



OHIO VOTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OHIO

FALL 2017

Statewide Issues on the November 7, 2017 Ballot

The League of Women Voters of Ohio Education Fund state board compiled the following summaries of the statewide issues appearing on the statewide November 2017 general election ballot. The summaries are also available online at www.Vote411.org and on the League of Women Voters of Ohio website (www.lwvohio.org) front page.

Issue 1 is an initiated amendment to the Ohio Constitution. There are three ways to amend the Ohio Constitution: proposal by the General Assembly; proposal by the people through an initiative petition; or by constitutional convention.

Issue 2 is an initiated statute. There are two ways to enact a statute in Ohio: legislation passed by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor; or proposal by the people through an initiative petition.

The League of Women Voters of Ohio state board decided to remain neutral on both issues.

Issue 1: Marsy's Law or "Crime Victims' Bill of Rights"

Will appear on the ballot as "STATE ISSUE 1: Rights for Crime Victims"

Generally known as Marsy's Law or "Crime Victims' Bill of Rights", this initiative would alter the state Constitution to require that crime victims be notified and consulted on developments in their cases.

(Proposed by Initiative Petition)

A **YES** vote means approval of the constitutional amendment.

A **NO** vote means disapproval of the constitutional amendment.

If approved, the proposed amendment will take effect 90 days after Election Day.

League Explanation of Issue 1:

Crime Victims' Bill of Rights

Issue 1 (Marsy's Law) will alter the state constitution to significantly expand the rights of victims in Ohio. The law would ensure that crime victims have a meaningful role throughout criminal and juvenile justice systems. It would provide crime victims with specific constitutional rights, including the right to be treated with fairness and respect for the victim's safety, dignity, and privacy; to be notified about and present at proceedings; to be heard at proceedings involving release, plea, sentencing, disposition, or parole of the accused; to a prompt conclusion of the case; to reasonable protection from the accused; to be notified about release or escape of the accused; to refuse an interview or deposition at the request of the accused; and to receive restitution from the individual who committed the criminal offense.

Marsy's Law is named after Marsy Nicholas, a California college student who was stalked and killed by her ex-boyfriend in 1983. One week after her death, her mother and brother Henry walked into a grocery store where they saw the accused murderer. The family had no idea that he had been released on bail. Dr. Henry T. Nicholas, brother of Marsy, is the key backer and proponent of Marsy's Law. Marsy's Law initiatives have been passed in California, Illinois, Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota (see <https://marsyslaw.us/about-marsys-law/marsys-story/>).

There is already language addressing rights of crime victims in the Ohio constitution which voters passed in 1994. However, Marsy's Law would replace it with language that, as described above, would expand the existing rights of victims and would establish new rights for victims.

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Pros:

1. This proposed law will increase the legal rights and privileges of victims.
2. Marsy's Law would replace the 1994 Ohio Victims' Rights Amendment, which victims' rights advocates said has been unenforceable.
3. The proposed law would ensure that victims are informed when the accused offender is released from custody.
4. It will inform crime victims of their rights.

Cons:

1. The amendment would override state law, eliminating judges' abilities to weigh the rights of victims and defendants.
2. Victims are already protected by 1994 Ohio Victims' Rights Amendment in the constitution.
3. The amendment would allow crime victims to directly file an appeal, overstepping the decisions of prosecutors.
4. Victims could refuse to be interviewed or to turn over pertinent evidence or testimony.

PROPOSERS: Marsy's Law for Ohio is leading the campaign in support of the initiative.

OPPOSERS: As of our publication deadline, no organized opposition has formed, however representatives from the legal profession have voiced concerns and may formalize their opposition. The Vote411 summary will be updated if and when an opposition campaign is announced.

Issue 2: The Ohio Drug Price Relief Act

Will appear on the ballot as "STATE ISSUE 2: To require state agencies to not pay more for prescription drugs than the federal Department of Veterans Affairs and require state payment of attorney fees and expenses to specific individuals for defense of the law"

Prohibits the state from buying any prescription drug from a drug manufacturer for a price over the lowest price paid for the drug by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

(Proposed by Initiative Petition)

A **YES** vote means approval of the Act.

A **NO** vote means disapproval of the Act.

