



# OHIO VOTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OHIO FALL 2015

## Fair Districts = Fair Elections

*LWV Ohio urges you to Vote YES on state Issue 1 on November 3!*

This year is a first for Ohio. In the decades-long fight to pass meaningful reform to end gerrymandering, every ballot issue faced strong opposition. Not so this time. This year, for the first time, we have a reform plan that is supported by both major political parties and a diverse list of endorsing organizations from across the political spectrum. Also for the first time, there is no known opposition to Issue 1.

State Issue 1, Fair Districts for Ohio, is the best chance we have ever had to pass a ballot issue that writes strong rules for **Fair Districts** into our state constitution.

You may ask, if there is no opposition to Issue 1, why do we need a strong campaign to pass it? The answer is simple. When voters find an issue confusing, they tend to vote no.

Redistricting and gerrymandering are terms many people do not know or understand. That is why we have adopted a very simple message: Fair Districts = Fair Elections.

We need your help to spread this message!

### Introducing the Fair Districts = Fair Elections Coalition

A coalition of LWV Ohio, Common Cause Ohio, and other good government advocates have **formed the "Fair Districts = Fair Elections" coalition**. This coalition is supporting the Issue 1 campaign by sharing a non-partisan good government perspective with Ohio voters about the problems with gerrymandering. So anytime you see the "Fair Districts = Fair Elections" logo, you know it's us!

**Fair Districts = Fair Elections**



**VOTE YES  
on Issue 1**

yesforissue1.org

The Fair Districts Coalition created a **new website** for Issue 1 campaign news: [www.yesforissue1.org](http://www.yesforissue1.org)

Visit [yesforissue1.org](http://yesforissue1.org) to read editorials in support of Issue 1, see a list of organizations and individuals who have endorsed Issue 1, read blog posts and other commentary, and more.

### New Materials Available

LWV Ohio and the LWVO Education Fund have produced some new materials to help describe the problem (Ohio's gerrymandered districts) and the solution (pass Issue 1 to enact reform).

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In late August, the LWVO Education Fund published a new report, "Predictable Results: A Report from the League of Women Voters of Ohio Comparing 2011 Gerrymandering to the 2012 and 2014 Election Results." The report concluded that Ohio's legislative districts are rigged to yield completely predictable results. Voters can predict with 97 percent to 100 percent accuracy which party will win every single legislative race in the state, because, thanks to gerrymandering, the districts are that rigged.

LWV Ohio has also produced a new postcard with the "Fair Districts = Fair Elections" and "Vote YES on Issue 1" message. You will find some free sample copies in the center of this issue of the *Voter*. Since the official bipartisan campaign won't be producing materials until closer to the election, we felt it was important to have some materials available in September and October for local League fall events.

Both the "Predictable Results" report and the Issue 1 cards are available on the state league website, [www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org), or you can call the office at 614-469-1505 to order print copies.

**LWV Ohio endorsed Issue 1 "Fair Districts for Ohio" redistricting reform and we need your help to convince Ohio voters to VOTE YES ON ISSUE 1 this fall.**

