



The Voter, February 2026

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, Feb. 17, any time

CoverSC Call to Action

(see Janet Marsh's explanation below)

Monday, March 2, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

LWVSC Legislative Update

Zoom

Wednesday, March 4, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

LWVOP Board Meeting

Zoom

Contact Pat Spurlock for Zoom link.

Tuesday, March 10, (New Date & time), 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

LWVOP Public Meeting "Lost the Youth Vote? Let's Talk About Why"

Panel discussion led by Rylie DeWeese, LWVOP Intern.

Saturday, March 21 (New Date), 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

LWVSC League Education & Advocacy Day (LEAD)

Midlands Technical College, Beltline Campus

316 S. Beltline Blvd., Columbia, SC

Registration is still open. We will carpool.

Find out more information and register.

[Click for a list of local Public Meetings](#)

We must show our interest and determination to make a difference in the current political environment. Please make an effort to attend some of these meetings.

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President's Message

To say we have a full plate is an understatement. And your League is on track to make a significant impact on voter turnout for the 2026 primary and general elections. Our Upstate Votes: 2026 initiative will be our roadmap. We are already implementing elements of the initiative, with the \$550 grant we received from LWVSC to improve voter participation in both elections – particularly among underrepresented and first-time voters.

Two public meetings are part of our voter engagement goals. Next month, Rylie DeWeese will moderate a panel of Clemson students to discuss why young people don't vote. Rylie is our unpaid intern from Clemson. Adding her is crucial to our success with encouraging younger people to vote in the elections.

In April, Carolyn Bishop McLeod will moderate a panel discussion with SC Representative Neal Collins and Lawson Wetli, LWVSC Director of State and National Programs, about the importance of voting in primaries.

The Oconee and Pickens County State Legislative Delegates definitely are aware of our presence and priorities. Our positions on several legislative proposals were presented by several members at the annual Delegation Meetings. I opened the public comments at the Oconee County meeting with the League's official positions on three subjects:

- Oppose state and national legislation which would require proof of citizenship when ALL Americans register to vote and when they go to the polls to vote.

- Oppose amendments to state income tax rates which would make major changes in the state income tax and reduce state revenue by \$400 million. The bills favor the rich over everyone else.
- Oppose closing election primaries by party, a move that would disadvantage new voters, unaffiliated and independent voters.

We will be successful because all of our members are dedicated to 'Making Democracy Work.' The Voter Service Team led by Carolyn Bishop McLeod, Carol Asalon, Sharon Morganroth Burns, Linda Gorry, and Kathy Bargeron will require your involvement to make 'Upstate Votes: 2026' meet its goals. We will do it!

Pat Spurlock, President LWVOP

LWVOP March 10 Meeting

(Note the new date and time.)

"Lost the Youth Vote? Let's Talk About Why."

Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 5 - 6 pm

Clemson United Methodist Church, 300 Frontage Road, Clemson, SC,
3rd building on the right, the Christian Life Center

The public is invited.

The panel will be moderated by:

Rylie DeWeese, an intern with the League of Women Voters of Oconee and Pickens Counties and a graduating Clemson University senior with a double major in Political Science and Communication.

Panelists: 3-4 Clemson University students

Is it apathy? Disillusionment? Barriers to access? Or something deeper?

Young people represent one of the largest and most diverse segments of the population — yet they consistently vote at lower rates than older generations. Why?

Join us for a thought-provoking panel discussion examining the social, economic, cultural, and political factors influencing youth voter participation. Our panelists will discuss barriers to engagement, misconceptions about the political process, how student debt, housing insecurity and political corruption may shape young people's trust in political institutions, and strategies to empower the next generation of voters.



Rylie DeWeese

CoverSC Call to Action

The importance of getting health insurance coverage to South Carolinians has grown even more important with the loss of coverage from the Affordable Care Act by so many people. CoverSC has developed a new strategy, used successfully by many organizations, to advance the movement towards broader coverage. Below is a blurb you can use, modify as you choose. for the VOTER, Action Alert, website. The strategy requires that the “action” be done on Tuesday, February 17th.