If approved, the proposed Act will take effect immediately after Election Day.

League Explanation of Issue 2:

The Ohio Drug Price Relief Act

Issue 2 would limit the amount the state and state agencies could pay for prescription drugs. This Act is designed to restrict the amount that any state agency could pay for drugs, tying it to the price paid by the VA. The VA negotiates drug prices with companies and typically pays 20 to 24 percent less than other agencies for prescription drugs. Specifically, it would forbid state agencies to enter into any purchasing agreement with drug manufacturers unless the net cost of the drug is the same or less than that paid by the VA.

State agencies would not be allowed to pay more than the VA pays for a particular medication. These state agencies include, but are not limited to, the Ohio Department of Aging, the Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Department of Insurance, the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, and the Ohio Department of Medicaid (the program for people with low incomes or disabilities).

The bill will only impact those who receive drugs paid for by the State, not those with any other type of coverage. If adopted, the proposed statute would affect only those associated with the above mentioned state agencies - roughly 4 million Ohioans. The Act would not apply to those who use private insurance, Medicare, or other non-state-provided coverage - approximately 7 million Ohioans.

Pros:

1. Drug costs are the main driver of rising health care cost. There is an urgent need to control costs while maintaining access to needed medications.
2. Too many Ohioans must choose between the basic necessities of life and paying for their medications.
3. There is an indirect benefit to taxpayers as the state would save an estimated \$536 million per year on drugs. This could free up some substantial money that the state could use for other programs.

Cons:

1. The Act does not define some important terms, such as "drug," "state," "ultimate payer," and "net cost."
2. The Act does not address pricing of drugs that are *not* purchased by the VA and creates costly, complex purchasing arrangements.

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- 3. Pharmaceutical companies might respond to passage of the Act by a) negating existing discounts and rebates, b) raising prescription prices charged to non-covered entities and individuals, and/or c) raising prices charged to the VA.

PROPOSERS: Yes on Issue 2, also known as Ohio Taxpayers for Lower Drug Prices, is leading the campaign in support of the initiative. You can read more at <http://yesonissue2.com/>.

OPPOSERS: No on Issue 2, also known as Ohioans Against the Deceptive Rx Ballot Issue, is leading the campaign in opposition to the initiative. You can read more at <http://www.deceptiverxissue.org/>.

Further information:

- A similar proposition (Proposition 61) appeared on the California ballot in 2016. It was defeated.
- An analysis from Vorys Health care Advisors commissioned by Ohioans Against the Deceptive Rx Issue, the campaign opposing the proposal, can be found at: <http://www.deceptiverxissue.org/news/>
- An analysis from Case Western Reserve University professor commissioned by Ohio Taxpayers for Lower Drug Prices, the campaign supporting the proposal, can be found at: <http://yesonissue2.com/in-depth-report-on-issue-2-the-ohio-drug-price-relief-act/>

Advocacy in Action: Voters Forum on State Issues 1 & 2

Want to learn more about Issue 1 and Issue 2? Hear from proponents and opponents of Marsy's Law and the Drug Price Relief Act and how these issues can be considered through a gender lens.

The Women's Fund of Central Ohio & LWVO present: "Advocacy in Action: Voters Forum on State Issues 1 & 2" on October 12 from 5:30 pm – 7 pm at: Women's Fund of Central Ohio 2323 West 5th Avenue #230, Columbus, OH 43204.

You can register online for the event at <https://goo.gl/no4hUo>.

US Supreme Court to hear WI gerrymandering case and OH voter purge case this fall

The new term of the U.S. Supreme Court begins in October, and two important voting cases are scheduled to be heard this fall.

Gill v. Whitford, the Wisconsin gerrymandering case will be argued on Tuesday, October 3. This is an important test case that invites the Court to declare that extreme partisan gerrymandering violates the Constitution.

In the past, the Court has invalidated redistricting for reasons such as racial discrimination or having unequal population. The Court has hinted that extreme partisan gerrymandering could be unconstitutional, although they have never defined a legal standard for what crosses the line.

The Gill case, brought by the Campaign Legal Center, suggests that the Court adopt a 3-part test, including an assessment they call "the Efficiency Gap" to measure the severity of partisan gerrymandering in a state's plan. You can read more about it at www.campaignlegalcenter.org.