#### How you can help:

- **Distribute materials and spread the message to vote YES on Issue 1!**
  - ⇒ Distribute "Yes on Issue 1" postcards and bookmarks. Thanks to generous donors, LWVO was able to design and print materials that can be used as handouts at League events and other events in your community. You can order copies from the LWVO office or download and print your own from our website. ***A few FREE materials are included in the middle of this newsletter for you to cut out and share!***
  - ⇒ Distribute materials at libraries, community centers, local events, etc.
  - ⇒ We hope to make additional materials available soon including bumper stickers, buttons, and yard signs.
- **Make a donation to LWVO to help us print and distribute more materials.** Gifts of any amount will be put to good use! A tear-out donation form is included in the middle of this newsletter.
- **Join our #YesIssue1 Photo Campaign.** Print out a copy of the "Fair Districts = Fair Elections / Yes on Issue 1" logo above, take your photo with it, and post it on Facebook and Twitter with #YesIssue1 and the website [www.yesforissue1.org](http://www.yesforissue1.org)
- **Add a "Yes on Issue 1" message to your email signature.** Create your own or use this sample: "Vote #YesIssue1 on Nov. 3rd! [yesforissue1.org](http://www.yesforissue1.org)"
- **Encourage your other organizations to endorse Issue 1.** You can endorse online at <http://www.yesforissue1.org/endorsements.html>
- **Include a Yes on Issue 1 plug in newsletters** for your local League and other organizations you belong to (we have a template available).
- **Write letters to the editor and op-eds** supporting Issue 1. Be sure to include community papers and ethnic press too!
- **We have a team of speakers available for events.** Please send requests to the state League office.
- The Fair Districts coalition is hoping to line up teams of **volunteers to hand out Yes on Issue 1 cards at early voting locations** on the Saturday, Sunday, and Monday before Election Day. We would greatly appreciate help recruiting volunteers.

## Voters' Guide State Ballot Issues

### Issue 1: Creates a bipartisan, public process for drawing legislative districts

(Proposed by Joint Resolution of the General Assembly)

Proposing to enact new Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of Article XI and to repeal Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 of Article XI of the Constitution of the State of Ohio.

A YES vote means approval of the constitutional amendment.

A NO vote means disapproval of the constitutional amendment.

A majority YES vote is required for the amendment to be adopted.

If approved, the proposed amendment will take effect immediately after Election Day.

#### League Explanation of Issue 1:

Issue 1 would amend the Ohio Constitution to change the way state legislative districts (but not U.S. Congressional districts) are determined. Every 10 years, Ohio draws new legislative district lines based on changes in population as reported in U.S. Census Bureau data. Issue 1 replaces the Apportionment Board with a bipartisan Ohio Redistricting Commission. If Issue 1 passes, members of the Commission will include:

- The Governor
- Auditor of State
- Ohio Secretary of State
- Appointee by the Speaker of the Ohio House
- Appointee by the President of the Ohio Senate
- Appointee by the Minority Leader of Ohio House
- Appointee by the Minority Leader of Ohio Senate

The Ohio Redistricting Commission will be responsible for creating district maps for the Ohio House and the Ohio Senate. Issue 1 establishes rules for map-making. It ensures compactness and keeps communities together by prohibiting splitting governmental units, like counties or cities, unless necessary. Issue 1 prohibits partisan gerrymandering. No General Assembly map shall be drawn primarily to favor or disfavor a political party. Issue 1 creates more transparent map-making by requiring public hearings.

If the amendment is passed, it will become part of the constitution immediately; however, the new rules for drawing districts will not be applied until the next time districts are redrawn beginning January 1, 2021, after the next U.S. Census.

Issue 1 encourages bipartisan map-making. For the maps to last ten years, at least two members of the minority party will have to vote in favor of it. If only one party supports a particular map, the district lines will only last four years. Map-making will be subjected to stricter criteria, including the requirement that the districts reflect the statewide partisan preferences of voters, sometimes called representational fairness.

#### PRO:

1. Prohibits partisan gerrymandering-- "No General Assembly district plan shall be drawn primarily to favor or disfavor a party" will be written into the rules in the Ohio Constitution.
2. Requires transparency and public hearings, encouraging accountability to the electorate.
3. Districts will better protect community cohesiveness by limiting government units such as counties and cities from being split.
4. Eliminates the continuation of previous gerrymandering by removing language from the current Ohio Constitution that requires new maps to be "reasonably consistent" with old maps.

#### CON:

1. Many Ohioans are not Republican or Democrat. Third parties and Independents are not represented on the Commission.
2. Issue 1 does not address the process for determining U.S. Congressional districts.
3. The Ohio Redistricting Commission is not independent from legislators; legislative members can still influence the process.
4. Bipartisan Commission members can make "sweetheart deals" that can result in districts that are not representative of the state's overall partisan preferences.

