

League of Women Voters of Schenectady County **Proposed Local Program 2024-2025**

Justice and the Law

Support improvements to the local criminal justice system by:

- * Monitoring and strengthening the Probation and Parole procedures, with an emphasis on rehabilitation and supportive services with programs such as the Ex-Offender Re-Entry Program in Schenectady County
- * Facilitating the implementation of alternative courts (problem solving courts) in Schenectady County and promoting collaborations to support them
- * Monitoring the juvenile justice system including Family Court and promoting community-based rehabilitation
- * Supporting restorative justice programs such as the Center for Community Justice
- * Improving accessibility to police complaint procedure
- * Improving Mental Health Crisis Intervention
- * Supporting the Schenectady Police Reform **efforts**
- * Support the monitoring of the Schenectady County Jail, including complaint resolution, public health measures, transparency, and greater oversight of day-to-day conditions
- * **Maintaining a presence in the Schenectady County Jail for the purpose of registering eligible voters and encouraging them to vote**

Local Government

- * Monitor activities of county governmental units, including town boards, the Schenectady City Council and the Schenectady County Legislature, monitor activities of other quasi- governmental units, public authorities and agencies such as Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority, Metroplex, IDAs and Planning Boards monitor activities of elected public Boards of Education
- * Evaluate opportunities for inter-municipal cooperation and examine options for the consolidation of governmental services in Schenectady County

Children at Risk

- * Collaborate with other organizations to identify the needs of children, including physical and mental health, in Schenectady County, facilitate programs on their behalf and educate the community about their needs and challenges; increase child and adolescent mental health services
- * Study early childhood education and care-giving needs in Schenectady County from a policy and financing perspective
- * **Study** coordination between child service agencies, **such as Department of Social Services, Family Court, Schools, and Charitable Organizations with a goal of seeing if networking among these agencies is helpful**
- * Encourage the availability and affordability of day care services for young children

Local Education

- * Monitor local initiatives related to schools and promote and advocate for adequate and equitable funding for all school districts so the students can reach their potential
- * Ensure school districts are adequately prepared and staffed for virtual education
- * Address disparities exposed by **the need for (REMOVE)** virtual education

- * Advocate for and support the strengthening of programs that improve the capacity, quality, and speed of connectivity
- * Advocate for and support equitable access to technology and technology education and closing technology gaps in rural and low income communities
- * Bolster public schools' ability to respond to needs of students
- * Ensure that all school districts in Schenectady County are actively seeking to hire teachers of color
- * Develop initiatives to bolster student attendance and retention
- * Support the annual LWVNYS's Students Inside Albany program and continue to fund at least one student's participation in the program

Environmental Issues

Advocate for and support the protection of environmental resources, land, water and air in Schenectady County

- * Advocate for and support energy conservation and development of renewable energy alternatives
- * Advocate for and support solid waste management programs that promote Reduce, Reuse, and

Recycling in the City and County

- * Promote understanding of the global climate emergency and support efforts to mitigate its effects

Health Services

- * Educate and advocate for national/state/local health care reform that provides quality physical and mental health care for all citizens
- * Encourage and support countywide comprehensive health care planning and access, equity, and safety in health care
- * Monitor the availability of services for the homeless including homeless veterans

Citizens Right to Vote - Making Democracy Work

- * Advocate for and support local government transparency
- * Advocate for and support the registration of new voters
- * Provide voter information and education during voter registration drives, tabling events, new citizen naturalization ceremonies, county jail visits, and other LWVSC activities *Provide current voter information on LWVSC website and on social media
- * Advocate for and support improving local, state, and national elections
- * Maintain a cordial relationship with the Commissioners of the Schenectady County Board of Elections and meet with them on a regular basis

*Advocate for, support, and provide voting education to children at the elementary, middle and high school levels

* Maintain the Citizenship Mentoring Group program that helps prepare immigrants for the US Citizenship Exam, including providing new voter information in the curriculum, and attending Naturalization Ceremonies when possible to register new citizens

Proposed February 2024

PLEASE NOTE: All text in red is new for 2024-2025

