



BULLETIN, October, 2023

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

### *From the Convenor's Desk*

I am looking forward to our [First Fridays this fall](#). We have three exciting programs scheduled and hope to see many of you in attendance. This year all of our First Fridays will be at the Lexington Community Center, 39 Marrett Road, Lexington, MA. On **October 6**, we will hear a presentation from Neil Rasmussen, Concord resident and president of Save Our Heritage, on the proposed expansion at Hanscom Air Field. On **November 3**, District Attorney Marian Ryan will be with us. And on **December 1**, joining us will be the four members of our state legislative delegation—Michael Barrett, Cindy Friedman, Michelle Ciccolo, and Ken Gordon—who will update us on current legislation at the State House and upcoming events of interest.

In Lexington, there is a movement to place a warrant article on the Fall Special Town Meeting to approve of [Ranked Choice Voting in Lexington](#). If approved, action to use it goes to the State legislature as a home rule petition before it can be implemented. Both the national and state Leagues have positions supporting RCV, and our board has voted to support it at the local level. The short-term goal of the movement is to add to the number of towns who have approved RCV locally so as to increase the pressure on the legislature to implement it statewide.

This fall there are a number of [League opportunities to learn more about current issues](#) and how to get involved. I am planning to attend a meeting sponsored by the League of **Cape Cod Area on Media, Misinformation, and the Protection of Democracy** on Saturday, **October 14, 2023** from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM at Barnstable High School. I plan to drive there and would love company. Let me know at [mecoppe@gmail.com](mailto:mecoppe@gmail.com) or call me at 339-223-0832.

Meanwhile, I attended an informative webinar cosponsored by LWVMA and New England for Offshore Wind, *What's Up with Offshore Wind? Current Status – Future Plans – Getting It Done*. In this first of a three-part webinar series on offshore wind, we learned about the

status of offshore wind projects in the Northeast, the red flags of misinformation and disinformation about offshore wind development, and the small actions that can have a big impact on offshore wind's success. On **November 16**, the second of the three-part series will cover the costs and benefits of offshore wind projects in the development pipeline: how project developers plan to protect people, wildlife and the environment from adverse effects, and how stakeholders are working to ensure that those plans rely on best practices founded in sound science and data. The intent is to respect marginalized and overburdened communities and to drive economic justice. Go to [lwmma.org](http://lwmma.org) to register.

**October 11, 2023** is the Massachusetts League of Women Voters annual **Day on the Hill**, a chance to hear from the League's legislative specialists on the major targets of League advocacy this session, and then to meet directly with our own legislators to let them know about the issues that are important to us and to encourage them to support specific pending legislation. **Senate President Karen Spilka will deliver the keynote address *Act for the Future: Voting, Maternal Health, Firearms, and PFAS***. More on this event below. I plan to go and hope some of you will join me. Let me hear from you at [mecoppe@gmail.com](mailto:mecoppe@gmail.com).

*Sincerely,*

*Margaret Coppe*

*Convenor*

[mecoppe@gmail.com](mailto:mecoppe@gmail.com)

## **LWV LEXINGTON OCTOBER FIRST FRIDAY FORUM: HANGAR EXPANSION AT HANSCOM AIR FIELD**

The Lexington League is beginning its 2023-2024 First Friday series on Friday, October 6, 2023, with a program on the proposed expansion of hangars at Hanscom Air Field. It will be held at the Lexington Community Center Dining Room, 39 Marrett Road, Lexington starting at 9:30 AM. The guest speaker will be Neil Rasmussen, Concord resident and president of Save Our Heritage, a non-profit engaged in protection of historical and natural resources in and around Concord, MA.

The Lexington League holds positions opposing extension of Hanscom Field into a major airport (1988), supporting maintenance of the 1973 level of general aviation at Hanscom Field (1988) and supporting Lexington's participation in the solution of problems associated with Hanscom Field (1978).

As always, there will be time for Q&A after the presentation. For more information go to <https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/lexington/calendar>.

## LWV LEXINGTON NOVEMBER FIRST FRIDAY FORUM: MIDDLESEX COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY MARIAN RYAN

The November First Friday Forum of the Lexington League will take place on Friday, November 3, 2023, at 9:30 AM, at the Lexington Community Center, 39 Marrett Road, Lexington, MA 02421. The program will introduce **Middlesex DA Marian Ryan** and highlight her work in the largest county in New England, covering 54 cities and towns. Her office represents the State in twelve District Courts, four Juvenile Courts, and two Superior Courts located throughout the county.