## Voters' Guide State Ballot Issues

### Issue 2: Anti-monopoly amendment; protects the initiative process from being used for personal economic benefit

#### (Proposed by Joint Resolution of the General Assembly)

Proposing to amend Section 1e of Article II of the Constitution of the State of Ohio.

A YES vote means approval of the constitutional amendment.

A NO vote means disapproval of the constitutional amendment.

A majority YES vote is required for the amendment to be adopted.

If approved, the proposed amendment will take effect immediately after Election Day.

#### League Explanation of Issue 2:

Issue 2 would prohibit an initiative petition amendment to the Ohio Constitution that would give special business rights to a certain person or entity. Specifically, Issue 2 would prohibit an initiative that creates a monopoly, cartel, or oligopoly; specifies or determines a tax rate; or confers a commercial interest, commercial right, or commercial license to any person or entity for the purpose of exclusively enriching its members and prohibiting others from engaging in similar enterprises.

If Issue 2 passes, the Ohio Ballot Board will be required to evaluate any proposed initiative petition to determine if it violates the prohibition above by creating a limited commercial interest. If such an initiative is proposed, the Ballot Board will be required to separate the proposed initiative into two parts – one part asking voters to override the limited business interest rule, and the second part describing the proposed new initiative – with both parts needing a majority vote for the initiative to pass.

If both Issue 2 and Issue 3 are approved by the voters, it is unclear what will happen, because they would create conflicting sections within the state constitution. The Ohio Supreme Court will likely have to resolve the matter if both issues pass.

#### PRO:

1. Exclusive financial deals for special interests should not be enshrined in our state constitution.
2. The state constitution should be used to protect fundamental rights for all individuals, not cluttered with special interests.
3. Nineteen states have constitutional provisions banning monopolies and protecting free and fair commerce; Ohio should too.

#### CON:

1. The constitution should not be amended to interfere with the constitutional initiative process and block a measure approved by the voters.
2. The language is too vague and may unintentionally preclude future policy or tax issues from being brought forward as an initiative.
3. Issue 2 gives the Ballot Board too much discretion to declare a proposed initiative to be a monopoly and force it to jump through two hurdles instead of one.

### Reminder about LWVUS Studies

#### Constitutional Amendment Study timeline & links:

- \* Late summer & fall 2015 - Local Leagues hold consensus meetings.
- \* December 1, 2015 - Consensus reports (electronic) from Leagues due to LWVUS.
- \* Resource page: <http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/constitutional-amendment-study>

#### Money in Politics Review timeline & links:

- \* Fall 2015 - Study guide and consensus questions posted.
- \* Fall & winter 2015 - Leagues hold consensus meetings.
- \* February 1, 2016 - Consensus reports (electronic) from Leagues due to LWVUS.
- \* Resource page: <http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/money-politics-review>

## Voters' Guide State Ballot Issues

### **Issue 3: Grants a monopoly for the commercial production and sale of marijuana for recreational and medicinal purposes**

#### **(Proposed by Initiative Petition)**

Proposing to add Section 12 of Article XV of the Constitution of the State of Ohio.

A YES vote means approval of the constitutional amendment.

A NO vote means disapproval of the constitutional amendment.

A majority YES vote is required for the amendment to be adopted.

If approved, the proposed amendment will take effect 30 days after Election Day.

#### League Explanation of Issue 3:

Issue 3 has a two-fold objective: (1) to legalize marijuana for personal and medical use and (2) to establish rules for growth and sales.

Growth and cultivation of marijuana will be limited to ten pre-determined, specific “grow sites” situated throughout the state. The ten sites already have designated investors. There will also be a number of pre-determined “quality control” sites throughout the state to test the product being cultivated. About 1,100 retail outlets will be allowed to sell marijuana, but they must buy it only from the ten specified sites and cannot develop their own supplies.

