



BULLETIN, May, 2026

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

### Greetings from the Convener's Desk,

Dear League Members,

Congratulations to Judy Zabin for her fifty years as an elected Town Meeting member! Judy has long been a loyal member of the League, serving as president from 1978-80.

And belated congratulations to the League members elected in March. Deborah Brown reelected Town Moderator and Mona Roy elected to the School Committee. Town Meeting Members elected include Al Zabin (52 years!), Pam Lyons, Jeanne Canale and Lisah Rhodes.

In early April, the state League took action on its position on voting rights.

This is not only a courageous act; it is an expensive one. I attended the state League board meeting last week and learned that they are in need of increased financial support for this, and for the upcoming state ballot question campaigns. If ever there was a time you have asked about how to give support in these fraught times, it is now. If you would like to support the League in this legal action, go to [Donate - League of Women Voters of Massachusetts](#) and give to LWVMA.

As reported below, the Massachusetts League has filed a lawsuit in the US District Court for the District of Massachusetts challenging President Trump's March 31 **executive order** concerning mail-in voting. The Constitution explicitly states that only Congress and the states can set the rules for elections. Nevertheless, the order attempts to displace states' mail-in voting laws by transforming the US Postal Service from a neutral mail carrier to an arbiter of who may cast a ballot by mail.

The order also requires the Department of Homeland Security to build and give to each state a list of citizens eligible to vote. Given that federal databases are out-of-date and unreliable, this risks mass disenfranchisement of eligible voters.

The plaintiffs and their counsel released the following statement of their position, found in our reporting below.

**Continuing!**

## **Attend Burlington ICE Actions**

*Bearing Witness* stands in solidarity outside the ICE Operations Office in Burlington every Wednesday from 11 AM - 1PM; and other organizations lead the charge every Thursday 11 AM - 1 PM. The League is not an official sponsor of this event but encourages attendance.

Another way to support the League is to send a Mother's Day card to a mother in your family or circle of friends. This has to be ordered by May 4 and you can order one easily at this site: <https://buy.stripe.com/00wfZhbx6cuC06F3jW8Zq0g>.

We are nearing the end of the League year. I want to thank all the members of the Lexington League for their support. Please look for our announcement of Annual Meeting next fall.

Margaret Coppe  
Convenor

## **LEXINGTON LEAGUE FIRST FRIDAY FORUM, MAY 1, 2026: GUN SAFETY LAWS ON THE MA BALLOT**

The **LWVLex May First Friday Forum** will be held on **May 1, 2026, in Room 237 at the Lexington Community Center, from 9:30 – 11:00 am**. The topic is the November ballot initiative that asks voters to support existing gun safety laws on the books in Massachusetts by voting "Yes" vote on this question.



Ruth Zakarin

The speaker will be **Ruth Zakarin, CEO of the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence and Chair of Vote Yes for a Safe Massachusetts**. Zakarin has spent more than two decades working on violence prevention and helped lead the Coalition, of which the LWVMA is a part, behind this legislation. She will walk us through what a "Yes" vote on this initiative will mean in practice.

The stakes are concrete. The existing law regulates untraceable "ghost guns," strengthens licensing, and bans devices that convert semi-automatic weapons into machine guns. It also expands Extreme Risk Protection Orders—tools that studies suggest prevent one suicide for every 10–22 firearms removed. These measures matter in a country where 6 in 10 gun deaths are suicides, nearly 26,000 people die by firearm suicide each year, and about 90% of attempts with a gun are fatal.

Studies have found that Black Americans are disproportionately affected by gun violence. They have found as well clear links to domestic violence. Over half of domestic violence homicides involve a firearm, and a majority of mass shootings have a domestic violence connection.

Massachusetts has the lowest gun death rate in the country—about 3.7 per 100,000 people, roughly 73% below the national average—largely because of laws like this alongside community-based interventions. Even so, every loss carries a lasting impact on families and communities, which is why efforts to prevent violence remain so important.

Ruth Zakarin became the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Coalition to prevent Gun Violence in May of 2019, after more than 20 years working with youth and adults impacted by domestic and sexual violence. Since its 2012 founding, shortly after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary school, the Coalition has brought together stakeholders from across the Commonwealth to address all forms of gun violence. The volunteer Coalition members worked to build grassroots energy that galvanized the State Legislature to pass the 2014 Omnibus gun safety bill, the 2018 Extreme Risk Protection Order law, and the 2024 Act Modernizing Firearms Laws, which is being challenged by the November 2026 ballot referendum.