If the Court rules that extreme partisan gerrymandering can rise to the level of a constitutional violation and adopts a legal standard for when that line is crossed, it could have far-reaching implications for states – including Ohio – that are heavily gerrymandered.

Husted v. APRI, the Ohio voter purge case will be argued on Wednesday, November 8. At issue in this case is a provision of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) – a law that the League of Women Voters helped pass.

The NVRA sets specific legal standards for the management of state voter registration lists, including limitations on when voters can be removed from the list. For example, voters can be removed if they moved or are deceased.

Ohio has taken the unusual step of purging people from the voter list if they haven't voted in a few years, claiming that failure to vote may indicate that someone has moved.

Plaintiffs in the case sued Husted, claiming that removing otherwise-eligible people from the registration list for failure to vote violates the NVRA. The League of Women Voters agrees, and we are filing an amicus brief in support of plaintiffs, arguing that this kind of behavior is what the NVRA's removal process was meant to protect against.

How the Court rules in this case will have nationwide implications. If the Court agrees with Husted, it could open the door to widespread voter purging of eligible voters for nothing more than missing a few elections – which in a nation with low voter turnout could disenfranchise millions of people.

Membership Surge Continues Statewide

In recent months, interest in joining the League of Women Voters has risen enormously statewide. We are thrilled to report that since February 2017, we have seen 16.5 percent increase in overall state membership.

Here's what Local League leaders are saying about what is driving their membership growth:

"The Kent League became less insular and partnered with other non-partisan community groups for events and celebrations. This exposed a somewhat different group of people to the League and our activities and thus Kent gained some new members. Also, both in terms of recruitment and retention, we took Membership Leadership and Development program to heart and tried to be intentional in all we did. Sign-in sheets for members and non-members meant we could both track current member involvement as well as reach out to non-members who attended any of our activities/events. We asked new (and on-going) members in what they were interested and tried to involve them in those areas. We communicated often without becoming broken records." – Iris Meltzer, LWV of Kent

"I think our increased visibility through public forums, voter registration drives and petitioning matched up with the desire of many of our new members to 'get active' and have an impact on civic/political life in Columbus & the country. Our challenge as an organization is to support that desire to have an impact by continuing our important visible work in the community." – Barbara Hykes, LWV of Metro Columbus

"The Cincinnati Area League is excited about its recent membership growth. The new members are part of a newly activated citizenry. Many joined through our work on the Fair Districts campaign. They saw our work and said, 'I want to be part of that.' We now have turned our membership efforts from recruiting to engaging the new members so they choose to stay with the League in years to come." – Elizabeth Brown, LWV of Cincinnati Area

"After the election, many women were inspired to get involved in political activism for the first time. They were looking for a way to make a difference, and we presented LWV as an existing structure they could use to change the world. Many of our members were involved in events like the Women's March in DC and in Cleveland and posted on the newly created women's resistance sites that the LWV was an organization that had been advocating for political reform for decades and encouraged these budding activists to try us. We also cross posted our social media to their social media sites. When Fair Districts launched the Congressional redistricting reform petition drive the frustrated activists were thrilled to have something concrete they could do with the potential to change the world now." – Susan Murnane, LWV Greater Cleveland

"The Dayton League began having quarterly dinners a few years ago as a relaxed way to recruit new members. Our quarterly dinners are held at local restaurants where all attendees pay their own way. Our dinners have been a great way to keep members informed about planned LWV activities and recruit volunteers for our events and programs as well as promote lots of interaction between LWV members and newcomers! It is strongly encouraged for members to bring friends and guests, and it's been a great way to introduce newcomers to the LWV in an informal, social setting. This purposeful effort in recruiting new members and participation in the Dayton Women's March in January and the Fair Districts campaign have helped increase our membership substantially." – Andy Cobb, LWV of Greater Dayton Area

"LWVOA has enjoyed a large jump in membership. People are joining out of concern for the democratic principles upon which our country is based and wanting to actively support the League's positions on voting rights, fair representation, access to healthcare, environmental protection, to name a few. Our positions and priorities are endangered and worth fighting for." – Linda Mason Miller, LWV of Oberlin Area

The state League would like to congratulate all the local Leagues and At-Large chapters across the state and thank them for all the hard work they are doing to recruit members and to energize and motivate them to become more civically engaged.