Across the country, and in our state, there is a growing understanding of the importance of local and statewide elected office in shaping government and preserving our democracy. Marian Ryan's Office of the Middlesex District Attorney has sought to redress racial injustice, reduce unfair judicial practices, address the opioid crisis, support legal means of immigration and find ways to extend restorative justice. During her tenure, the DA's Office has created crime prevention programs as well as a Cold Case Unit that has delivered answers and sometimes justice in decades-old crimes.

Recently DA Ryan has been focusing on the rise of disinformation and misinformation in public media and the difficulty in differentiating truth from falsehood. "If we lose the ability to accept objective facts," she has said, "it eats away at our democracy."

This program is the second in the 2023-2024 LWV Lexington First Friday Forum series. All Lexington League forums are free and open to the public, and as always, there will be time for Q&A after the program. For more information about the League and this program go to <https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts.lexington>.

### AN EARLY ALERT: ANNUAL CANDIDATES' NIGHT

The LWV Lexington Annual Candidates' Night has been scheduled for Thursday, February 15, 2024 at Clarke Middle School. Here is Lexingtonians' chance to see candidates for office up close, and to test their positions with direct questions. Put it on your calendars.

### *A Loss to Lexington and the League*

*We wish to express condolences to the family and friends of Sandra Frohman, a long-time member of the Lexington League, who passed away in September. She will be missed.*

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS

### LWVMA EVENTS

#### LEAGUE LEADER LUNCH HOSTS SPEAKERS ON WATER POLICY

The first LWVMA League Leader Lunch to be held in person in three years brought 60 representatives from 26 Massachusetts Leagues to Harvard on September 30, to renew acquaintance and hear from local experts on water resources and policy in the Commonwealth.

Stow State Representative Kate Hogan, Speaker Pro Tempore of the Massachusetts House, presented a detailed description of H. 2197, an **Act to Protect Massachusetts Public Health from PFAS**, which she sponsors, part of her long-standing campaign to identify, monitor, regulate and eliminate these harmful perfluorinated chemicals from common products and drinking water. Katharine Lange, Policy Director for the Massachusetts River Alliance, discussed the effect of climate change on our water resources and waterways, and strategies to protect them. And Carolyn Lee, LWVMA Legislative Specialist on Natural Resources, gave us a spirited, not to say raucous, call to action on this issue. A final highlight was a presentation from three local Leagues, Ayer, Falmouth and Concord, on their practical efforts to protect water sources, preserve shorelines and limit the use and discarding of plastic bottles in their own communities. Attendees left awed at their persistence and determination.

#### OCTOBER DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION PEER GROUP DISCUSSION OCTOBER 28

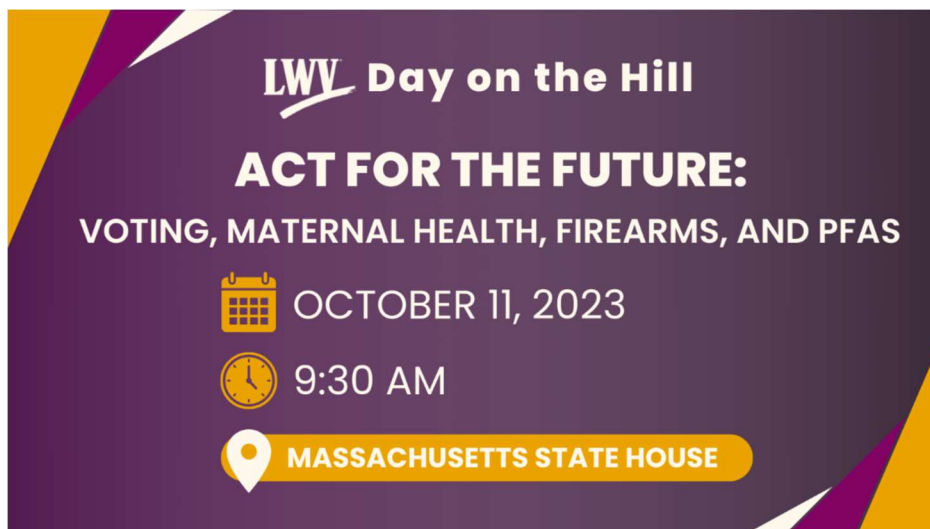
The next quarterly LWVMA DEI Peer Discussion Group's will be held on Saturday October 28, 2023, from 10:00-11:30 am on Zoom. Members Jeanne Morrison, Zippy Ostroy, and Marguerite Chatelier will report on their efforts to clarify for their fellow League members

how to work intentionally toward achieving diversity in the League. Newcomers are welcome and our encouraged to bring questions, comments, or reflections.