Individuals may grow up to four plants and possess up to eight ounces of actual product at one time. The four plants must also be bought from the ten specified wholesale grow sites. Under this initiative, individuals possessing or cultivating over 100 grams of marijuana would be committing a felony. Selling marijuana outside of the sanctioned outlets would also be a felony, with a possible sentence of up to one year in prison.

#### PRO:

1. Marijuana will, within the strict limits specified in the initiative, become legal to cultivate, use, and sell in Ohio for medicinal and personal use.
2. Issue 3 creates rules for a tightly controlled industry. The system of designated grow sites and quality control testing areas will ensure that the marijuana grown at these sites will conform to standards of public safety.
3. Issue 3 will create tens of thousands of jobs in Ohio and will eventually generate millions of dollars in tax revenue to support local government services.

#### CON:

1. The state constitution should be used to protect the fundamental rights of all individuals, not to enshrine an extremely detailed plan creating exclusive financial deals for a group of special interest investors.
2. The initiative sets up an exclusive business scheme that eliminates competition to such an extent that independent business owners could be permanently locked out of what is projected to be a billion-dollar market and individual users who do not abide by the strict restrictions will still be subject to criminal penalties.
3. Issue 3 will flood Ohio with marijuana and marijuana-infused products, like candy and cookies, that put the public health and safety of Ohio’s adults and children in danger.

## LWV Ohio's Position on Statewide Fall Ballot Issues

On September 14, 2015, the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO) announced the following positions on state Issues 1, 2, and 3 for the November 3, 2015 ballot.

### Issue 1: *Support*

LWVO's board voted earlier this year to formally endorse the Fair Districts for Ohio redistricting reform proposal that will appear as Issue 1 on the November 2015 ballot. We have been a staunch supporter of the need for redistricting reform in Ohio and have been advocating for such reform for the last forty years. We are pleased that the Ohio General Assembly came together to approve a bipartisan measure to improve how we draw state legislative districts, and we wholeheartedly support its approval by the voters.

### Issues 2 & 3:

The League of Women Voters of Ohio has a position, adopted in May 1968, on the Ohio Constitution:

*"LWVO believes a constitution should be a clearly stated body of fundamental principles. It should provide for the flexible operation of government and be logically organized and internally consistent."*

Based on this position, LWVO opposed the 2009 initiative to write casinos into the Ohio Constitution.

For this same reason, LWVO takes the following position on Issue 2 and Issue 3 on the November 3, 2015 Ohio ballot.

**Issue 2 - *Support*** Issue 2 because it protects the constitution as a document of general principles.

**Issue 3 - *Oppose*** Issue 3 because the constitution should be a document of general principles.

However, LWVO is *Neutral* on the aspect of Issue 3 pertaining to marijuana as we have no applicable League position.

## LWV Moment in History

By Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick, LWVO Co-President

The 1920 election was simultaneously exhilarating and disappointing to the suffragists who had fought so long and so hard to get women the vote. Expectations were high for a voter turnout of at least thirty million, but, in the end, slightly more than twenty-six million votes were cast. Because Georgia and Mississippi required voters to register four months before an election, women in those states were unable to participate in the election. For every five men who voted, only three women did. A similar disparity would last throughout the twentieth century.

Nevertheless, excitement ran high among those who did vote. On Nov. 3, the *Boston Daily Globe* reported that in many places "women, old and young, married and single, most of them under no compulsion to vote at that daylight hour, had come forward with pride and eagerness to be among the first," and the *New York Times* stated that "Women showed intense interest in the election. In many districts, more women than men went to the polling places in the morning."

In a prepared statement, Carrie Chapman Catt affirmed her belief that the League of Women Voters had a role to play in elections, noting that "the vote came to women in many states too late for the best preparatory work to be done. Political parties worked to get their own women to register and vote the straight ticket; the League of Women Voters worked to get all women to register, regardless of political faith, and urged them to choose their own party affiliations with the aid of reason. Had the vote [for ratification] come earlier, more women would have voted and more women would have been trained for election work....Women have good and sufficient reason to be fairly well satisfied with this, their first participation in a great national contest."

