



Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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Calendar

Join the Santa Cruz County AAUW

When: Saturday, November 22
10:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Where: Aptos Public Library
7695 Soquel Drive
Aptos, CA 95003

This will be a K-12 Education Update for Santa Cruz County.

Join us for a conversation about how current legislation and funding changes are affecting our schools with Dr. Faris Sabbah, Superintendent of Schools in Santa Cruz County.

This free event is co-sponsored by the American Association of University Women, Santa Cruz County (AAUW) and the League of Women Voters.

For additional dates of interest, please see Page 2 of this newsletter

First, Let's Get One Thing Cleared Up

The League of Women Voters is Not Affiliated with the Redistricting Mailer which was Recently Sent Out

Here is the statement from LWVC:

You may have received a mailer from "Protect Voters First" about the redistricting ballot initiative this November. By naming our organization and quoting Gloria Chun Hoo, the mailer wrongly implies that the League of Women Voters of California is part of their coalition and endorses the information contained in the flyer.

This implication is **not correct**—we are not part of that coalition. The League of Women Voters of California did not authorize this action.

Signed by:

Helen Hutchison	Gloria Chun Hoo
LWVC Interim Executive Director	LWVC President

Here are a couple of other links that represent the League's thoughts:

Link to LWVC [opposition letter](#) to redistricting. Summary of arguments.

[Letter from LWVC to Sacramento Bee](#)

In case you would like to comment, here is the link to the California Assembly Election Committee's [public comment page](#) on the redistricting proposal.

Welcome to Our Newest Member

We would like to welcome Marla Sanchez, who recently became the newest member of our League. For more information about our chapter, Marla (or anyone else), please check out our website at <https://my.lwv.org/california/santa-cruz-county>

Save the Date(s):

Saturday, January 24, 2026

10 a.m.

Tour Pure Water Soquel, Soquel Creek Water District's new water purification facility. Details are coming soon.

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

1 to 2:30 p.m.

National Program Planning

Home of Sandy Warren

150 Scenic Street, Santa Cruz

RSVP to Sandy Warren via

email sandra333warren@gmail.com

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

1 to 2:30 p.m.

Local Program Planning

Home of Sandy Warren

150 Scenic Street, Santa Cruz

RSVP to Sandy Warren via

email sandra333warren@gmail.com

President's Message

Throughout our long and distinguished history, the League of Women Voters has provided leadership in making our democracy work. In a recent webinar, LWVUS President Dianna Wynn provided a plethora of interesting information for local League presidents, some of which I will share in this message. On April 17, the League was the first organization to declare a constitutional crisis arising from the failure of the first US President to comply with a Supreme Court order. In response to this crisis and the rise of authoritarianism, LWVUS began the

Unite and Rise initiative, featuring six 90-Day Campaigns. The goal is to mobilize 3.5 % of eligible voters, i.e. 8.5 million people to shift power back to the people. In the May 1-July 3 first phase, the focus included immigration, health care, and Medicaid. There has been an increase in League mentions in media, which is now close to 10,000, and 10,000 new members have joined nationwide since February! There are currently over 770 League of Women Voters local groups. The second phase of Unite and Rise, from August 1 to Halloween will include legal and policy coalition building, protecting libraries, museums, and voting rights, and redistricting. Celina Stewart, LWVUS CEO, handled the Unite and Rise part of the presentation. I learned from Dianna Wynn that, according to the information received from local League leaders, there were 63,132 volunteers during the past year, which is the equivalent of 29.9 million dollars in value of volunteers' time, which is likely an underestimation, since all Leagues did not submit the survey. Since about half of the webinar focused on Resources for League Leaders, I will share this information with our board of directors and other members who want to know more about accessing League resources,

An update on the 2026 LWVUS National Convention was provided by LWVUS President Dianna Wynn. The National Convention will be hybrid and take place from June 25-28 in Columbus Ohio. Details will be provided in coming months in League updates. While members are encouraged to attend in person, having a hybrid convention will allow for greater participation.

---Barbara Lewis, President LWVSCC

On Immigrants- a Letter of Opposition from the California League

Former Assemblymember Bilal 'Bill' Essayli has introduced a piece of legislation – AB 85 – that would take away the restrictions on local law enforcement's interaction with ICE. These restrictions, which were only approved for non-violent crimes, were put in place in the California Values Act (SB 54), supported by the League when it was enacted in 2017. The California League has sent Essayli a letter of opposition to the legislation, which points out that SB 54 was enacted partly so members of immigrant communities would feel comfortable reporting violent crimes without fear of deportation. You can read the entire text of the letter [here](#)

Town Hall Discussion with Ricardo Lara on Insurance and Wildfire Prevention

Dawn Addis represents the 30th Assembly District in California – a district that skirts Monterey Bay and runs down the coast past San Luis Obispo. Because she understands the concerns surrounding wildfire in her district, as well as in much of the rest of California, she shared our concerns with Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara and invited him to address her constituents via Zoom.

Insurance Commissioner Lara was born in Los Angeles County, California and earned a BA in Journalism and Spanish with a minor in Chicano Studies from San Diego State University. He also currently serves as the President of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO). This is his advice:

There are things you can do ahead of time to protect your home.

- Plastic bins for trash kept next to your house can be a major cause of fire attacking your home. Move them away from your home's walls.
- Create defensible space – nothing flammable within five feet of your walls.
- If your fire department tells you to create defensible space, do it.
- If you have a Jacuzzi, it is better to keep it at a distance from your walls.
- Take pictures of your home and its contents, as well as of important papers – including your insurance information.
- Keep a diary of everything that happens in an emergency.

- Keep all receipts connected with dealing with the emergency.
- For help, contact the state Department of Insurance at 1-800-927-4357 or insurance.ca.gov

Currently, under Proposition 103, which created the state Department of Insurance, there aren't a lot of requirements for insurance companies. Lara is working toward building a system for coverage that you can actually get (his words).

California does not allow insurers to use forward-looking modeling, but insurers cannot ignore wildfire issues. There are currently three bills being considered in the Legislature that would help homeowners deal with wildfires:

AB888 (Calderon) The California Safe Homes Grant Program; eligible applicants, threatened by wildfires, would include individuals, cities, counties, and special districts.

SB495 (Allen) Contains new requirements for property insurers, including mandates for full personal property coverage without itemized inventories after a declared emergency and annual reporting obligations for larger insurers. (There is opposition from industry groups because of cost.)

SB547 (Perez/Rubio) Existing law prohibits an insurer from canceling or refusing to renew a policy of residential property insurance for a property located in a ZIP Code within or adjacent to the fire perimeter for one year after the declaration of a state of emergency, if the cancellation or nonrenewal is based solely on the fact that the insured structure is located in an area in which a wildfire has occurred. This bill would extend that prohibition against cancellation or nonrenewal and its exceptions to a policy of commercial property insurance.

There are currently gaps in the knowledge consumers have in relation to insurance. Consumers do not know they are underinsured and do not receive information on upgrades, or why they are denied more coverage, especially in wildfire areas. Lara is looking for ways to close these gaps.

If you have been dropped by your insurer, what should you do?

According to Amy Bach, who is a professional insurance consumer advocate: Start shopping and do all those risk reduction improvements mentioned above. **For more information:**

<https://a30.asmdc.org/event/20250813-virtual-insurance-town-hall>

This is Dawn Addis' link to the fire prevention town hall.