Welcoming the New At-Large Units!

On the heels of announcing our new At-Large Unit (ALU) procedures at state Convention this May, the LWV Ohio is pleased to welcome its newest ALUs in Licking and Hancock Counties.



After 20 years, LWV has made a comeback in Licking County. The Chapter held its first general meeting on August 23 in Newark, with about 40 women and men attending.

Photo Credit: Christine Ramsey

The LWV Hancock County Chapter is experiencing a surge of new members interested in Making Democracy Work. About 10 people decided to start up an At-Large Group in Findlay. Check the state League website for more information on the Group's upcoming events.

Both ALUs plan to work on League's voter service and public education activities and provide citizens with unbiased, factual information that can be used as a basis for understanding the election process and reaching their own voting decisions.

Members wishing to form either an At-Large Chapter or At-Large Group must petition the LWV Ohio office for recognition using the application to form an At-Large Unit. To request an application form and for more information contact the state League office at 614-469-1505.

Ohioans for Gun Safety launches background check initiative

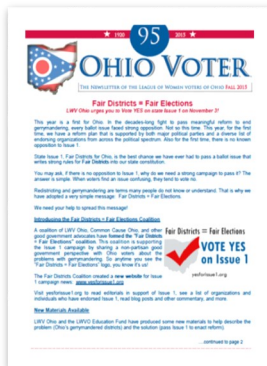
At the September LWVO board meeting, the state board voted to join a new effort to enact common sense background checks on any gun sales in Ohio.

Ohioans for Gun Safety is a coalition of individuals and organizations who are frustrated by inaction at the Ohio Statehouse and recently announced that they would pursue a citizen initiative. In the campaign's own words: "This campaign is about bringing common sense background checks to Ohio through the ballot initiative process, a campaign that begins NOT with a written proposal, but with a period of LISTENING to Ohioans' ideas before a single word of the initiative is written."

Ohioans for Gun Safety invites individuals and organizations to be a part of the growing grassroots coalition to bring common sense background checks for gun safety to Ohio. One way to do that is to join what they call their list of "Groundbreakers for Gun Safety." Groundbreakers are those who want to take part in the conversation about gun safety in Ohio and help spread the word about the campaign. You can read the "Groundbreakers Pledge" by going to ohioansforgunsafety.com.

The League of Women Voters of Ohio is proud to be one of the early signers of the Groundbreakers pledge, and we encourage local Leagues and individual members who are so inclined to join us in signing the pledge. Let's make our state a safer place for our families, children and grandchildren through common sense background checks for gun safety.

Big news: The Voter newsletter is going green!



Did you know you have the option to receive the Voter by email? Call the state office at (614) 469-1505 to opt in to email delivery and let us know your preferred email address!

Moment in LWV History: Speaking out on Immigration Policy

By Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick,
LWVO Co-President

In 1924, when Congress passed the Johnson-Reid Act that set up ethnic quotas to restrict immigration from southern and eastern Europe as well as Asia and Africa, the newly formed League of Women Voters was unable to take a stand. Barely four years old, the League had yet to gain its footing as an organization able to speak authoritatively on issues affecting women, let alone the entire nation. Even as late as 1965, when the Immigration and Nationality Act did away with the racially and ethnically biased Act of 1924 and instead gave preference to those with relatives in the U.S. or with special skills regardless of country of origin, the League held no position on immigration. Finally, as xenophobia reared its head after the attacks of 9/11/2001, the delegates at the LWVUS 2006 Convention adopted a study on immigration.

After taking 18 months to study and achieve consensus, the immigration position was approved by the LWVUS board in March 2008. The National Voter June 2008 Issue, available in the media library archives at the LWVUS website, provides background and the position itself. Go to <http://library.lwv.org/content/unauthorized-immigration-case-earned-legalization>.

