



## LWVC Executive Director Joins Democratic Leaders to Defend Voting Rights

by Sharon O’Hara

League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) Executive Director Jenny Farrell joined Democratic leaders and voting rights experts in Los Angeles on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026 for a critical “shadow hearing” on protecting our democracy. “Shadow hearings” are unofficial, ad-hoc meetings held by Congressional Democrats (minority party) to conduct oversight, highlight witness testimony, and raise awareness on issues when Republicans block official hearings. These hearings, often held in California, have focused on immigration crackdowns, voter security, and potential administration weaponization. Held at the Tateuchi Democracy Forum, officials discussed defending state voting systems and opposing proposed GOP-led voting restrictions, highlighting concerns over election security infrastructure.

Jenny was joined by these other expert witnesses: Sonni Waknin, UCLA Voting Rights Project; Hector Villagra, MALDEF; Justin Levitt, Loyola Law School; Darius Kemp, Common Cause California,

### Jenny Farrell’s Oral Testimony:

“Chair, Members of Congress, thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

I am here on behalf of the League of Women Voters of California, an organization founded over a century ago to fight for the rights of women to vote and become full participants in our democracy. Since 1920, our mission has remained the same: to ensure that every eligible voter can participate fully, freely, and confidently in our elections. That mission is as urgent today as it was then.

Across the country, we are seeing a troubling pattern: policies framed as “election integrity” that narrow access to the ballot. Chief among these are voter ID laws and proposals like the federal SAVE Act – and now, similar voter ID initiative likely headed to the California ballot this November.

[Continued on the next page]



Jenny Farrell  
LWVC Executive Director

### Inside This Issue

Do you have a Plan?	2
President’s Message	3
Need a Little Break?	4
Advocacy	5
Observer Corps Report	6
Groaners	6
Officers and Directors	7

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## **LWVC Executive Director Jenny Farrell** [Continued from page one]

These efforts are cut from the same cloth. They disproportionately burden voters who already face barriers. Women who have changed their names due to marriage may find that their identification does not match voter rolls. Communities of color, voters with disabilities, seniors, and low-income voters are less likely to have the required documentation readily available. These are not hypothetical concerns – they are predictable outcomes. And they are completely unnecessary.

Because the truth is: voter fraud is extraordinarily rare. And by extraordinarily, I mean you are more likely to be struck by lightning than you are to commit voter fraud in the United States. Yet we are being asked to restructure our entire democratic system around a problem that does not exist.

Meanwhile, we have real-world evidence of the harm these policies cause. In Kansas, a proof-of-citizenship requirement enacted in 2013 blocked over 30,000 eligible voters from registering. In Texas, after new voter ID requirements for mail ballots were implemented in 2022, more than 24,000 ballots were rejected in a single primary, meaning that 1 in 8 voters who had always voted by mail suddenly had their ballots thrown out due to new technical errors. These are cautionary tales. And we should heed them.

Here in California, we are working to move in the opposite direction – to expand access, not restrict it. The California Voting Rights Act of 2026 would restore key protections that have been weakened at the federal level, including a state-level pre-clearance system for jurisdictions with histories of discrimination, expanded language access for voters, and stronger tools to challenge practices that dilute or suppress votes.

Protecting democracy today requires vigilance on every front – policy, education, and litigation. But I want to be clear about something: California’s elections are strong. They are secure, accessible, and run by dedicated professionals who take their responsibility seriously. Our goal is not to fix a broken system – it is to protect a working one from unnecessary and harmful interference. Thank you”

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## **Do you have a plan to vote?** by Sue Guilford

Californians will receive their ballot for the June 2, 2026 election as early as May 4. I recently checked my voter registration and verified that I am signed up for Ballot Tracking, which is available to all California voters. I’ll be depositing my ballot into a ballot drop box at least a week before Election Day. I can log into the system where there is a record of which ballot drop box I used. If I vote in person, the ballot tracking system will have a record of voting in person.

### **Get Ready for the November Election**

A ballot measure that will require strict voter ID has just been approved for the November 3, 2026 election. League of Women Voters of California, along with League of Women Voters US, opposes such laws, which are not about preventing noncitizens from voting but are a modern form of voter suppression. It is against the law for noncitizens to vote and very few actually do vote. When you registered to vote in California, you swore, upon penalty of perjury (a felony) that you are a citizen and that the information you provided is correct.