Beyond advocating for the passage of this legislation, the Coalition has worked with legislators and public health experts to implement these laws and to push for funding of programs that support youth opportunity, including Summer Youth jobs programs and the Safe and Secure Youth Initiative supporting violence intervention across the Commonwealth. Because gun violence is a complex problem requiring multi-faceted solutions, the Coalition, now with over 120 members, continues to grow and evolve to better serve the Commonwealth. Mass Action is the 501(c)(4) advocacy arm of the Coalition.

This program is the eighth in the 2025-2026 LWV First Friday Forum series hosted by the Lexington League of Women Voters to promote awareness and understanding of public policy issues. Lex Media will record the program for future viewing. As always, the League forum is free and open to the public, and there will be time for questions and answers from the public. For more information about the League and this program go to:

<https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/lexington>.

## **REMINDER:** **LEXINGTON LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING IN SEPTEMBER**

The Lexington LWV Board has voted to schedule the date of the League's Annual Meeting in September rather than in June so that it will coincide with the start of the League's year. This will allow us to hold our business meeting and elections for League positions at the beginning of our year, and to map out the coming year's program after input from the state and national conventions/councils held in alternate years in June. Stay tuned for information on the Lexington LWV Annual Meeting program as it becomes available. .

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS

## LWVMA EVENTS

### LWVMA MOTHER'S DAY CARDS



**Mothers' Day is May 10.** This Mothers' Day, celebrate the mothers in your life with a League of Women Voters of Massachusetts Mothers' Day card. Each card includes a donation to LWVMA, along with a thoughtful token of appreciation for the extraordinary women you want to honor. Card options include:

\*In Honor Of — sent directly to your honoree

\*In Memory Of — sent to your honoree's family or directly to you.

Place your order at <https://buy.stripe.com/00wfZhbX6cuC06F3jW8Zq0g> by May 4<sup>th</sup> and reach out to [lwvma@lwvma.org](mailto:lwvma@lwvma.org) with any order questions.

## SECOND LWVMA NEW MEMBER MINGLE

The League's initial New Member Mingle in February was such a success, another NMM is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 12 at 7:00 pm on Zoom**. Especially for those new to the League, but open to all members, the Zoom gathering will share an overview of the LWVMA, including staff, state Board, state committees and local Leagues. It's a fun and sociable way to connect with other League members in small-group conversations and learn of upcoming events. Register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/> And feel free to invite a non-member friend if they are interested in learning more about the League.



## LWVMA BIENNIAL COUNCIL SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 6

The LWVMA Biennial Council *Defending the Commonwealth* will take place on Saturday, June 6 from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm on Zoom. This brief, focused business meeting will allow us to elect a new slate of LWVMA Board Directors, hear from an inspiring keynote speaker, and learn more about what the state League has been up to this year. All League members are invited to attend; local Leagues will be allocated a certain number of voting delegates based on League size. Delegate count, detailed schedule, and registration information will be coming soon!

The time to act is NOW! Every dollar you give will strengthen this fight for accessible elections in Massachusetts. As a reminder, all contributions made to LWVMA stay in Massachusetts, ensuring every Bay Stater has the right to free and fair elections.

## DEMYSTIFYING THE STATE BUDGET AN LWVMA WEBINAR ON YOUTUBE

A recording of the League's virtual program, "**Demystifying the State Budget**," featuring **Elizabeth Lutts, Policy & Budget Advisor for State Senator Patricia Jehlen**, is available for those of you who may have missed it on line in March. You can find it on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G81IFv7HkkY>

## REMINDER: LWVMA POSITIONS ON 2026 BALLOT QUESTIONS

The LWVMA Board votes to support, oppose, or take no position on specific ballot questions based on positions or goals previously researched and adopted by the League. As a nonpartisan political organization, LWVMA does not endorse political parties or candidates, but does advocate for issues that the organization has studied and taken a position on, based on consensus from members. League members may

participate in Yes campaigns for ballot questions that the Board has voted to support, and No campaigns for ballot questions that the Board has voted to oppose

**LWVMA supports** the following Ballot Questions.

- #Election Day Registration,
- #Law to Improve Access to Public Records,
- #Zoning of Single-Family Homes, and
- #Rejection of repeal of firearms laws passed in the last legislative session.

**LWVMA opposes** the following Ballot Questions.

- #Limiting State Tax Collection Growth and Returning Surpluses to Taxpayers,
- #Reducing the State Personal Income Tax Rate from 5% to 4%.