The importance of holding and voicing positions on important national issues such as immigration was underlined this year when LWVUS immediately issued a strongly worded statement supporting the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy after the present administration announced plans to end the program. In her response, LWV President Chris Carson, one of the original members of the immigration study committee, noted that, "as a country of immigrants, we are made stronger by our diversity. Yet time and time again, this administration has discriminated against immigrants and communities of color....The League of Women Voters is opposed to deportation of non-criminal undocumented immigrants and we urge Congress to pass a clean Dreamers Act to protect, not turn away, the 800,000 young people who were brought to the United States as children."

Pass-thru Grant Opportunities - Apply today!

LWVO is excited to be able to offer a variety of pass-thru grant opportunities to Ohio local Leagues and At-Large Units.

a. Women's Voices - Thanks to a grant from the Women's Fund of Central Ohio, we are able to continue the *Women's Voices: Training the Next Generation of Women Leaders* project. In response to feedback from local Leagues, we are adjusting the program to run over the school year instead of the calendar year to accommodate arrangements with local schools and other youth group partnerships. Find the application form on Women Voices page under the "Member Area" section of the LWVO website.

b. Voter Participation Forums - Thanks to a grant from the national LWV Public Advocacy for Voter Participation project, we are glad to announce pass-through funds for local Leagues and At-Large Units to hold forums based on the *Where Have All The Voters Gone?* report on low voter participation from the National Issues Forum Institute. With the election of a new Ohio Secretary of State on the minds of many voters next year, this is a great opportunity to start dialogue and build awareness of issues surrounding voting. Contact the LWVO office for the application form.

c. Online Voter Registration Outreach to College Students - School is back, and that means college students around the state have new addresses. Help us work with campuses around Ohio to help get their students registered to vote. Please let the state office know if you are interested in participating and if you have relationships with faculty or administration at any local universities, colleges, community colleges, and technical schools. We would like to partner on a joint state & local LWV effort to reach students during the first month or two of the new school year. Application form, sample materials and other support are available from the LWVO office.

Did your local League elect a new board at your annual meeting?

Please remember to send your updated board lists to the LWVO office. Updates can be emailed to the state League office at lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org.

LWVUS encourages each League to keep its active officers list up to date in their database as well. If you have questions, or need help with the LWVUS membership database, please email LWVUS at RosterSupport@lwv.org.

Edith Chase: In Memoriam

By Iris Meltzer, LWVO Board Member



Edith Chase

Edith Chase was a Life Member of the League of Women Voters of Kent. During the time she lived in Kent, Edith Chase was part of ensuring that Kent maintained a focus on the environment. She tirelessly worked to improve Kent's water treatment plan from one of primary treatment to secondary treatment; to establish Riveredge Park to create what is now the Portage County Recycling Program; and to remain cognizant of the need to educate the public and create awareness of the importance of the environment and conservation.

Edith was an activist, lobbying at both the state and federal level for legislation she deemed important to our community and our country.

Her interest in the environment was heightened with the publication (1962) of Rachel Carson's *The Silent Spring*. She was further energized, as was the public, when the Cuyahoga River caught fire on June 22, 1969. Issues important to her included updating our knowledge and legislation, toxic substances, climate change, the Great Lakes Watershed, and public health. It was this last issue that brought me to the League. The League of Women Voters – Kent was holding an information meeting regarding clean water using the public health perspective. Edith knew that my field of interest and expertise was public health so, although I wasn't a League member, she asked me to join them on that Saturday morning. I was so impressed by the League and its seriousness and expertise in addressing the issue, that I joined on the spot. She remained active in League activities, attending almost every event and meeting until she moved to Ithaca, NY to be closer to her family.

Over the years, Edith received many honors. Chase Park, in Kent, was named for Edith and her husband Richard who were the first family to live on Caranor Dr. (having moved there in 1958). Their efforts led to establishment of the Franklin Township Zoning Commission. Edith served as Township Zoning Inspector from 1978-1990 and from 1995 through 1998.

