



League of Women Voters-Central Delaware County

VOTER

March 2021

The National Popular Vote Initiative — March 19

Can voters just bypass the Electoral College and hold a nationwide popular vote election for president? Join us to hear Pennsylvania Rep. Christopher Rabb and Brett Dolente of the LWVPA discuss the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact at Noon March 19 on Zoom. Rep. Rabb introduced legislation in November 2020 to pass the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact in Pennsylvania and will be introducing it again in the new session. The Compact, already approved by 11 states and the District of Columbia, needs its signatories to possess at least 270 electoral votes before it takes full effect and converts the Electoral College into a de facto direct popular presidential election.

The states currently in the Compact possess 165 electoral votes, and therefore need only 105 more before the Compact takes effect, a total that can be reached with the consent of as few as four more states. The LWV supports the Compact as one way to achieve a true majority

vote until the Electoral College can be overturned.

Dolente, a member of the board of LWVPA, will speak about the League's position on the Compact.

The program is free, but you must register to receive the Zoom link. Register [here](#). Contact Ral Graves at ralgraves@comcast.net for more information.



Sign up for Spring Fundraiser — Learn about Your Roots

If you hurry, you may still be able sign up for our spring fundraiser March 3 at 2 p.m. League members Olivia Thorne and Jodine Mayberry will present a program by Zoom on how to research your family tree and how to use the most popular tools, Ancestry and Family Tree Maker to hunt for clues. The League is asking for a donation of \$10 to go toward its operational expenses.

Register [here](#) and follow the directions for making a donation.

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Visit our website(s)

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You can find us online at <http://www.LWV-CDC.org> or on Facebook by clicking [here](#). Or go on Facebook and search League of Women Voters of Central Delaware County. Then click "like," post a comment, send us pictures.

By the way, our umbrella organization, the Delaware County League of Women Voters, has a new website too. Check it out [here](#).



President's Message

With the new year upon us and the hint of Spring ahead, LWV-CDC is engaged in two initiatives which are the heart and soul of the League and is the basis from which we advocate and educate.

The Program Planning process for 2021 State Convention is underway. During this process we identify positions we believe should be the LWVPA legislative and advocacy priorities for the next two years. We are holding the Program Planning session on March 18 at 10 a.m. by Zoom and all interested members are invited to attend. If you are interested, please contact me, Barbara Amstutz, at swhmdi53bwa@outlook.com

Legislative Interviews are a vital part of the League's work and this year some of the key issue areas for discussion with legislators are redistricting reform, election law, open primaries, and the National Popular Vote Compact. The interviews teams are being conducted through the month of March and if you are interested in participating, please contact Jodine Mayberry at jodinemayberry@comcast.net

The LWVPA 54th Biennial Convention is being held June 18 and 19 virtually by Zoom. This year's theme is The League: Keystone of Democracy. The 2021 Convention offers the chance to embrace our history and celebrate 101 years of the League of Women Voters. All members are encouraged to join as non-voting delegates. There will also be plenty of opportunities for connection and engagement among members. <https://www.palwv.org/2021-convention>

At the recent Board of Directors meeting, we hosted Meghan Pierce, the new Executive Director of LWVPA, who is conducting a listening tour with many of the local Leagues. The issue of fighting voter suppression is a top priority for both the state League and LWV-CDC regarding both advocacy work and educational programs. Another key priority of the state League is fostering communication and exchanging organizational knowledge among the local Leagues. One successful strategy Meghan talked about are mentorships between experienced and new members. If you are interested in serving as a mentor or would like to learn more, please contact me.

We have a full Spring calendar with the March Hot Topic – The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact – and the annual Jeannette Ross environmental lecture on April 15 with Roberta Winters – Natural Gas on the Move: NGL or LNG—Pick Your Poison. Please mark your calendar for the Annual Meeting on May 27, 2021 at 7:00 pm. We encourage your participation to achieve a quorum.

Thank you all for your many contributions to the League.

Barbara Amstutz

What is DEI and Why is Everyone Talking About It?

What is DEI?

Answer: The letters DEI stand for **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Does the League of Women Voters have a DEI position?

Answer: Yes the League at all levels is fully committed to DEI in principle and practice and our position in brief reads: Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy. To read the full position click [here](#).

What is our local League doing to foster DEI within our League and communities?

Answer: Our League is addressing DEI in multiple ways.

- We have formed a [DEI committee](#) to lead our League on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion trans-

formational journey, to incorporate the commitment of LWVUS and LWVPA into our local League mission, and to attract and build diverse membership. The DEI Committee provides outreach to community organizations to embrace the diversity of our League.

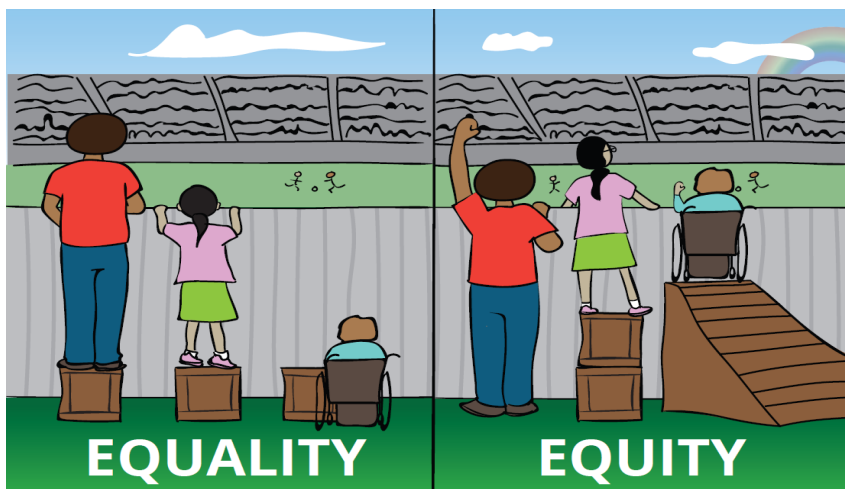
- We are educating ourselves on the impact of DEI through the efforts of LWVUS and LWVPA.
- We will develop and offer events and activities featuring DEI.
- We will create an Issues page about the importance of DEI which will include resources for members to review and share.