**LWVMA takes no position** on the following Ballot Questions.

- #Implement All-Party State Primaries “Top 2,”
- #Act to reform and regulate legislative stipends\*,
- #Nature for All Fund,
- #Protect Tenants by Limiting Rent Increases,
- #Labor Relations Policies for Committee for Public Counsel Services Employees, and
- #Recriminalize marijuana.

The legislature may choose to act on the petitions by May 5. If they take no action on a petition, another 12,429 additional signatures are required by June 17. The ballot questions submitted for the November 3, 2026 election do not become official until July. More detail on the League’s positions on each of the Ballot Questions can be found at <https://lwmvma.org/lwmvma-statement-on-2026-ballot-questions/Positions>.

\*This ballot question was presented at the LWVLex First Friday in November, 2025 by our former Representative Jay Kaufman, one of its sponsors. It can be found on the LWVLex website: [my.lwv.org/massachusetts/lexington](http://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/lexington)

## **Community Advisors Still Needed for 2026 MA Spring Civics Showcases**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Generation Citizen are once again collaborating to host four Statewide Civics Project Showcases across the Commonwealth in 2026:

- Springfield: MassMutual Center, Tuesday, May 26
- Dartmouth: UMass Dartmouth, Friday, May 29
- Worcester: DCU Center, Monday, June 1
- Boston: Edward M. Kennedy Institute, Friday, June 5

At each Showcase, volunteer Community Advisors have short conversations with students about their projects, asking questions and offering feedback based on their own expertise. Projects address a wide range in project topics; advisors come from diverse backgrounds: community organizers, legislators, business and non-profit leaders, educators, healthcare workers, and more. This is an interesting opportunity tailor-made for League members.

Register as a Community Advisor at:

[https://generationcitizen.rsvpify.com/MACivicsShowcase?utm\\_source=Civics%20Monthly%20Memo&utm\\_campaign=47f9111c99-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2023\\_08\\_25\\_04\\_20\\_COPY\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_7e599155c7-577457987](https://generationcitizen.rsvpify.com/MACivicsShowcase?utm_source=Civics%20Monthly%20Memo&utm_campaign=47f9111c99-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_08_25_04_20_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_7e599155c7-577457987)

## LWVMA ADOCCACY

### LWVMA LEADS SUIT CHALLENGING EXECUTIVE ORDER ON MAIL-IN VOTING

On **March 31**, **President Trump signed an executive order concerning mail-in voting**, which attempts to displace states' mail-in voting laws by transforming the US Postal Service from a neutral mail carrier to an arbiter of who may cast a ballot by mail. The order requires the federal Department of Homeland Security to build and give to each state a list of citizens eligible to vote which will be used to prevent the USPS from delivering ballots to anyone not on the list. Given that federal databases are out-of-date and unreliable, this risks mass disenfranchisement of eligible voters.

On **April 3**, a coalition of voting rights organizations, led by the LWVMA, filed a lawsuit in the US District Court for the District of Massachusetts challenging the executive order. The Constitution explicitly states that only Congress and the states can set the rules for elections.

The suit was filed by the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, the League of Women Voters, Association of Americans Resident Overseas (AARO), US Vote Foundation, OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates (OCA), and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

They are represented by the **American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)**, **ACLU of Massachusetts**, Brennan Center for Justice, Legal Defense Fund (LDF), Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC), and LatinoJustice PRLDEF. The plaintiffs and their counsel released the following statement:

*"This executive order is an illegal and dangerous attempt by the Trump administration to eliminate accessible voting options and subvert our democracy by seizing control of election administration from the states and Congress. If implemented, it would disenfranchise eligible voters across the nation.*

*"Attempts to end voting by mail are part of the Trump administration's larger strategy to undermine elections and subvert the will of the people. The US Constitution is clear: the states and Congress — not the president — set the rules for our elections. President Trump tried to make an end-run around the Constitution with another executive order last year and was promptly rebuffed by multiple courts. History will repeat itself.*

*"This executive order would up-end countless state laws and procedures regarding mail-in voting. It could deny eligible voters, including voters with disabilities, US citizens living abroad, and military members and their family members, the right to vote by mail — and unknown numbers will be disenfranchised without that option. Far from improving elections, this executive order would create chaos for election officials, erode public confidence in our elections, and block Americans from exercising their most fundamental right and responsibility as citizens — voting. By taking the administration to court, we are standing up for the rule of law and the promise of our democracy."*

## **SEND FIVE MESSAGES TO HELP DEFEND VOTING RIGHTS**

Here's how you can support LWVMA's lawsuit defending mail-in voting! Copy and paste the script below and email/text five of your friends, peers, or family members to help us fundraise towards our \$30,000 goal!