Additionally, she received numerous awards including the following:

- 2005: First Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund Grassroots Citizen Advocate Award
- 2005: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Walter B. Jones Memorial Award as Coastal Steward of the Year
- 1990: Inducted into the Ohio Women's Hall of fame
- 1992: Inducted into the Department of Natural Resources Conservation Hall of Fame
- 1996: Lake Erie Award from the Ohio Lake Erie Commission
- 1999: Portage County Environmental Roundtable honored her with the Portage County Environmental Conservation Award
- 2001: Orville T. Magoon Service Award from NOAA, Coastal Zone
- 2001: R. Livingston Ireland Award from the Water Management Association of Ohio
- 2002: Presidents' Award from the Ohio Environmental Council
- 2002: Recognized as Chair of the Coastal Resources Advisory Council from 1996-2002 from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Coastal Management Program
- 2004: John Maury Award for Protection of the Great Lakes from Great Lakes United
- 2008: Portage County Health Department named her Friend of Public Health
- 2009: Named Champion of the River by the Cuyahoga River RAP
- 2010: Received an award from the Portage County Solid Waste Management District for her years of service on the Policy Committee
- 2013: Received the first Annual Edith Chase Award from the Kent Environmental Council
- 2013: Received the Outstanding Environmental Leader Award from the Burning River Foundation

From the Co-Presidents' Desk: Joining Forces to Make Democracy Work

The LWVUS board's decision that Leagues across the country could openly participate in the Women's March on Washington last January was the logical extension of the League's coalition-building since its inception. Knowing that the march attracted a broad spectrum of political activists, we were asked that if we were marching in the name of the League, not to carry "any overtly partisan signs [and to] stick with messaging that highlights the nature of the march: freedom, equality, women's rights, inclusivity and unity." As part of this broad coalition, we Leaguers were therefore able to express our concern over the direction of our country in positive and important ways without betraying our non-partisan stance. While we have always been well known for our efforts to educate voters and provide unbiased voter information, our advocacy work on behalf of the issues we believe in and positions we have adopted is coming to the forefront as never before during this contentious political era.



From left: Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick, Alison Ricker

In Ohio, we have always worked steadily with like-minded partners to further our agenda for action. Our Fair Districts coalition, for example, consists of at least thirty-two different organizations, encompassing a broad spectrum of political voices working towards a single goal: to end gerrymandering in Ohio. Lately, we have begun a close partnership with the Women's Fund which, like LWV, is keenly interested in providing women with the tools they need for effective political and social engagement. Going further, on Oct. 12, LWVO and the Women's Fund will jointly host an Issues Forum. At our last board meeting, the LWVO board agreed to support Ohioans for Gun Safety's effort to pursue common sense background checks and to explore other partnership opportunities, such as the National Institute for Civil Discourse's Ohio activities. In addition, the board agreed to sign a general letter of support for the Citizens' Climate Lobby initiative's efforts to find a political solution to this particularly vexing problem facing our planet (see Alison's note for more details).

Here in our own town and county, the Oberlin Area League has joined forces with Lorain County Rising and Oberlin Ahead, two groups of younger – and sometimes more partisan - activists whose interests and mission overlap with our own. The key, as with the Women's March, is for us to focus on the messaging of our common ground and common goals. While our membership numbers are increasing, we cannot depend on our membership alone to accomplish the work we need to do. We are far stronger when we work with others moving in similar directions and urge all of you to build your own local coalitions. There is definitely strength in numbers! If you have any questions about the partnerships you want to forge in your local area, don't hesitate to reach out to one of us or to your LWV Ohio Board liaison.

— Alison Ricker and Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick

Encourage Congress to Act to Mitigate Climate Change

The LWV Ohio Board of Directors voted on September 9 to sign the "Community Leaders Climate Action Letter" written by the Citizens Climate Lobby. The Climate Action Letter is essentially a resolution, urging Congress to sponsor and/or support measures that will:

- Acknowledge the serious threat posed by climate change, and
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a clear, transparent and effective way.

The LWV Ohio Board encourages all local League boards and members to consider signing the letter as a community leader - either as an organization or an individual - and to follow up with personal contact to your representative and senators. This action is in keeping with other actions taken and positions adopted by LWVUS.



Carrie L. Davis

ED Column: Modernizing LWV Websites

How much time do you spend online each day or each week? How much time do your kids, grandkids, or students spend online? So much of our lives now involve online communications.

We all know how critical it is nowadays for League to have a strong online presence. People look for our Voters' Guides online, for action alerts and updates about political happenings, they join as members and make donations online, and they sign up for events and volunteer opportunities.

