



# VOTER

League of Women Voters of Central Delaware County

March 2022

## Voters Beware Constitutional Amendment Ballot Questions — Mar. 11

LWV-CDC will present a webinar on **Friday, March 11 at 12 – 1:30 pm** about the Pennsylvania General As-

sembly's new tactic of putting partisan issues on the ballot in the form of constitutional amendment questions to avoid Gov. Tom Wolf's veto pen. The proposed amendments cover a wide variety of issues that should be enacted through the normal legislation process — redistricting, election law, reproductive rights, gun safety.

More than 90 amendments have been proposed, most of which are languishing in various committees.

Republicans argue that they are merely placing these decisions before the voters, but Democrats contend the Republicans are only proposing changes that

they want enacted and that voters will parse as convincingly plausible amendments regardless of the actual merits.

Unlike laws that can be changed if they are unworkable, once the voters approve amendments, they are in the Constitution forever.

Panelists are Susan Gobreski, LWV PA Board and Government Policy Chair, Danielle Ohl, Capitol Reporter, Spotlight PA, Kaida Kenner, Executive Director

of The New Pennsylvania Project & Co-Chair of Why Courts Matter - PA, and Khalif Ali, Executive Director, Common Cause Pennsylvania. LWV-CDC Legislative Advocate Jodine Mayberry will moderate. Contact Ralf Graves, [ralfgraves@comcast.net](mailto:ralfgraves@comcast.net), for more information. Register and pose questions [here](#).



## LWV-CDC Watch Party for Constitution Center Program — Mar. 10

### Elections, Speech, and Political Disinformation

Thursday, March 10, 7 p.m.

What are the leading proposals to combat election disinformation and are they consistent with the First Amendment? **Richard L. Hasen**, leading election law expert and author of *Cheap Speech: How Disinformation Poisons Our Politics—and How to Cure It*; **Catherine Ross**, free speech expert and author of *A Right to Lie? Presidents, Other Liars, and the First Amendment*; and others. Moderator **Jeffrey Rosen**, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center.

Once you have registered to attend the watch party, you can go to the Park Avenue Community Center, 129 Park Ave. in Swarthmore at 6:30 p.m. March 10, for dessert, the program and discussion afterwards. Donations to LWV-CDC would be appreciated at the door. Register with LWV-CDC as the center has a limited capacity. Register [here](#). Contact [Barbara Amstutz](#) for more information.

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## President's Message

In my President's message for March the focus is on our proposed Local Program for 2022-2023. Every year the League of Women Voters of Central Delaware County reviews its Program leading up to either National and State Conventions and our annual meetings.

LWV-CDC members are asked to vote on our Local Program as part of our Annual Meeting scheduled for May 2022. In our bylaws PROGRAM is defined as - "The program of the LWV of Central Delaware County shall consist of action to implement the principles and those local governmental issues chosen by the annual meeting for concerted study and action."

Our current bylaws state that the proposed Local Program be shared for review with our members and our board of directors two months before the annual meeting. The proposed Local Program for 2022-2023 can be found on page 4. If members have any recommendations concerning the Local Program that the LWV CDC Board of Directors might need to consider prior to our Annual Meeting please send recommendations via our LWV CDC email to [lwvcdc@gmail.com](mailto:lwvcdc@gmail.com) by March 21. The LWV CDC Board of Directors will review any recommendations for the proposed 2022-2023 Local Program as part of the March Board meeting.

Once the 2022-2023 Local Program is voted on and passed at our 2022 Annual Meeting it will be posted on our website [www.lwvcdc.org](http://www.lwvcdc.org). Our current 2021-2022 Local Program can be found on our website under the About section. Click [here](#) to review.

Anne Mosakowski, President  
LWV Central Delaware County

## The Local Leagues Mourn Kate deRiel

LWV-CDC and LWV of Delaware County are sad to announce the death of Kate deRiel, a long-time member and past-president of the former Haverford League before its merger with CDC and a member of the CDC board after the merger. She was also a long-time member of the board of the county League, where she delighted in representing LWV in welcoming new citizens at naturalization ceremonies.

Kate taught third grade in the Haverford School District until her retirement and was well-known to most Havertown residents. She belonged to several community organizations in addition to LWV. She is survived by her husband, Kim, and four children.



# Jeanette Ross Lecture: Environmental Sustainability and Justice

LWV-CDC will present New Developments in Sustainability and Environmental Health, the 2022 Jeanette Ross lecture, on **Thursday, March 24, at 7 p.m. via Zoom.**



Francine Locke

For decades, the League of Women Voters of Central Delaware County has advocated for environmental justice, clean water, health, and safety. We are pleased to continue this advocacy with this annual program. We will learn about developments regarding the establishment of two new Delaware County departments: Sustainability Office and the District Attorney's Environmental

Crimes Unit. The Office of Sustainability is charged with making Delaware County more sustainable and resilient to the effects of climate change and to develop a long-term Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. The Environmental

Crimes Unit investigates environmental hazards that threaten health and safety.

This panel discussion features Francine Locke, Chief Sustainability Officer, and Assistant District Attorney Melissa Muroff, chief of the new Environmental Crimes Unit, comes to the DA's office with decades of experience addressing environmental threats before they become catastrophes.

In addition, the program will feature Justin Dula, acting director of the PA Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Environmental Justice, who will preview the department's new environmental justice report.

Review information on these new departments [here](#) and [here](#). Register [here](#).