Please go on line to register at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlpd-ipqT8sHdYbpufgU-CY5xmCHHUdq-ij#/registration> and receive a zoom link to attend this meeting. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

The LWVMA DEI Resource List, to be found on [LWVMA.org](http://LWVMA.org), includes links to Audio/Video Resources on Basic Concepts, intended to increase general understanding of DEI among LWVMA Members, Asian American Resources, Racial Justice Resources, First Nations History and Perspective, and LWV History.

## LWVMA ADVOCACY



It's time to act together and raise our collective voices on Beacon Hill. Please join us for the LWVMA's annual **Day on the Hill**, on Wednesday, October 11, from 9:30 AM to 12 noon at the Massachusetts State House. The key note address for our opening session, ***Act for the Future: Voting, Maternal Health, Firearms, and PFAS***, will be delivered by Senate President Karen Spilka, and will touch on the League's current priority issues.

Day on the Hill is the League's own lobby day each legislative session. LWVMA advocacy this session has already led to victories for some of our policy priorities (See the October issue of this Bulletin.), and we need to keep up the momentum. Advocacy targets include voting rights, including same day registration; maternal health; gun violence prevention; and protection from "forever" chemicals known as PFAS. We will be briefed on the bills by our

legislative specialists, who follow their progress throughout the session, and then have the opportunity to go to our own legislators' offices to meet with them in person.

Register to attend at this link:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1SamFxXrv2e7KfbUyVFRpjsXPSBOo\\_KC5DxhOlp4XyhU/viewform?ts=64e65f48&edit\\_requested=true](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1SamFxXrv2e7KfbUyVFRpjsXPSBOo_KC5DxhOlp4XyhU/viewform?ts=64e65f48&edit_requested=true)

Please register by Wednesday, October 4 at 5:00 pm to allow time for LWVMA to schedule meetings with your legislators. Detailed agenda and advocacy packets will be provided. We are excited to be back in person for the first time since 2019. A hybrid option will be available to participate in the general program. Hope you can join us!

## **ACTION PRIORITY: PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE**

As noted, LWVMA has prioritized gun violence prevention legislation as one of four key areas for Day on the Hill October 11. Recent polling by Everytown for Gun Safety, released on September 23, 2023, shows overwhelming bipartisan support for gun safety policies across the Commonwealth:

- *84% of respondents, including 78% of gun owners, supported prohibiting the sale and possession of "ghost guns."*
- *84% supported increased training requirements for those seeking to obtain a license to carry.*
- *68% of respondents – Including a majority from every region in the Commonwealth – said they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports strengthening gun safety laws.*

## **ACTION PRIORITY: MATERNAL HEALTH** **MIDWIFE ADVOCACY DAY OCTOBER 5 ON BEACON HILL**

Massachusetts is facing a maternal health crisis. Midwives can help eliminate racial disparities in maternal health outcomes by improving patient autonomy and satisfaction. Midwives in Massachusetts do not have a path to licensure. Please join our partners in the **Bay State Birth Coalition** on **Thursday, October 5 at 12:30 PM at the State House** for Midwife Advocacy Day. LWVMA supports the midwife licensure bill S1457/H2209, ***An Act promoting access to midwifery care and out-of-hospital birth options***, which would create a pathway to licensure for Certified Professional Midwives and integrate these midwives into our existing maternal health care infrastructure. Register at <https://lwwma.org/midwife-advocacy-day-october-5/>.

## UPDATE ON NEW SEX EDUCATION GUIDELINES IN MA SCHOOLS: HEARING ON OCTOBER 10

The LWVMA has advocated for accurate, age-appropriate sex education in our public schools for over eleven years through our support of the **Healthy Youth Act bill** (H544/S268). Of great concern was that the MA sex education curriculum hadn't been updated since 1999, so schools did not have useful guidelines to follow. The state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education unanimously voted to approve a comprehensive new set of guidelines on Sept. 19. LWVMA submitted testimony supporting the new guidelines. The Healthy Youth Act will receive a **public hearing on October 10** and the LWVMA will submit further testimony in support of the bill. It calls for schools that teach sex ed to use up-to-date curriculum materials that are scientifically correct. The Act would require schools to decide between not teaching any sex education or teaching the accurate, updated materials.

### LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES

### LWVUS VOTER SERVICE

### NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

September 19, 2023, was National Voter Registration Day. On that day more than 450 Leagues across the country signed on as partners for NVRD observance, hosting both in-person and virtual voter registration events across the country. Since the inception of NVRD in 2012, the League has been the largest on-the-ground partner, and this year, **LWV reached over 100,000 voters!**

Also on September 19, the CEO of the League of Women Voters of the United States, Virginia Kase Solomón, issued the following statement in response to the U.S. House reintroduction of the ***John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act***:

*"Today our elected leaders are taking the necessary steps to preserve our democracy. The **John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R.14)** will restore the provisions stripped from the Voting Rights Act of 1965 while modernizing legislation that guarantees all voters, specifically voters of color, can exercise their right to vote. We commend the House on reintroducing this critical piece of legislation.*

*"Our freedom to vote is under attack, and this legislation is needed now more than ever. We've seen too many recent attempts to chip away at our democracy, with voter suppression efforts diluting the fundamental right to vote for voters of color. Our elected leaders must act*



*now before voters go to the polls in next year's elections. We cannot afford to wait any longer to restore access to the ballot. The **Voting Rights Act** has a long history of bipartisan support. It is the obligation of this new generation of lawmakers to respond to the call of the majority of Americans who support new legislation to protect the vote.*

*"We thank Rep. Terri Sewell for leading this fight to protect our democracy. We urge our elected leaders to work together in a bipartisan way to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act ..."*



Representative Terri Sewell, D. Alabama



## SAVE THE DATE

October 5, 2023 Bay State Birth Coalition Hearing, State House, 12:30 pm

October 6, 2023 LWV First Friday Forum: Proposed Hanscom Expansion  
Community Center, 9:30 am

October 10, 2023 Healthy Youth Act Bill hearing, State House

October 11, 2023 Day on the Hill MA Statehouse, 9:30 am

October 14, 2023 Media Misinformation, Barnstable H.S. 9:00-11:30 am

October 28, 2023 DEI Peer Group Discussion, Zoom, 10:00-11:30 am

November 3, 2023 LWV First Friday Forum: Marian Ryan,  
Middlesex District Atty Community Center, 9:30 am

November 15, 2023 VOTE411 Training 6:00 pm Zoom

December 1, 2023 LWV First Friday Forum: Lexington's Legislators  
Community Center, 9:30 am

December 13, 2023 VOTE411 Training 6:00 pm Zoom

February 15, 2024 Candidates' Night Clarke Middle School

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF 2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Convener: Margaret Coppe: [mecoppe@gmail.com](mailto:mecoppe@gmail.com) 339-223-0832

Treasurer: Lisah Rhodes [lisahrhodes@gmail.com](mailto:lisahrhodes@gmail.com) 781-307-3116

Communications: Jeanne Canale [j.canale@rcn.com](mailto:j.canale@rcn.com) 781-861-0287

First Friday: Eileen Zalisk: [zalilsk@aol.com](mailto:zalilsk@aol.com) 617-285-0383

Bulletin Editor: Wendy Manz [wendy\\_manz@yahoo.com](mailto:wendy_manz@yahoo.com) 781 863-1733

Voter Registration: Eileen Zalisk [zalilsk@aol.com](mailto:zalilsk@aol.com) 617-285-0383

Webmaster: Charles Hornig [chornig@charleshornig.org](mailto:chornig@charleshornig.org) 781-862-1112

P.O. Box 233, Lexington, MA

[www.lwvlexington.org/](http://www.lwvlexington.org/)

[lwv.lexington@gmail.com](mailto:lwv.lexington@gmail.com)

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 Lexington League Convenor, Margaret Coppe at [mecoppe@gmail.com](mailto:mecoppe@gmail.com). All League forums are free and open to the public.

### Contact Information for Legislators

U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren	309 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 202 244-4543
U.S. Senator Edward Markey	255 Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 202 224-2742
U.S. Representative Katherine Clark	2448 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515 202 225-2836
MA Senator Michael Barrett	Mike.Barrett@masenate.gov 617 722-1572
MA Senator Cindy Friedman	Cindy.Friedman@masenate.gov 617 722-1432
MA Representative Michelle Ciccolo	Michelle.Ciccolo@mahouse.gov 617 722-2210

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you'd like to submit an article for the November 2023 LWV LEXINGTON Bulletin, please send it to Wendy Manz at [wendy\\_manz@yahoo.com](mailto:wendy_manz@yahoo.com) prior to October 15, 2023.