Does your League's website offer all those functions? Do you wish your website could do more?

California launches new version of League Easy Web

Many of us have been watching and waiting to see what happens with LWV-California's League Easy Web (LEW) system that is used by about one-third of Ohio's local Leagues. While there had been a period of uncertainty, that is over and things appear on course for successful continuation and improvement of LEW.

LWV-CA rolled out a new and improved version of LEW this fall. They are calling it "MyLo" – short for My League Online. Current LEW subscribers and new subscribers are welcome to sign up for MyLO.

The new MyLO platform includes a variety of improvements: the page automatically adjusts to be viewable on the user's screen size (mobile-friendly), it includes an RSS feed¹ allowing for automatic integration of content (such as having LWVUS action alerts automatically show up on a state or local website), and it allows for more easy addition of graphics and videos. Read more about MyLO at <https://lwvc.org/mylo>

LWV-CA will continue to operate the "historic LEW" platform concurrently with the new MyLO platform for at least a year. Leagues who currently use the historic LEW can choose to upgrade to MyLO or stay on old LEW.

Pricing: Historic LEW costs \$250/year and the new MyLO will cost about \$400/year. There is a one-time set-up fee of \$200 for a League joining MyLO, but that fee is waived for current subscribers of historic LEW. Additional support packages are available for a sliding fee, such as if a League needs help migrating a large amount of content to a new MyLO site as opposed to doing much of the upload for itself.

LWV Ohio building new website

LWV Ohio has been wanting to overhaul our website for a long time, and we are ecstatic that time is finally here.

The LWV Ohio board and staff have opted to move our website onto the new MyLO platform in order to allow better content-sharing with local Leagues, other states, and LWVUS. Just think how exciting it will be to have local Leagues' events automatically show up on LWV Ohio's state calendar or for LWVUS action alerts to instantly appear on LWV Ohio's website.

LWV Ohio will be working on migrating our website to MyLO over the next few months, with a target date of having the new site go live by the end of the year.

In the meantime, we want to hear from YOU about what our new website should like! We created a short online survey at <https://goo.gl/zfRPob> for members and visitors to share their thoughts. What content and features you would like to see on our new and improved LWV Ohio website?

¹ RSS stands for Real Simple Sharing. It allows for someone to subscribe to your RSS feed and automatically be sent updates such as press releases and action alerts. By allowing an RSS to be embedded in a LL website, it can automatically display the latest updates from LWVUS and LWVO without the LL website administrator having to manually add them. In short, it is a way to automatically include content from other Leagues on your League's site.

Thank You to our Donors!

A sincere thank you from all of us at LWVO to each and every donor who have given so far to support our 2017 Women's Equality Day Campaign. Every single dollar contributed helps us continue our critical voter education and advocacy work.

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| Diane Ashman | Tamara Hardgrove-Shomo | Linda Tobin and Stephen Pepper |
| Rosemary Balazs | Ann Henkener | Gail Pytel |
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The League of Women Voters of Ohio/Education Fund sincerely thanks the many donors who wish to remain anonymous for their generous support.

Please Support LWVO's Women's Equality Day Campaign 2017!

Donate today!

Yes, I want to support the work of the LWVO!
 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other ____

Gifts can be made payable to:

- LWVO (non-tax deductible)
- LWVO Education Fund (tax deductible)
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You can also donate at www.lwvohio.org and click 'Donate'. Thank you!

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Please return to: League of Women Voters of Ohio,
 17 S. High Street, Suite 650, Columbus, OH 43215

On August 26th each year, the women of the United States celebrate Women's Equality Day. On that day in 1920, Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby signed the proclamation granting American women the constitutional right to vote. While the League of Women Voters uses Women's Equality Day to commemorate the signing of the 19th Amendment, we also use that day to remember it would be years until people of color, Native Americans and other voting groups would gain that same right. LWV fights to insure every American regardless of race, gender, income level, location – be afforded the right to vote. Therefore, WED is a day for all LWV to recommit to insuring the rights of all voters.

LWVO continues to advocate and lobby for the rights of ALL Ohio voters through efforts such as leading the campaign for Fair Districts, lobbying for secure online voter registration, and opposing unlawful purges of eligible voters.