*Hi! I'm volunteering with the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts as a member of the Lexington League to support our historic fight to protect voting rights and STOP President Trump's March 31 Executive Order against mail-in-voting. Our lawsuit will impact thousands of voters in Massachusetts and the resources for our upcoming 2026 election. Your contribution will help stop the ramifications of this Executive Order and support public education so that every voter can participate without barriers or legal costs. Can we count on your support for voting rights today?*

Go to <https://lwmma.org/donate> for more information.



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF UNITED STATES

## LWVUS EVENTS

### UPDATE:

## 57<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NATIONAL CONVENTION, JUNE 25-28, 2026



The LWVUS 57<sup>th</sup> Biennial National Convention will take place in Columbus, Ohio, June 25-28, 2026. Attendance may be in person or virtually for this multi-day event where League members from across the country come together to network, learn, and chart the course for the next biennium.

National Convention is a League experience unlike any other, as delegates representing state and local Leagues across the country vote on the nominees for LWVUS Board of Directors and Nominating Committee, as well as on bylaws amendments, budget, and League priorities. In addition to plenary sessions, Convention also includes dynamic presentations, practical trainings, and inspiring content that support our mission of empowering voters and defending democracy.

In-person attendees will have full access to plenary sessions, trainings, and networking opportunities. Virtual attendees can fully participate in live-streamed plenary sessions from anywhere. The hotel block at the Hilton Columbus Downtown for the 2026 Convention is now full. **If you have not yet booked your accommodations, you can still use the same booking link <https://hotelmap.com/events/> to reserve a room at a nearby hotel.** When you click the provided link, you will be taken to a website that will provide you with hotel options close to the Hilton and show you the walking distance to Convention.

As a reminder, **Convention will take place June 25–28 in Columbus, OH.** All attendees are responsible for booking their own lodging, whether through a hotel or an alternative option such as Airbnb or Vrbo.

Should you have any questions regarding any elements of Convention that are not covered on the Convention [website](#), please feel free to reach out to the events team ([events@lww.org](mailto:events@lww.org)). We would be happy to assist you!

## DIGITAL DEMOCRACY: MEDIA LITERACY FOR DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION TODAY

Civic participation requires understanding how information moves online- who shapes it, how technology amplifies it, and how citizens can navigate it thoughtfully. This **webinar series, hosted by the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS)** will help League members understand how and why online civic information spreads, recognize emerging digital actors and tools that shape public opinion and build confidence in evaluating information without needing to be technical experts. At the end of the series, attendees will feel more confident and well-equipped heading into the 2026 election cycle.

Register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/> for either of the following sessions:

- May 7, 2026 03:30 PM
- Jun 2, 2026 03:00 PM.
- 

## WEBINAR: LWV DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION FOUNDATIONS MAY 14, 4:00 PM EST

Register for this primer on League DEI positions at:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/>.

## LWVUS ADVOCACY LWVUS CONTINUES TO DEFEND VOTERS' RIGHTS IN LOUISIANA LITIGATION

Continuing its fight to protect voters' access to the ballot across the country, the LWVUS has joined with the League of Women Voters of Louisiana Education Fund, League of Women Voters Education Fund, Voice of the Experienced, NAACP, Louisiana State Conference, and the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice in a motion to intervene as defendants in *Louisiana v. EAC*. The defendant organizations are represented by the ACLU, the ACLU of

Louisiana, the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law, Campaign Legal Center, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Louisiana has filed a lawsuit against the US Election Assistance Commission because the agency denied the state's requests to modify the federal form — the national mail voter registration form used across the country. Louisiana wants its state-specific instructions to require voters to provide extra information about their citizenship, such as a unique immigration number. These new requirements violate the National Voter Registration Act and are unnecessary and burdensome.

"This lawsuit is a direct attack on voters and an attempt to weaponize both federal law and the court system to initiate illegal voter purges based on racist and xenophobic narratives," said **Celina Stewart, CEO of the League of Women Voters**. "There is no credible evidence of voter fraud, yet Louisiana is pushing burdensome proof-of-citizenship requirements that will inevitably block eligible Americans from registering to vote. The League of Women Voters is yet again stepping in and we will keep defending voters from laws and actors that seek to harm our democracy."

