



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®**  
OF SCHENECTADY COUNTY

## Bulletin



### Annual Dinner

Wednesday, June 18, 5:30 PM

Turf Tavern, 40 Mohawk Ave., Scotia

Guest Speaker: Rev. Amaury Tañón-Santos,

Executive Director, Sycamore Collaborative

Buffet dinner for \$35

### President's Letter

We've long suspected it but now it's official. On April 17, 2025, the national League of Women Voters declared that we are in a constitutional crisis. **Celina Stewart** and **Dianna Wynn, CEO and President, respectively, of the League of Women Voters**, released the following statement:

"It has now been 87 days since the start of the Trump administration. From the flagrant disregard for congressional authority and governmental checks and balances to defying Supreme Court orders to bring Kilmar Abrego Garcia back home, one thing is abundantly clear: *our country is in a constitutional crisis.*"

I had been concerned that during the rallies we've led recently, while our League members on the steps of City Hall were scrupulously nonpartisan, the same could not be said of the people holding signs and chanting slogans calling out Trump and Musk. I asked a question on a google group for NYS League presidents on whether the League could lead a rally clearly designed to protest against the administration's policies without violating our core value of nonpartisanship.

The response to my question, from MaryKate Owens, President of the Albany League and confirmed by Erica Smitka, Executive Director of the State League, said that "nonpartisanship means we do not support nor oppose any particular candidate for office, nor any political party.

Denouncing people who are working quickly to destroy our democracy and who are flouting our laws and our constitution - leading to our current constitutional crisis - is not partisan. It is what the League is about: Defending Democracy and Empowering Voters."

With that reassurance, we'll continue leading protests against the administration's policies. In closing, a quote submitted by Cindy Engel from Chief Joseph: "The earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it".

*Cheryl Nechamen*

**Voter Services**

As of now, the SAVE Act (Safeguard American Voter Eligibility) has passed in the House and awaits Senate action. The act saves nothing – there is no evidence of voter fraud as claimed by proponents of the act – but it does make registering to vote much more difficult. (We’ve included a SAVE Act ‘cheat sheet’ in this Bulletin, which lists provisions of the act most likely to affect average citizens.)

The Senate may, or may not, act on this legislation in the coming weeks. It may also make its own changes to the bill, accept some provisions, reject others, and pass a watered-down version to be considered by the House. If the House agrees, it is likely that, at a minimum, part of the current bill’s provisions will become law. If a Senate-revised bill does not pass the House in its second round, people who care about voting and voting rights – the bedrock of our democracy – may feel relieved. But don’t. However this plays out in Congress at the present, the SAVE Act is now part of a national conversation about who gets to vote and who does not. It’s a conversation that may be with us for a long time.

Among other barriers, the act requires in-person-only registration at a government office. This can be burdensome for people who work full-time, live far away, lack transportation, or who cannot easily return to complete their registration if they forget one of the required documents.

This provision also puts the League and similar nonprofits in the crosshairs: we will no longer be able to go out into our communities to help people register to vote.

For over a century, the League has put voter services – registration, education, and voting information – at the core of its mission. It is incumbent on the League to not only fight against the passage and implementation of this act, but also to think strategically about how we continue to serve the voting public if registering voters is off the table. How do we support voters and voting rights, help people navigate the revised registration process, and ensure that people have access to nonpartisan, fact-based voting information? That discussion needs to start now.

Youth Grant Update (or, the Good News): We registered 117 new voters at Schenectady and Mohonasen High Schools, with student leaders’ invaluable help. At Schenectady County and Fulton-Montgomery Community Colleges, we registered 32 more and engaged with many dozens of students about the importance of voting. (They got it.) New registrations in 2025 now total 162 voters.

Thank you, Ellen, Julia, Ann, Elaine, Inge-Lise, Connie, Pauline, Yvette, John, Sandra, and Cindy for your work on the Youth Voter project. And kudos to Ellen, for her terrific work at Mohonasen. She created a model we can use for future youth outreach.

More volunteer opportunities to come! Please keep checking [LWV 2025 Voter Registration Drive Sign Up](#).

*Joan Fucillo*

## **The **SAVE Act** makes it much harder to register to vote**

The SAVE Act (Safeguard American Voter Eligibility) is up before Congress. The act is based on the idea that noncitizens are voting in droves. They are not; it is illegal; and there is almost no evidence to support this.