What can you do now to help us advance DEI?

Answer: Reach out DEI Committee contacts: [Barbara Amstutz](#) - Co-Chair and [Anne Mosakowski](#) - Co-Chair to learn more .and/or join the committee.

Why we say “equity,” not “equality”

Equality is not enough, as this cartoon illustrates. Inequities in housing, employment, health, education and interaction with law enforcement put minorities far behind. It's like being in a bicycle race. You and I can have exactly the same equipment, but if I get to start a mile closer to the finish line every time, I always win. When there's equity, we all win.



New Hope for the ERA

Last month, the House and Senate introduced legislation to remove the time limit on the Equal Rights Amendment and finally include it in our Constitution! The League has supported ratification of the ERA since it was first passed by Congress in 1972, and we have worked for decades to see ratification by the states. Last year, Virginia ratified the ERA, bringing the total state count to the required 38. Ask your congress member to support ratification.

March-April Events

March 19 (Friday) — Hot Topic: National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. Noon on Zoom. Brett Dolente of LWVPA. Register [here](#).

April 15 (Thursday) — Jeanette Ross Lecture: Roberta Winters: Natural Gas On the Move: NGL or LNG - Pick Your Poison. 7 p.m. on Zoom.

May 27 (Thursday) — 7 p.m. Zoom. Members only. Election of officers, setting of budget and programs for 2021-2022.

Remember to register on lwvcdc.org for all events.

Election Law Wars — State and Federal

By Jodine Mayberry

Chair, Legislative Advocacy Committee

War is being waged on both the national and state level to either protect or curtail the gains of 2020 in expanding access to the vote.

Republicans claim the 2020 elections were rife with voter fraud and the 250 measures filed in state legislatures around the country are intended to reduce that alleged fraud.

Democrats argue that as the numerically minority party, Republicans are simply seeking to make it more difficult to vote to protect itself and its centers of power.

Democratic measures are intended to protect no-excuse mail-in voting, early voting and other measures that dramatically increased voter turnout in 2020, resulting in the largest turnout on both sides in American history.

The LWV at all levels is acutely aware that by supporting and fighting for ballot access and against gerrymandering, the organization may be perceived as being partisan.

We are not. We maintain our nonpartisan position while advancing our core mission, the same one we have had for the last 101 years — the right to vote.

As an old hand recently told me, LWV used to have a slogan: Partisan, no. Political, you bet!

With that in mind, here are some election law bills we are keeping a close eye on, and advocating for or against:

- Congress: HR 1, SB 1 — the “For the People” bills would

expand voting rights, change campaign finance laws and reduce the influence of money in politics. These identical bills will be the Democrats’ first priority after COVID19 relief and it looks certain that the Senate will have to overturn the filibuster to make any progress with them. LWV supports them.

- Pennsylvania: HR 38 — the proposed constitutional amendment to elect statewide judges by districts. It was voted out of committee but public reaction to it has been so negative, it’s been tabled. It could still be passed in both houses in time for inclusion on the November General Election Ballot. LWV opposes it.
- Pennsylvania redistricting efforts (HB 222 and SB 222) — We failed to win legislative support for a very popular constitutional amendment establishing a bipartisan redistricting commission but will still push for one via statute. The census data will not be in until September but the Republican-controlled legislature must still redistrict both state legislative and congressional districts for the 2022 elections. LWSV and its sister group Fair Districts PA are currently lobbying for a commission and for transparency in the upcoming redistricting process.
- Pennsylvania changes to Act 77. Various bills have been introduced to restrict the no-excuse mail-in voting law passed in 2019 after mail-in voting proved to be so popular last year. One would overturn it altogether, one would ban drop boxes, one would require mail-in ballots to arrive no later than Election day, and so on. Watch this space as these bills proceed, or not.

LWVUS CEO Virginia Kase on Nonpartisanship

LWVUS Chief Executive Officer Virginia Kase recently blogged on “Remaining Nonpartisan in Hyper-partisan Times.” Her blog, which can be read [here](#), is too long to reproduce in full but is well worth the read. Here are a few of the things she had to say:

The League’s advocacy work is issue based, and we arrive at our positions based on careful study and input from our members in communities across the country. We never derive our positions from politicians, and even when candidates or parties support the same issue, we never endorse them. Issues may evolve over the years, but our allegiance will always be first and foremost to the voters.

If a party changes their position on an issue, that doesn’t mean the League has to change our position to remain neutral. And one politician taking a similar position to the League on any one

issue does not make the issue or the League partisan.

Supporting the democratic processes of registering eligible voters and casting and counting ballots is seen by some as



Virginia Kase

subverting one political party, even though these are sacred tools of our democracy. Likewise, empowering voters who previously have been left out of the process and supporting the anti-racism movement does not mean we are in alliance with one ideological segment of American government; rather, it means we are doing what we were founded to do: stand up for what is right.

Wanting every eligible voter to have equal access to the ballot box is not partisan. Wanting a robust democracy in which everyone has an equal voice and equal representation is not partisan. Wanting to see more elected officials that reflect the diverse makeup of our country is not partisan — it is American.