"This is Louisiana's latest attempt to burden voter registration for all Louisianans. Instead of standing up for its voters, Louisiana is suing a neutral voter protection agency—the Election Assistance Commission—to ensure it can further limit voter registration," said **M. Christian Green, president of the League of Women Voters of Louisiana**. "The Louisiana League has already filed a lawsuit to oppose the state's discriminatory proof of citizenship law, and we are proud to continue the fight against its implementation."

"Adding burdensome proof-of-citizenship requirements to the federal voter registration form is a solution in search of a problem, one that will disproportionately block elderly voters, rural residents, and low-income families who may not have immediate access to the specific documents demanded," said **Derrick Johnson, President and CEO of the NAACP**. "The NAACP has fought for generations to remove obstacles to voting, not add new ones. We are intervening to fight back against this latest attempt to restrict Black Louisianans' ability to register and have their voices heard. On our watch, voter suppression will not be rebranded as election integrity."

"Based on my service on various voter commissions for the State of Louisiana, the state does not have a voter fraud problem but a voter participation problem," said **Michael McClanahan, president of the NAACP Louisiana State Conference**. "More legislation needs to be done to make it easier for persons to have their voices heard and not suppressed."

"Louisiana is demanding a federal agency to rewrite the national voter registration form to impose new proof-of-citizenship requirements that Congress never authorized, threatening to turn a uniform federal safeguard into a vehicle for voter suppression," said **Sophia Lin Lakin, Voting Rights Project director for the ACLU**. "We stopped President Trump's unlawful effort to force that result with an Executive Order, and we are now going to stop Louisiana from achieving it."

"Once again, Louisiana is attempting to disenfranchise eligible Black and Brown voters, said **Bradley Heard, deputy legal director for the Southern Poverty Law Center**. "We refuse to stand idle as a right so many sacrificed their lives to secure is stripped away. The SPLC is proud to stand alongside the intervenors defending voting rights in Louisiana against those who are reviving the suppressive tactics of the Jim Crow era. We will continue to advocate for this constitutional right for all Louisianans."

## **SAVE AMERICA ACT, SAVE ACT AND MAKE ELECTIONS GREAT AGAIN ACT ARE PENDING IN THE SENATE**

The LWVUS reminds us that the SAVE America Act, the SAVE Act and the MAKE ELECTIONS GREAT AGAIN Act are still alive. The SAVE America Act is pending in the U.S. Senate, and may come up for a vote at any time. The national League requests financial support to help in its opposition to these three related acts, which making voting harder for eligible citizens.

The SAVE America Act will have these impacts on voters:

- **Women who changed their names after marriage** — who would have to secure updated documentation to register to vote;
- **Military families** — who would have to re-register every time they move sometimes very close to an election day;
- **Disaster survivors** — who may have lost documents in disasters and face burdensome hurdles to replace them while rebuilding their lives; and
- **Communities of color** — Black Americans are three times more likely than white citizens to lack easy access to birth certificates, passports, or naturalization papers.

It will also weaken the *National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1993*, a law that expanded access to voter registration. We worked for years with legislators to pass the NVRA, and we cannot let this groundbreaking law be dismantled, harming millions of voters. As guardians of voters' rights, **we** will not stay silent while the SAVE Act threatens our essential right to vote—the very foundation of our democratic process. Please contact your senators to stress the importance of defeating this legislation,



## SAVE THE DATE

May 1, 2026, LWVLex First Friday, Gun Legislation, 9:30 am, Community Center

May 4, 2026, Deadline to donate to the League and send a Mothers Card to a mother in your life.

May 26 - June, 5, 2026 2026 Mass Spring Civics Showcases, Springfield; Dartmouth; Worcester; Boston\_

June 25-28, 2026 LWVUS national biennial convention, Columbus, Ohio and on zoom

September, 2026 LWVLex Annual Meeting, time and place to be announced

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you would like to submit an article for the June 2026 Lexington LWV Bulletin, please send it to Wendy Manz at [wendy\\_manz@yahoo.com](mailto:wendy_manz@yahoo.com) by May 29, 2026.

## CONTACT INFORMATION FOR LEGISLATORS

### **U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren**

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(617) 565-3170

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### **U.S. Senator Edward Markey**

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### **U.S. Representative Katherine M. Clark**

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### **MA Senator Michael Barrett**

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### **MA Senator Cindy Friedman**

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### **MA Rep. Michelle Ciccolo**

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### **MA Rep. Ken Gordon**

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# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

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The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization dedicated to the principles of self-government established in the Constitution of the United States. The League works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. For more information, contact the League convenor Margaret Coppe at [mecoppe@gmail.com](mailto:mecoppe@gmail.com).