### **The SAVE Act requires proof of citizenship to register, but few IDs qualify**

- A valid passport qualifies because it is a government photo ID with proof of citizenship
- No passport? Need government photo ID + birth certificate
- Birth certificate doesn't match photo ID (changed name upon marriage)?  
Need government photo ID + birth certificate + name change document
- Only some Real IDs and military IDs qualify; tribal IDs do not

### **Under the SAVE Act,**

- Voters must register in person at a government office
- Voters must re-register in person if they've moved
- Voters must re-register in person if they want to change their name
- Voters must re-register in person if they want to change political parties
- Many people in rural areas would have to travel long distances to register to vote
- People who rely on public transportation may find that the closest government office is a mile or more away from the nearest bus stop.
- Private individuals are allowed to challenge election workers, who could face lawsuits or criminal charges
- Upon passage, the SAVE Act would take effect immediately

### **Say "NO" to the SAVE Act**

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#### **Why will we be using so much of our reserves next year?**

You may be wondering why the proposed budget for 2025-2026 is so different from the 2024-2025 budget. In short, our income will be lower and our expenses will be higher next year. The projected dues income for '25-'26 is \$1500 vs. \$6410 in '24-'25. That's because of the new dues process. Our share of a suggested \$75 membership level would be \$13.61. However, per member payments (PMP) to the State and National League are retroactive, so we still owe money from 2024-2025. We'll also have higher expenses next year due to a national convention which costs much more than a convention in Albany and local elections in 2025 with recording costs for candidate forums.

Despite the fact that we will need to use some of our savings to cover our proposed 2025-2026 costs, we will still be on good financial footing come June 30, 2026. We have adequate reserves to cover the additional costs and we will still maintain a comfortable level of savings.

*Judy Middelkoop, Treasurer*

<b>LWV Schenectady Financial Report 2024-25 Fiscal Year</b>		<b>2024-2025 Budget</b>	<b>As of Feb. 28 2025</b>	<b>Projected 2024-25 Year End Amount</b>	<b>2025-2026 Proposed Budget</b>
<b>INCOME</b>					
A. Dues		6,410.00	6,298.45	6,500.00	1,500.00
B. Contributions					
1. Membership		700.00	1,016.75	1,016.75	500.00
2. Non Member		0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00
3. Earmarked Funds					
a. Youth Voter Registration		0.00	0.00	375.00	500.00
b. Fundraising		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
c. Citizenship Mentoring		250.00	125.00	125.00	0.00
d. Jail Outreach		625.00	0.00	562.50	750.00
C. Other Contributions					
1. Interest		12.00	6.23	12.00	12.00
2. Election Monitoring		100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
4. Meeting Revenue		3,000.00	1,190.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
5. Co-sponsorship/collaboration		50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
D. From Reserves					
1. LWVNY Ed Foundation					
a. Youth Programs/Inside Albany		650.00	0.00	0.00	700.00
b. Other Grants		2,970.00	3,985.04	3,630.04	3,600.00
2. Our Reserves		528.00	0.00	TBD	10,533.00
E. Miscellaneous Income		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Income:</b>		<b>15,295.00</b>	<b>12,196.43</b>	<b>15,721.29</b>	<b>21,245.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
A. Operating Costs					
1. General Supplies		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2. P.O. Box Permit		225.00	210.00	210.00	220.00
3. Bank Charges		60.00	0.00	0.00	30.00
4. Copy Expense		50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
5. Bulletin Expense		20.00	31.05	31.05	40.00
6. Web Page		425.00	425.00	425.00	425.00
7. Meeting Expense		3,000.00	1,179.36	3,000.00	3,000.00
<i>sub total:</i>		<i>3,780.00</i>	<i>1,845.41</i>	<i>3,666.05</i>	<i>3,765.00</i>
B. Board & Admin Committees					
1. President		50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
2. Board Tools & Expenses		200.00	0.00	0.00	200.00