The League's two-fold mission, to educate voters and to improve our political institutions, had begun.

Fair Districts = Fair Elections



yesforissue1.org

Election Day  
is Tuesday,  
November 3, 2015  
Polls are open  
6:30am to 7:30pm

\*\*\*

**Vote YES on Issue 1!**

\*\*\*

*Paid for by the League of Women  
Voters of Ohio*

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## Help spread the “Yes on Issue 1” message!

Please cut out and share these “YES on Issue 1” bookmarks and cards with your family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors.

Tell them you plan to VOTE YES ON ISSUE 1 and ask them to vote yes too.

Visit [yesforissue1.org](http://yesforissue1.org) to order more copies.

# Fair Districts = Fair Elections



# VOTE YES on Issue 1

yesforissue1.org

# We need your help to pass Issue 1!

*Please make a donation today to help us spread the “Yes on Issue 1” message across Ohio.*

Here’s what your gift will do:

- ◆ \$65 - print 1,000 postcards
- ◆ \$100 - print & distribute 1,500 postcards
- ◆ \$200 - print 3,000 postcards
- ◆ \$300 - print 5,000 postcards or 10,000 bookmarks
- ◆ \$500 - print & distribute 8,000 postcards
- ◆ \$1000 - print 15,000 postcards
- ◆ \$2000 and up - begin producing bumper stickers and yard signs

Fair Districts = Fair Elections



**VOTE YES  
on Issue 1**

yesforissue1.org

**Yes! I want to help pass Issue 1 to ensure Ohio’s future includes fair districts and fair elections.**

Enclosed is my donation for (please circle one):

\$100   \$200   \$250   \$500   \$1000   \$2500   \$5000   other \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to LWV Ohio or make a secure donation online via PayPal at [www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org) and click “Donate.”*

\* Contributions to LWV Ohio, a 501(c)4 organization are not tax deductible.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



Fair Districts = Fair Elections



[yesforissue1.org](http://yesforissue1.org)

Issue 1 will:

- Establish clear rules for creating fair districts.
- Require transparency and public input.
- Create a bipartisan process that requires both parties to work together.

*Paid for by the League of Women Voters of Ohio*

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	<p><b>Check &amp; update your voter registration, look up your polling place, request an absentee ballot, and more at <a href="http://www.MyOhioVote.com">www.MyOhioVote.com</a></b></p>
<p><b>2015 Ohio Election Dates</b></p> <p>Oct. 5 - Voter registration deadline</p> <p>Oct. 6 - Start of absentee &amp; early in-person voting</p> <p>Oct. 31 - 12noon deadline for absentee ballot requests</p> <p>Nov. 2 - Deadline to postmark mailed absentee ballots</p> <p>Nov. 3 - Election Day! Polls are open 6:30am to 7:30pm;</p> <p>7:30pm deadline to drop off absentee ballots at Board of Elections</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <i>Visit the League of Women Voters of Ohio at <a href="http://www.lwvohio.org">www.lwvohio.org</a></i>  <i>follow us on  <a href="https://twitter.com/lwvohio">@lwvohio</a> or  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/lwvohio">Facebook</a></i> </p>	

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## Primary Election Systems 101 (Fact Sheet #1)

By Lynda Mayer and Dianne Herman, Co-Chairs, PES Study Committee

Our new LWVO Study Committee for Primary Election Systems has been off and running since mid-Summer. Our study does not address presidential primaries, but focuses only on state, local and Congressional primaries. So far, we have tracked down and digested over 40 sources, read relevant Ohio statutes, and interviewed experts at the Secretary of State's office plus top people at over 10 county Boards of Elections and 20 city halls. Here's some of what we've learned so far:

**History of Primaries in the U.S.** -- Before the Progressive Era in the very early 1900's, candidates were chosen at party conventions and caucuses, controlled by small numbers of party leaders and interest groups. Starting with Wisconsin in 1904, individual states began to democratize the process, with 44 states enacting laws by 1910 to turn nominations over to voters in primary elections. The direct primary was considered a major reform, introducing competitiveness and opening up the political process to rank-and-file party members.