More info? Go to CoverSC.org, [Get the Facts.](#)

Take action Tuesday, February 17. Call your State Senator and ask him to work with other legislators to find commonsense solutions that help working South Carolinians obtain health insurance. Call your Senator only. House Delegates will be contacted later.

- Too many workers earn too much to qualify for assistance, but too little to afford insurance.
- Without coverage, workers delay or don't get the care, hurting them and their families, employers, hospitals. This drives up the cost of health care for all.
- Use personal stories to emphasize the need.

DO NOT MENTION MEDICAID OR OBAMACARE. THEY ARE NEGATIVE TRIGGERS!

Phone Numbers:

- [Senator Thomas Alexander](tel:803.212.6220) 803.212.6220
- [Senator Rex Rice](tel:803.212.6116) 803.212.6116

Feel free to leave your message with a secretary or aide; it is unlikely the Senator will be available though you can ask for a call back.

If you can't make the call on February 17, please make it on the 18th or 19th. Ask others to do the same!

This strategy creates a "buzz" among legislators across the state and has worked successfully for other organizations. Watch for follow-up actions!

Pickens County Legislative Delegation Report

In South Carolina, each county has a legislative delegation made up of all members of the House and Senate whose districts cover a specific county or portion of a county. Members of the Pickens County Delegation are Sen. Thomas Alexander (representing parts of Clemson), Sen. Rex Rice (representing most of Pickens County), and state Representatives Thomas Beach, Phillip Bowers, Neal Collins, Adam Duncan, David Hiott, and William Whitmire.

A Google search turns up the following information: "[SC state delegations] serve as liaisons between citizens, local governments, and the state legislature. Considered among the most powerful in the nation, they influence local road projects, education policy, and appointments to local boards, commissions, and committees."

The Pickens County Delegation held its yearly public meeting at 7 pm on Jan. 12, 2026 in the Pickens County Career and Technology Center in Liberty. Karla Kelly opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance and introduced the delegation members. Delegation secretary Tiffany Chandler called on judicial candidates to introduce themselves. Pickens County Board appointments were then announced: Board of Disabilities and Special Needs, Ms. Susan Oliver;

Foster Care and Review, Ms. Debbie Ennis; Tri-County Tech Commissioners, Ms. Melanie McLane and Mr. Thomas Strange; and the Transportation Committee, four re-appointments plus Mr. Len Newman and Mr. Doyle Hundley.

The final item of business was comments from the public. Those who had signed up for 3-minute slots then spoke. Topics ranged from descriptions of services (e.g., guardian ad litem, veterans services) to positions on various matters before the legislature. Delegation members were asked to consider the economic and environmental downsides of computer data centers, to vote against legislation designed to reduce—and eventually eliminate—state income tax, consider health care needs, and other matters. One citizen provided a detailed account for the record of the actions of the county library board on board interference with library policy. The Legislative Delegation appoints members of the library board. Five members of LWVOP spoke in their personal capacity; no one spoke officially for the League this year.

Submitted by Ruth Reed

Membership Renewals

Wondering how you will know if it's time to renew your membership? You will receive an email notice from LWVUS shortly before your membership expires (one year from your last dues payment). To renew, go to LWVOP.org, click on JOIN/RENEW, and pay by credit card. If you have difficulty, contact [Janet Marsh](#) or [Ruth Reed](#). —*Ruth Reed*

Board Members

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- [Linda Gorry](#), Vice President
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- [Cherie Walker](#), Board member
- Shelia Crawford, NAACP
- Sharon Morgenroth Burns, Observer Corps
- Meredith Burr, VOTE411

Want to Submit to the Voter?

We are always looking for great content to share with our members. If you have something you wish to share, including the great work being done by League members, let us know! We need the content submitted by the 21st of each month for inclusion. You can email your submissions to [Pat](#) or [Christine](#).

[Learn More](#)



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