Many of us are part of the largest group of voters who will be affected: married women who changed their name and therefore have a birth certificate that doesn’t match their legal name. A woman might need at least two certified legal documents, each costing \$50; the cost alone is a barrier for some.

All of us need to understand why League opposes voter ID and be equipped to explain to our friends and neighbors why we all need to vote NO on voter ID for California.

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# President's Message

by Gerri McNenny, LWVNOG president

## “Voting Rights Groups Vow to Defeat Measure Restricting Ballot Access”

Press release from [lww.org](http://lww.org) April 24, 2026

Today, a broad coalition of voting rights, disability rights, community and labor organizations, vowed to defeat an [anti-voter proposition](#) that is headed for the November ballot. This measure would make it harder for millions of eligible Californians to vote, expose voters to potential identity theft, and cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars.

“California’s elections are already secure,” said **David Trujillo, executive director of ACLU California Action**. “This is voter suppression, pure and simple and would create new obstacles to voting for countless Californians.”

This initiative is part of a dangerous national trend of anti-voter laws, meant to incite fear and distrust in our elections. We, as a coalition, promise to defeat this measure by exposing the false claims behind the initiative and the very real harms it would inflict on voters across California.

If voters approve this measure in the November 2026 election, the roughly 80% of Californians who vote by mail would be required to write the last four digits of their government ID number on the outside of their ballot envelope, exposing millions of voters to potential identity fraud.

“This measure makes it harder for Americans to cast a ballot and exposes voters to identity theft,” said **Brittany Stonesifer, senior voting rights & redistricting program manager at California Common Cause**. “It’s unsafe to require voters to list their sensitive personal data, including their driver’s license and social security numbers, on the outside of an envelope that passes through countless hands and sits in public records for nearly two years.”

Not everyone has an ID that could be used for voting. And getting a government ID in time for an election is not a simple process for many eligible voters.

“Getting an ID can require taking time off work, arranging transportation, gathering documents like birth certificates, and paying fees,” said **Jenny Farrell, executive director of the League of Women Voters of California**. “Those barriers fall hardest on people of color, seniors, people with low incomes, people with disabilities, and those in rural areas.”

People who vote in person would also be required to show a government ID that is current. Registered voters who change their names after getting married or divorced, who have recently moved, or whose records contain even a small clerical error could show up to vote and be denied a ballot. The measure would also require elections officials to do citizenship investigations of all California voters, even though eligibility is already verified during registration. If officials use databases that contain outdated or incomplete information, eligible voters are likely to be wrongly purged from the rolls through no fault of their own.

Election officials in California already verify voters’ eligibility through signature matching, voter registration databases, ballot tracking, and other safeguards throughout the voting process.

“This ballot measure is a multi-million dollar so-called solution to a problem that doesn’t exist,” said **Michael Gomez Daly, political director for the California Donor Table**. “Californians are not fooled. This totally unnecessary ballot measure is just part of Trump’s national campaign to stop people from voting who don’t support his authoritarian agenda.”

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## President's Message [Continued from previous page]

The coalition includes the following groups who invite others to join in this opposition campaign:

ACLU of Northern California	ACLU of Southern California
ACLU of San Diego and Imperial Counties	ACLU California Action
Asian Law Caucus	California Black Power Network
California Common Cause	California Donor Table
CHIRLA	Courage California
Disability Rights California	Equality California
For the People Action	League of Women Voters of California
NextGen Policy	VoteRiders

[For more information, read our voter ID fast facts.](#)

*The coalition has formed a campaign committee registered with the Fair Political Practices Commission to oppose the measure. Californians for Voting Rights, sponsored by California Donor Table & ACLU of Northern California, is the campaign committee registered with the Fair Political Practices Commission (ID #1489007) to oppose the measure.*

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## Need a little break?



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# Advocacy: A Quick Review

by Richard Larsen

**March 31:** The LWVUS March newsletter which included LWVUS news and activities along with the seven advocacy petitions and requests to contact our representatives shown below.

## CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

- \*Reject the anti-voter SAVE Act suite of bills!
- \*Let Congress know that federal immigration enforcement has gone too far!
- \*Tell Congress to stop interfering with DC!
- \*Demand that the Census count all people!
- \*Tell your representative to protect equal voting rights!
- \*Urge Congress to stand up for our democracy!
- \*Demand passage of the Equal Rights Amendment!