**Types of Primaries Nationwide.** -- State primary election systems in the United States come in two main varieties -- *Closed* and *Open*. By *Closed*, we mean that the only voters permitted to vote in one party's primary are registered members of that political party. The National Conference of State Legislators lists only 11 states with closed primaries. *Open* primaries, on the other hand, come in several varieties, from open partisan primaries where voters can easily cross-over (11 states), to "*Top-Two*" *nonpartisan* primaries (4 states), to *hybrid* systems (24 states). Details and even terminology vary. All *open* primaries permit unaffiliated voters to participate.

**Ohio's Statewide & Congressional Primaries.** -- The Ohio Constitution (§5.07) says that "all nominations for elective state, district, county and municipal offices shall be made at direct primary elections...." No jurisdictions of less than 2000 population have primaries unless their electors petition for that right. The Ohio Revised Code contains many statutes (§3513), beginning with this key one: "Primary elections shall be held for the purpose of nominating persons as candidates of *political parties*." An official at the Secretary of State's office explained that Ohio has essentially a *closed* primary system, because *only* members of a party may vote in that party's primary. An unaffiliated voter may select a partisan ballot, but by doing so automatically becomes a member of that party. State Law spells out a process whereby election officials may challenge a voter affiliated with one party who requests the ballot of another. Surprisingly, the challenge law is enforced in some counties but not in others. Nevertheless, the law exists, and therefore Ohio's statewide system must be said to be virtually *closed*. Municipal and other primaries, however, will be addressed in our next article.

Our committee of eight has much more work to do, including interviewing county and local officials, academic experts and persons in other cities and states which have primary systems different from Ohio's. We could use more help, so please let the state League know if you would like to join the Study Committee. And stay tuned for the next Ohio Voter.

**New Ohio Voter Service Listserv!** What can we do about candidates who refuse to participate in the voter guide or candidate forums? Is there any way around the "empty chair" debate rule? Every League wrestles with voter services questions, and it's time we had a place to discuss these and other questions. That is why we are happy to announce the new Ohio League voter service email listserv. We hope that the list will serve as a helpful forum to share questions, advice and best practices with one another.

We need your help identifying who to include on this list. There is no limit to how many people from each League can be on the list. It's up to you. Some Leagues have just one voter service person who miraculously does all voter service related work, and other Leagues have a team of people who cover everything from the voter guide or Vote411 to voter registration to candidate forums. Please email the name and preferred email address of anyone who should be added to the list to [lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org](mailto:lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org).

## Making THE ASK at Your League's Election Events

By Meg Flack and Pat Simons, MLD Co-Coordinators

With election-season upon us, Leagues have many great opportunities to *intentionally* reach out to potential new members. By consistently and intentionally asking potential members to join in our work, our Leagues can grow and become more effective in our communities. Here are some suggestions from the Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) program for "making THE ASK":

### IN PUBLICATIONS

Remind potential members they are invited and welcome to join the League by using the following language in Voters, at the bottom of press releases, in fliers for League events, and other publications:

"The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. Join LWV and be directly involved in shaping the important issues to keep our community strong, safe and vibrant. As an LWV member, you are a part of an organization where smart, active leaders work to create change in their communities. To join us please visit: PROVIDE YOUR LEAGUE'S CONTACT INFO/WEBSITE HERE"

\*\*Leagues can even use this text as a membership ad in your Voter's Guide. However, in a Voter's Guide this must be paid for with your League's operating funds; NOT education fund monies.\*\*

### AT A CANDIDATES' FORUM

From the podium, the moderator can include the following message in his/her opening remarks –

"The League of Women Voters is a trusted, nonpartisan political organization. Our members do the hands-on work to safeguard democracy. While we never endorse a candidate, we are directly involved in shaping the important issues to keep our community strong. As an LWV member, I have the opportunity to contribute in a leadership role (such as this one) that has a great impact on local, state and even national issues. If you are interested in learning about how you can make a similar impact, I would encourage you to pick up some of the League's information available here tonight or visit our web site at XXX."