Melissa Muroff

## Here's Why Constitutional Amendments Concern Us

*By Jodine Mayberry*

The Republican-controlled Pennsylvania General Assembly has adopted a tactic of seeking constitutional amendments to bypass Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf's veto pen. Wolf has vetoed 54 bills in his seven years as governor, but his clash with Republicans only developed in full since the COVID pandemic when the Legislature won the approval of the voters to curtail the governor's emergency powers.

Because of the makeup of the Legislature, it has not been able to override a single veto during Wolf's tenure.

The amendment process requires passage by the Legislature over two sessions before a proposed amendment can be put before voters. The governor cannot veto a proposed amendment and it needs only to be passed by a simple majority in each house of the Legislature and then by a simple majority of voters. LWV opposes putting amendments on primary ballots because it takes only a small percentage of voters to enact them and they become part of the Constitution forever.

The Republicans assert that they are merely "taking government directly to the people" but critics respond that voters typically approve any plausible-sounding measure that is put before them. Here are two to watch out for:

**Judicial Districting:** [HB 38](#) is a proposal to elect state supreme court, commonwealth court and superior court judges by districts. This has been perceived as nothing more than gerrymandering judicial statewide offices.

**"Citizens Reapportionment Commission":** The next most important proposed amendment is [HB 2207](#), sponsored by Seth Grove, the chairman of the House State Government Committee, to create what he titled a "citizens" reapportionment commission that in fact is heavily top-loaded with the legislators themselves. If HB2207 is adopted, it provides for reapportionment again in 2024 by the proposed commission.

Dozens of other proposed amendments have been introduced, including several relating to election law. We'll keep you posted as they progress through the Legislature.

## Act 77 Thrown Out?

The Pa. Supreme Court has begun hearing an appeal of a Commonwealth Court ruling overturning Act 77, the 2019 election law reform act, specifically on the issue of no-excuse mail-in voting. The Court has granted a stay keeping mail-in voting while the case is pending and mail-in ballots will be available for the May 17 Primary Election.

The appellate court said the law, approved by the Legislature in 2019, violates a section of the Constitution requiring voters to vote in person at their local precincts except for those needing absentee ballots. The case is *McLinko v. Commonwealth*, Nos. 14-MAP-2022 and 15-MAP-2022. Docs are posted on the court [site](#). [Apply](#) for a ballot to show your support for mail-in voting.

**LWV-CDC Members:** Below is the proposed local program for 2022-2023 that you will be asked to approve at the annual meeting in May. If you have an item you want to propose or change, please send your suggestion to [lvvcdc@gmail.com](mailto:lvvcdc@gmail.com) so it can be presented to the membership at the annual meeting.

### **Proposed 2022-2023 Local Program LWV Central Delaware County**

The goal for the 2022-2023 Local Program is to develop [committees](#) to address and work on local program initiatives with the intent to become more active and involved in all the communities we serve.

**I. GOVERNMENT:** Engage members and community in all levels of government.

**A. Voting Rights and Participation through Education and Action:**

Protect the right to vote and security of the election process for every Delaware County citizen.

**Encourage everyone to participate in the electoral process by:**

- a) Conducting voter registration drives.
- b) Educating voters through candidate forums.
- c) Promoting [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org)
- d) Speaking to community groups.
- e) Working with the schools to build student awareness of the importance of voting and how governments work.
- f) Continuing voter education for in-person voting and/or mail-in voting and election security.
- g) Monitoring ALL PA Legislation related to expanding voting rights and opposing legislation regarding voter suppression.
- h) Continuing efforts to allow eligible prisoners to register to vote and use mail-in ballots to vote.
- i) Working with our partners that are part of the LWV-CDC Voter Engagement Coalition.
- j) Encouraging our members to be poll workers.

**B. Municipal Government and Services:** Enable members to understand the role of local government.

Continue to develop a "Know Your Community" model for each municipality our members represent.

Continue to support the initiatives of the Delaware County Health Department.

**C. State and Federal Governments:** Engage members and community in the legislative process.

Conduct Legislative interviews.

Monitor government activities and take appropriate action.

Inform community members of government actions.

Advocate for legislation that meets our members' and communities' needs.

Support LWVPA and LWVUS proposals and positions.

**II. EDUCATION:** Support excellence and equity in our public school systems.

A. Monitor the progress and outcome of the [Fund Our School PA](#) fair funding lawsuit.

B. Continue to develop Civic Education resource materials and presentations to be used in schools.

C. Continue our leadership role with the [Regional Adolescent Sleep Needs Coalition](#) (RASNC)

D. Continue our leadership role focusing on the impact of social media on the mental health of youth.

**III. NATURAL RESOURCES:** Support management and protection of natural resources in the public interest, including planning, land use, environmental quality and safety in our communities.

B. Preservation and protection of open space for public use and monitor enforcement of land use ordinances.

F. Advocate for renewable clean energy resources.

G. Monitor legislation that impacts the environment within Delaware County.

H. Coordinate our LWV CDC Environmental Committee efforts with that of the LWVPA and LWV Delaware County and other environmental groups.

**IV. CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PRISON REFORM:** Monitor and advocate for improving the criminal justice system in Delaware County working with Delaware County officials and advocacy groups.

**V. DIVERSITY, EQUITY and INCLUSION:** Support the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) [policy](#), positions and programs of the [LWVUS](#) and [LWVPA](#).

A. Continue to serve on the LWV PA DEI Taskforce and LWV PA DEI Learning Module Development Team.

B. Use the [LWV DEI Lens](#) with all program and event development.