Our annual Women's Equality Day campaign is not only a time to reflect on how far voter rights have come, but also a time to recommit to the work we still have to do! The WED

Campaign is one way of providing the capital needed each year to continue our voter rights education and advocacy. Your contributions help LWVO continue to provide voter education and advocacy programs/services like Vote411, Fair Districts = Fair Elections, and statewide issue/candidate information.

Thank you for your continued support! LWVO could not provide the outstanding service you have come to expect without the support of our generous donors.



Fair Districts Campaign Update

There has been so much happening with Fair Districts in late summer and early fall. Here are some of the highlights.

Petition numbers

Keep up the great work! We are almost at the halfway point on signature gathering.

As of mid-September, we have 142,000 verified signatures, with more boxes of signatures being delivered every week. Our county totals are on the rise too, with 12 counties already over the 5% mark and 21 more closing in on their county goal.

As a reminder, here are the requirements in order to qualify for the ballot. We need 305,591 valid signatures. We also need a certain percentage of signatures from 44 of Ohio's 88 counties. We have until July 2018 to file in order to qualify for the November 2018 general election ballot.

We have plenty of time to collect the signatures we need, but we need to keep at it!

Will the state legislature finally take up congressional redistricting reform?

Apparently, it has become increasingly hard for the Statehouse to ignore the 2700-plus Fair Districts volunteers around the state, because in mid-September legislative leadership announced that they were going to take up the issue of congressional redistricting reform.

While legislative leadership's public comments are a hopeful sign, we have to balance that hope with a realistic appraisal of the situation.

Despite voters' overwhelming passage of state redistricting reform in 2015, and our persistent lobbying, the legislature has thus far declined to act on any of the congressional redistricting reform proposals submitted in 2015, 2016, or 2017. Until the legislature does more than talk, we need to continue pushing forward with our Fair Congressional Districts for Ohio initiative.

That said, we have always supported a legislative solution and continued to lobby for reform in the legislature. However, we will carefully scrutinize any proposal to ensure it puts forward real reform, not just pay lip service to the problem.

US Supreme Court hears major gerrymandering case

As the article on page 3 notes, the US Supreme Court is going to hear arguments in early October

about a high-profile gerrymandering case, *Gill v. Whitford*.

We can expect that this case to drum up a lot of interest and press on this issue. We should use this opportunity to highlight our campaign for Fair Districts – how you can do something about gerrymandering here in Ohio, where you can sign a petition, donate, or volunteer. Hold a community forum to talk about what's at stake with the *Gill* case and urge people to support Fair Districts here at home.

Fall opportunities to continue our Fair Districts work

While summer was chock full of parades and community fairs that were great to collect signatures and raise awareness, fall presents a great many opportunities too.

If your local League or partner group is looking for fall ideas, here are a few to get you started:

- Fall is election season! Local Leagues around Ohio will be holding candidate and issue forums ahead of the election. Make sure you have a table near the entryway with information on Fair Districts and invite people to sign the petition to put Fair Districts on next year's ballot.
- High school football games tend to be a big Friday night draw in many communities. Bring your clipboard and collect signatures from neighbors on their way into the game.
- Fun fall activities such as Oktoberfest, pumpkin festivals, hay rides, and more are popular community events and good spots to collect signatures.
- College and university campuses host big events like student fairs, concerts, speakers, and athletic events. Just make sure to bring voter registration forms in case students need to update their registration if they moved.
- Take advantage of Election Day on Tuesday, November 7 or early voting the Saturday before. Stand outside high-traffic polling locations to educate voters about Fair Districts and ask them to sign.
- Anyplace in the community that people congregate can be good for striking up a conversation – libraries, book stores, coffee shops, beauty shops and barber shops, the dog park, and more.

Halloween contest

We're often reminded not to forget to have a little fun along the way. With that spirit, we invite you to participate in a pumpkin carving contest for best Fair Districts or gerrymandering themed pumpkin. Share your photos on the Fair Districts Facebook page at www.facebook.com/OhFairDistricts or email them to us at ohiofairdistricts@gmail.com!

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

For membership information,
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email lwvinfo@lwvohio.org, or visit us online
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