### AT AN ISSUES FORUM

From the podium, the moderator could include the following message in his/her opening remarks –

"The League of Women Voters is a trusted, nonpartisan political organization. Our members do the hands-on work that safeguard democracy and lead to civic improvement. As an LWV member, I have the opportunity to contribute in a leadership role (such as this one) that has a great impact on local, state and even national issues. If you are interested in learning about how you can make a similar impact, I would encourage you to pick up some of the League's information available here tonight or visit our web site at XXX."

### AT ANY EVENT

We can make it easy to join by using the following techniques to attract new members at any and every League event.

- Have League materials (such as membership brochures and copies of the Voter) available.
- Wear a League button and prominently display the League logo on podium signs, etc. to remind attendees that the League is hosting the event.
- Engage individuals with your own personal League success story.
- Have membership ambassadors at the doors greeting attendees and letting them know they can join the League.
- Ask individuals to sign a sign-in sheet, providing their name, phone number, and email address. After the event, follow-up with non-members to see if they enjoyed the event and if they'd like to join the League. Let them know about upcoming events to attend, too. If they aren't ready to join the League now, they still may join later.
- Most importantly, make sure to remember to ASK people to join the League.

## From the Co-Presidents' Desk

### Education & Advocacy: Hand in Hand for Voter Empowerment

This is preaching to the choir, of course, but listen again to what Carrie Chapman Catt said in 1920 (noted by Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick elsewhere in this issue):

*“Political parties worked to get their own women to register and vote the straight ticket; the League of Women Voters worked to get all women to register, regardless of political faith, and urged them to choose their own party affiliations **with the aid of reason.**”* [emphasis mine]

Here we see the abiding premise of LWV: informed citizens are empowered to act and think for themselves, and may affiliate (or not) with a political party that best represents their ideals and concerns, without pressure from the League to choose any specific candidate or party. True representative democracy cannot thrive without a widely engaged and educated citizenry. Education – and advocacy to inform and advise – is the foundation of being political but not partisan.



Even with an informed populace, democracy is all but lost when partisanship becomes so deeply entrenched that politicians choose their voters – rather than voters choosing politicians – through gerrymandering. This is why LWVO is advocating on behalf of Issue 1, alongside other groups, officials and legislators backing **Fair Districts for Ohio**. The list of endorsements for Issue 1 is updated regularly by Common Cause: [tinyurl.com/Issue1Endorsements](https://tinyurl.com/Issue1Endorsements).

Reforming redistricting has been the work of LWV Ohio for decades. The League's most recent report, **Predictable Results II**, has received excellent media coverage, including a LWVUS guest blog by our own Carrie Davis. Please share this widely: [tinyurl.com/PredictableResults](https://tinyurl.com/PredictableResults).

Each local league leader should have received a note about this LWVUS blog post from your State Board Liaison. We'd love to hear your response! Contact your Liaison anytime and let us know how we can work with you. The Local League Liaison relationship can help strengthen ties across all of the Ohio leagues, and make our common work more effective.

Other state-wide ballot issues are being studied by the State Board. Advice from the Board on Issues 2 and 3 will be sent to local leagues at the conclusion of the Board meeting on September 12. Finally, a round of applause to everyone involved in [JudicialVotesCount.org](https://JudicialVotesCount.org), another essential source of information for all Ohio voters. See more information elsewhere in this issue.