**April 3:** LWVUS petition against ICE actions. Demand that Senators reject additional funding, investigate the use of force, and implement steps to protect the constitutional rights of civilians to peacefully protest.

**April 8:** ACLU invite to a gubernatorial forum. The ACLU is joining with the California Immigrant Policy Center and the California Latino Legislative Caucus Foundation to host Nuestra Voz 2026, a gubernatorial forum designed to elevate community voices and hold candidates accountable on the issues that matter to our communities.

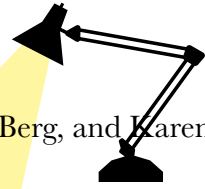
**April 21:** LWVUS requested a petition to reject any additional funding for ICE and CBP.

**April 24:** LWVUS repeat request of April 14.

**April 23:** LWVUS call on Voting Rights Act 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

On **Monday, May 4, at 5:00 PM ET**, LWV National will host a **virtual field call on the Voting Rights Act 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Day of Action** including the menu of ways leagues can engage and build power this summer. The call will introduce the Day of Action framework, walk through activation options, and preview the June workshop series that will equip leagues with the tools to succeed, including support for deep canvassing, people's hearings, cross-movement advocacy days, voter registration drives, faith/community roundtables, town halls, and phone banks. Click on the LWV logo to register.





## **Observer Corps Report** by Ruth Zemke, Sherlan Neblett, Pamela Berg, and Karen Bender

On **4/14**, the **Orange County Board of Supervisors** approved an \$800,000 contract with Angels Baseball for behavioral health and public health outreach. Supervisors Sarmiento and Foley voted “No.” Supervisor Sarmiento thought the money should go to improve County outreach and Supervisor Foley pointed out that alcohol advertisements often come right after the County ads. They both thought it was not a productive way to advertise the issue.

Supervisor Sarmiento commented on the increasing threats now being made to the Muslim community online.

The **Fullerton City Council** discussions are frequently tense these days. On **4/7**, voices were raised and Council members spoke over each other during discussion about the motion rejecting the city traffic engineer’s recommendation for a traffic light at Euclid and Valley View. City Manager Manfro stated that other alternatives have been attempted without successfully changing traffic patterns. The Mayor directed staff to “come up with something” without assistance from the Planning Commission.

At the **Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District meeting on 4/14**, it was noted that yet another charter school, California Republic Leadership Academy has been approved by the Orange County Board of Education. This charter school will be established at Esperanza High School for the 2026-27 school year. The district shoulders significant costs to comply with Prop 39.

Notably, a group of students from several high schools approached the School Board requesting environmental issues be included in the district curriculum. The students and the Superintendent collaborated to produce a “doable” resolution 25-30: “advancing environmental literacy and sustainability in PYLUSD. The resolution included curriculum, teacher training, student engagement, community partnerships “to provide students with hands-on, real-world learning experiences in sustainability,” and sustainable practices for the district. The resolution passed 3-2 (Buck, Anderson, Quintero – Yes; Blades and Frazier – No).

## **Groaners**

I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.

A rubber band gun was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.

No matter how much you push the envelope, it’ll still be stationery.

A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.

A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.

A hole has been found in the nudist camp wall. The police are looking into it.

Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway. One hat said to the other, “You stay here; I’ll go on ahead.

I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.



## LWVNOC Current Officers and Directors

### Officers

President	Gerri McNenny
Vice-President	Sharon O'Hara
Secretary	Ruth Zemke
Treasurer	Karen Bender

Web Host	Ed Smith
Special Events	Maggie Lee Gerri McNenny
Nominating Comm.	Barbara Dunsheath Betty Hammond Karen Bender

### Directors

Action/Advocacy	Richard Larsen
Lunch w/ League	Betty Hammond Jennifer Trafford Maggie Lee
Co-Membership	Marcy Fry Maggie Lee
Voter Services	Sue Guilford
Speakers Committee	Gerri McNenny

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Read with League	Charlene Brotman
Student Outreach	Jodi Balma
Facebook	Ruth Zemke
Observer Corps	Karen Bender

E-mail Blasts	Maggie Lee
<i>Voter</i> Editor	Jim Hill

### 2025-2026 Focus Committee Heads

Federal Judiciary	Ruth Zemke
Climate Sustainability	Sharon O'Hara
Education	Marcy Fry