3. Fundraising	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4. Membership Committee				
a. Copying/Supplies	34.00	30.66	30.66	30.00
b. Postage	16.00	0.00	0.00	10.00
<i>sub total:</i>	300.00	30.66	30.66	290.00
C. Delegates				
1. State Convention	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	0.00
2. National Convention	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
<i>sub total:</i>	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	5,000.00
D. Financial Support of the League				
1. National PMP	3,456.00	1,728.00	3,456.00	3,616.00
2. State PMP	2,484.00	1,863.00	2,484.00	2,599.00
<i>sub total</i>	5,940.00	3,591.00	5,940.00	6,215.00
E. Educational Activities				
1. Environmental Committee	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
2. Observer/Action/Lobbying	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3. Judicial	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4. Youth Programs/Inside Albany	650.00	0.00	650.00	650.00
5. Voter Services				
a. Voter Resources	300.00	810.38	810.38	1,000.00
b. Take Me To Vote	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
c. Candidate Forums	500.00	500.00	500.00	2,000.00
d. GOTV	500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	500.00
6. Other Studies/Consensus	25.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
7. Youth Voter Registration	0.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
7. Citizenship Mentoring	250.00	721.39	721.39	150.00
8. Jail Outreach	625.00	0.00	0.00	750.00
9. Community Outreach	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
<i>sub total:</i>	3,050.00	4,531.77	5,181.77	5,750.00
F. Position Support				
1. Affiliation				
a. Schenectady Foundation	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
b. Human Rights Commission	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2. Co-sponsorship/collaboration	100.00	0.00	250.00	100.00
<i>sub total:</i>	200.00	0.00	350.00	200.00
G. Miscellaneous				
2. Other Expenses	25.00	0.00	0.00	25.00
<i>sub total:</i>	25.00	0.00	0.00	25.00
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>15,295.00</b>	<b>9,998.84</b>	<b>17,168.48</b>	<b>21,245.00</b>

**Citizenship Mentoring Group**

We recently received a request from the Interim Director of Social Studies for the Niskayuna School District to attend a naturalization ceremony at the high school on May 2. We’ll be meeting the new citizens and providing them with registration forms, pamphlets for new voters, vote reminder pens, and of course, small American flags.

We are frequently asked for help filling out the form and explaining some of the questions that are asked on the forms. A judge will speak with the attendees and explain what citizenship will mean to them; the speech can be a little bittersweet as they are reminded that although they will now be American citizens, they should not forget their original home countries and cultures.

Once they have taken the Oath of Allegiance to the US, they become new citizens with all the rights and responsibilities that come with citizenship. We look forward to welcoming at least 40 new citizens to our community, and we thank the Niskayuna School District for their kind invitation.

*Ann Hatke*

President	Cheryl Nechamen
Vice President	Joan Fucillo
Voter Services Chair	Joan Fucillo
Secretary	Heide Westergard
Bulletin Editor	Cindy Engel

**Mission Statement:** The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization. We encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. We work to increase the understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

<b>Welcome New Members:</b>	
Wendy Bender	Margaret Verhayden
Eveline Hartz	Margaret Wexler
Patricia Assini Jacobson	Kerrie Wolf-Piechota
Nancy Stoffel	

## **Proposed Local Program 2025-2026**

### **Citizens Right to Vote - Making Democracy Work**

- \* Provide voter information during voter registration drives, tabling events and other LWVSC activities in person, on the LWVSC website and on social media
- \* Support and provide voter education to youth in high schools and colleges
- \* Advocate for local government transparency and monitor activities of local governmental units
- \* Support improving local, state, and national elections
- \* Meet with the Commissioners of the Schenectady County Board of Elections on a regular basis
- \* Maintain the Citizenship Mentoring Group program that helps prepare immigrants for the US Citizenship Exam and attend Naturalization Ceremonies when possible to register new citizens

### **Children and Education**

- \* Collaborate with other organizations to identify the needs of children
- \* Encourage the availability and affordability of day care services for young children
- \* Advocate for adequate and equitable funding for all public schools
- \* Advocate for the strengthening of programs that improve the capacity, quality, and speed of connectivity to the internet, especially in rural and low-income communities
- \* Advocate for the active recruitment by all school districts in Schenectady County of teachers of color
- \* Support the annual LWNYS's Students Inside Albany program

### **Health Services**

- \* Advocate for national/state/local health care reform that provides quality physical and mental health care for all citizens

### **Justice and the Law**

- \* Support restorative justice programs such as the Center for Community Justice
- \* Improve accessibility to police complaint procedure and support Schenectady police reform efforts
- \* Register eligible voters in the Schenectady County Jail and encourage them to vote

### **Environmental Issues**

- \* Advocate for the protection of environmental resources, land, water and air in Schenectady County
- \* Advocate for energy conservation and development of renewable energy alternatives
- \* Advocate for solid waste management programs that promote Reduce, Reuse, and Recycling in the City and County





Our League in action-  
Light For Our Democracy rally,  
March 6, 2025



100 Year Anniversary Celebration  
at Union College, April 30, 2025