— Alison Ricker and Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick

## Executive Director's Column:



Carrie L. Davis

**Providing Ohio Voters with one more tool for casting an informed vote**

Have you ever skipped voting for judges on your ballot, because you didn't know enough about them? You're not alone. Every election, up to a quarter of voters skip voting in judicial races.

According to a recent poll conducted in fall 2014, the primary reason Ohio voters skip judicial races is because they don't have enough information to make an informed choice.

Problem solved. [JudicialVotesCount.org](http://JudicialVotesCount.org) is a new online voter guide that launched on September 1, 2015.

Judicial Votes Count is a joint project of Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor; the Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron, which houses the website; the League of Women Voters of Ohio; the Ohio State Bar Association; the Ohio Newspaper Association; and the Ohio Association of Broadcasters.



In addition to candidate profiles, the website features information about what judges do, descriptions about the duties of different courts, and brief videos of former judges explaining how the court system works.

With 2015 being an odd-numbered year, municipal court judges are up for election on Nov. 3 in Ohio. Next year, [JudicialVotesCount.org](http://JudicialVotesCount.org) will include information on candidates for the state Supreme Court, appeals courts, common pleas courts, and county courts, as judges for those courts are elected in even-numbered years.

Please help us promote this new resource! Local Leagues and other community groups are encouraged to add a link to Judicial Votes Count to your own websites. Consider reprinting this article or excerpts of it in your local *Voter* newsletter. Local Leagues are also welcome to use the judicial candidate profiles and questionnaire responses in your local Voters' Guides or Vote411. Contact the state office for details.



**To Get More From LWV OHIO in 2015**

**1. CHECK OUT THE MEMBER AREA OF [www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org)**

You will find recent Ohio League Leader Updates and important information for local Leagues and members.

**2. JOIN THE CONVERSATION**

The first Tuesday of every month at noon, join us for an all-member conference call to discuss an issue of importance to the League with members across the state. Topics have included redistricting, money in politics and education funding.

**3. BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR ACTION ALERTS AND E-NEWS UPDATES!**

All League members receive E-News updates to keep them connected to the work of LWV Ohio. Periodically, when legislation or policy is on the move, LWV Ohio will reach out to you and your local League to take action. We count on you to amplify the voice of LWV Ohio with your phone calls, emails and letters.

**4. SIGN UP FOR THE LEAGUE LEADER UPDATES**

The League Leader Updates, LWV's monthly e-newsletter filled with updates on everything from membership to advocacy to finance/grant opportunities to voters' service to upcoming events, is now accessible to **all** League members. Simply email [lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org](mailto:lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org) or call 614-469-1505 to subscribe.

**5. LIKE US ON FACEBOOK AND FOLLOW US ON TWITTER**

LWV Ohio posts breaking news and member updates on Facebook and Twitter regularly. Get news quickly and easily share it with your friends and network.

## Thank You to All of Our Donors!

The League of Women Voters of Ohio/Education Fund thanks all of the individuals who donated so far to our 2015 Women's Equality Day Campaign. The generous support of our donors helps us continue our critical voter education and advocacy work.

The League of Women Voters of Ohio/Education Fund also offers thanks to the many donors who wish to remain anonymous for their generous support.

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Catharine Warmbrod  
Mary Warren  
Kenneth Wolfe

**It is not too late to participate in our Women's Equality Day Campaign!**

**Donations will be gratefully accepted through October.**

**You can make a gift online at [lwvohio.org](http://lwvohio.org) (click donate)**

**or mail a check to the state League office.**

**Thank you!**

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

**For membership information,**  
call (614) 469-1505,  
email [lwvinfo@lwvohio.org](mailto:lwvinfo@lwvohio.org), or visit us online  
at [www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org).

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# MEMBERSHIP FORM



**YES, Sign me up as a Member  
of the League of Women Voters  
of Ohio!**

\$60 INDIVIDUAL     \$90 HOUSEHOLD

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_


**Mail this form with your check to**  
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**17 South High Street, Suite 650**  
**Columbus, Ohio 43215**

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