizens Can Place Potential Constitutional Amendments on The Ballot



The LWV-VA is considering the possible adoption of Maryland's Citizen Initiative by concurrence at the 2025 LWV-VA Convention. Virginia voters currently have no option for enacting statutes or constitutional amendments without General Assembly approval. By contrast, in 24 states, citizens have the right to propose legislation and bring it up for popular vote. One clear benefit of citizen initiatives is that they can be an effective tool when a state's General Assembly repeatedly fails to enact



legislation that aligns with public opinion. The LWV-VA has supported legislative action on some issues for decades, such as campaign finance reform, and in several cases, we know from polling that the majority of Virginians are on our side. The option to bypass an unresponsive General Assembly and enact the legislation by popular vote is very attractive.

The LWV-VA held an educational forum on the topic on November 17th attended by more than 30 League members from across the state. Elaine Apter from the Maryland League presented their findings and position, as well as provided information on current Virginia law regarding referenda and initiatives which included local municipality information. [Here](#) is the recording of the forum,

**We want your input!** League members will be asked to weigh in on this issue at their January Program Planning meetings.

-Alice Tousignant

---

## **Help Wanted**

### **Calling All Members Who Are Naturalized Citizens**

If you are a naturalized citizen and would like to help us protect voting rights please contact Joan.

### **Social Media Gurus**

There are so many aspects of social media that we would like to build a team to divide the up the work. Right now we are on Facebook, Threads, X, Snapchat, Instagram and TikTok. Please consider taking a one or even two of these and helping us get our messaging flowing. Contact Joan if you are interested!

### **Mis Dis Task Force**

Our Mis and Dis Information Task Force needs members. As disinformation mutates, we need people to work on webinars for our local leagues to show. Much of the information is “out there” and we have partners upon whom we can call – but we need people to organize the information.

They are also considering adult civics programs, trivia games etc. to help combat the lack of knowledge about how our government works. Again, this takes more hands than they now have.

They also need a co-chair to assist with planning.

We would hate this group to go away but they are at a turning point and need some bodies so please consider signing up [here](#).

### **Issue Group Leaders**

We are in need of leaders for two issue groups; *Reproductive Rights* and *Behavioral Health/Criminal Justice*. These groups, like all issue groups, meet monthly to plan educational programs and work on legislation.

Thanks to Grace Lawler, whose hard work on the Reproductive Rights Group. She will be missed but we are so happy for her new job even though it will take her away from us a bit!

Contact Joan if you are interested!

### **Budget Committee Members**

Delegates to the 2025 State Convention will be asked to participate in a vote to adopt the LWV-VA (Op Fund) Fiscal Year 2025 and 2026 biennium budget. The State Board approved the LWV-VA Education Fund (EF) budget and presented it at the 2024 Council. The Board is currently looking for three (3) LWV-VA members to review LWV-VA's Op Fund spending and help draft the Op Fund budget. If you are interested in serving on the Budget Committee please contact Andrienne Konstas [here](#).. You must be up-to-date on your membership dues to serve on this committee.

---

## The LWWUS Study of the Federal Judiciary



At the 2024 LWWUS Convention in June, approval was given for a fast-track study of the US Federal Judiciary as an essential component of US democracy. The goal is to adopt a position at the 2025 LWWUS Council in June.

The study's purpose includes, but is not limited to, addressing concerns and clarifying judicial accountability, transparency, independence, and ethics. The scope addresses the Supreme Court as well as the other Article III federal courts. The LWWUS held a webinar on November 20th that covered the study process and timeline and can be viewed [here](#).

Local Leagues will receive a study guide and consensus questions by February 7, 2025, from the LWWUS. The LWWUS is asking local Leagues to review these study materials and hold consensus meetings sometime between February 7, 2025, and April 14, 2025, which is also the deadline for local Leagues to send the results of their consensus meetings to the LWWUS. This is an opportunity for local Leagues to educate members about the federal judiciary system and ways that it could be improved to protect and strengthen democracy.

The LWW-VA may hold a consensus meeting for members at large and for smaller Leagues who are unable to hold one on their own. Please contact Alice Tousignant, LWW-VA Program Chair [here](#) with questions or if you're

interested in participating in a LWV-VA sponsored Federal Judiciary Consensus meeting.

- Alice Tousignant

---

LWV US Action Alert on ERA

# Equal Rights Amendment *It's Time!*



We only have 20 more days. Sign the Alert [here](#)

The ERA will protect against the rollback of rights, provide a vital tool for the judicial branch to decide sex discrimination cases, and pave the way for further legislative progress toward sex and gender equality.

---



*Members of the League of Women Voters were out in force on December 10, demanding that President Biden enroll the ERA into the Constitution now!*

---



# TURNING POINT

S U F F R A G I S T  
M E M O R I A L <sup>TM</sup>

Turning Point sits near the spot where early suffragists were jailed and tortured for their work to secure the vote for women. Located in Occoquan Regional Park, Fairfax County, it is part of the historic prison grounds where the infamous Occoquan Workhouse was located. Scores of Silent Sentinel suffragists aged 19 to 73 were unjustly imprisoned there and were humiliated, kept in inhumane conditions, locked in solitary confinement, and severely beaten. When word leaked out, it was the Turning Point in the battle for suffrage.

Pat Wirth, President of the Northern Shenandoah Valley League, is offering to lead a tour for LWV members – probably in the spring before it gets too hot! Pat was the Executive Director of Turning Point from 2015 until it opened in 2021 – and was the driving force behind the fundraising and development of Turning Point and is still a docent.

If you have an interest in a spring tour please let us know [here](#)

This will not commit you to anything – we are just getting a sense of interest.

If you find you can't make this tour, please try to check it out during a visit to NOVA, it is worth the trip. The website is [here](#).

---

**Supporting Local Leagues--Monthly Money Matters Group**

As we enter a new year and take on a new membership mechanics system, LWV-VA and Local Leagues are looking for new revenue streams. How do we budget for the unknown? How do we get the most out of a donation? What financial instruments are available to Local Leagues? With the “Money Matters Group” we will discuss helpful tips to manage your League’s finances effectively. Join LWV-VA’s Treasurer, Andrienne, every third Thursday of the month at 7 PM to discuss everything money for the League. In January we will discuss LWV-US’s launch of the new membership system – is your League up-to-date on ChapterSpot and Stripe? For the meeting Zoom link and more information please contact Andrienne [here](#).

---

### **Educational Programs - Recordings**

If you missed **Pre Session** on December 4, you can listen to the recording and pre session with google drive [here](#).

Information from our partners can be found [here](#)

Joan Porte

---

### **January 2025 Calendar**

Jan 9 - Carrie Chapman Catt's Birthday - (1859)

Jan 20 – Martin Luther King Day

Inauguration Day

---

[unsubscribe](#)

---