

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It is an honor and a privilege to continue to lead the League of Women Voters of Delaware. In spite of the roadblocks created by the pandemic, I am proud to say that we are still thriving as a group and serving the community.

There's good news on the League front! The Clean Water for Delaware Act was signed into law by Governor John Carney on July 22. This bill, sponsored by House Majority Leader Valerie Longhurst and strongly supported by the League, creates a new Clean Water Trust to protect Delaware waterways and rebuild Delaware's drinking water infrastructure with a focus on underserved communities. It also establishes a framework for assessing needs and planning to implement projects that support Delaware's longstanding efforts to improve the quality of the state's water supply and waterways.

Thank you to everyone who supported our efforts and took part in making this happen.

The League's presentation for Peace Week Delaware 2021, dubbed *Power to the People – Confronting Voter Suppression Head-on*, was another success. Jill Itzkowitz, Voting & Elections Portfolio Lead for the League's Advocacy Corps, spoke about Delaware voting bills currently under review. The SB5, automatic voter's registration at the Department of Motor Vehicles and other state agencies, passed the House and Senate. An important bill that was defeated was HB75: remove restrictive absentee voting from the constitution. This was the bill's second leg of constitutional amendment.

The League is not in support of HB189, the requirement of photo identification for absentee voting, as we feel it will restrict some people from voting.

Other panelists were Katie Williams, Policy Advocate for United Church of Christ, who spoke about the recent push toward more restrictive voting rules in many US states, and Dr. Freeman Williams, president of the NAACP's Newark, Del. Chapter, presented historical context to the waves of voter suppression in US history and, in line with our position on HB189, addressed how restrictive voting rules disproportionately affect people of color.



Congratulations to everyone for their hard work and success!

Our celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month (*Mes Nacional de la Herencia Hispana*) took place from September 15 to October 15. During that time, the League joined in the national recognition of the contributions and influence of Hispanic and Latino Americans to the history, culture, construction, and achievements of the United States.

A calendar of events is posted on our website listing activities for families and concerts, great reads, and additional links to various activities. Also listed are online Heritage and History Month events presented by the Smithsonian.

The League is experiencing continued growth, and I strongly encourage you to become active in one (or more) of our ongoing sponsored programs, one being Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

Diversity is the practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds, genders, gender identities, and sexual orientations. It also includes historically underrepresented groups in socially, politically, or economically powerful institutions and organizations. *(Continued on page 2 President's Message)*

(Continued from page 1 President's Message)

Equity is fairness or justice in the way people are treated. It offers balance where societal disparities have historically been the norm. In an equal opportunity culture, resources are divided and shared to ensure a level playing field, and that each person has a fair chance to succeed.

Inclusion is the act or practice of including and accommodating those who have historically been excluded for reasons including race, gender, sexuality, or ability. The League boasts an inclusive environment, one that ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for everyone.

How can you learn more about, or participate in, DEI?

Become active in the League's continued commitment to foster more diversity and inclusion in the community. Our DEI learning resources will help you understand inclusive leadership principles and strategies. You can help cultivate a culture of belonging by suggesting more programs and topics of discussion. Add to our reading list with book or article suggestions or send links to podcasts that share inclusion strategies and training to our webmaster, Mary Ann Coe.

You can also help garner support by submitting your success story to the League's Committee. And when time permits, take a moment to pore over our online resources. You'll find Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion webinars, books, and other helpful materials. Please share them!

The missions and goals of the League are clear, and the Board as well as the membership is diligent about maintaining their commitment to meeting them. Let's work together and achieve greater success as we tackle the roadblocks.

Gwendolyn Miller, President, grybm@outlook.com



Peggy Schultz & supporters at the signing of the balloon release bill S.B. 14, Sept. 17, 2021.

Four Historic Markers in Delaware's National Votes for Women Trail Dedicated September 28 in Wilmington

Advocates for Equal Rights and Wilmington neighbors gathered Tuesday, September 28 to honor the work of early suffrage leaders with historic markers sponsored by the Pomeroy Foundation and newly installed at four sites, namely:



Former site of the **Garrett Settlement House**, meeting place of the African-American Suffrage Club; integrated suffrage events held 1914-1920. Located at present-day St. Michael's Day Nursery at 700 N. Walnut Street, one of the oldest childhood education programs in Delaware and now teaching children from birth to age eight; **Home of Alice Dunbar-Nelson (1875-1935)**, poet, teacher, author, civil rights leader, elected President of the Equal suffrage Study Club in 1914: 1310 North French Street.;

Home of Blanche Williams Stubbs (1872-1962), Equal Suffrage Study Club leader and advocate for African-

American voting and civil rights: 827 North Tattnell Street; and **Suffrage Rally, May 2, 1914**, the first Delaware rally for women's right to vote: parade route from the train station to 10th and Market Streets.

Guest speakers included Judge Susan DePescio, Attorney General Kathleen Jennings, Historian Anne Boylan, Ph.D., Lucy Beard of the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites, Marsha White of the Pomeroy Foundation, Michael S. Purzycki, Wilmington Mayor, Senator Elizabeth Lockman (SD 1),



(Continued on page 3 Historic Markers)

(Continued from page 2 *Historic Markers*)

Senator Elizabeth Lockman (SD 1), Senator Kyle Evans Gay (SD 5), Representative Stephanie Bolden (RD 2), and Delaware House Majority Leader. Representative Valerie Longhurst (RD 15). Dr. Boylan acknowledged **the League of Women Voters of Delaware**, represented by Secretary Marj Johnson and First Vice President, Kathleen Baker.

Delaware Suffragists Honored

On the grounds of Legislative Hall sits the newly dedicated Delaware Women's Suffrage Centennial Monument honoring those women who lead in the struggle for a federal right to vote. The Monument was the work of the Delaware Women's Suffrage Centennial Committee created by the General Assembly, under the leadership of Representative Valerie Longhurst and Senator Nicole Poore.

The official start for the effort to guarantee women the right to vote begin in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, with the issuance of the Declaration of Sentiments. The Declaration recognized the equal voting rights of men and women. Thus, began a 72-year effort to guarantee women the federal right to vote. (Earlier efforts include those of Abigail Adams in a letter dated March 31, 1776, to her husband to not "forget the ladies" in the fight for independence, and state laws in mostly western states and territories.)



In the beginning of the 20th Century, the call for equal voting rights intensified. Among the leading Delaware women included on the Monument are: Mabel Vernon, Florence Bayard Hilles, Mabel Lloyd Ridgely, MaryAnn Shadd Cary, Ethel Cuff Black, Eva Halpern, Alice Dunbar Nelson, and Balance Williams Stubbs.

By 1920, 35 of the needed 36 states had ratified the 19th Amendment. The remaining state should have been Delaware. Governor John G. Townsend, Jr. supported ratification, as did the Senate. The House, however, went home (many back to Sussex County) without voting. It was left to Tennessee to approve the 19th Amendment, which it did by one vote. The 19th Amendment was ratified on August 18, 1920. Delaware did not ratify the 19th Amendment until 1923.

For a complete look at Delaware Women's Suffrage History, please read University of Delaware Professor Emerita Anne M. Boylan's new book "Votes for Delaware Women," soon to be available through the Delaware Archives.

Please visit the Monument the next time you are in Dover.

The pictures above are of the Monument.

Jack Young

Adopting A More Robust & Resonant Criminal Justice Position for Delaware

Presentation and Discussion of LWV of California Criminal Justice Position

Thursday, October 28, 2021
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.



Registration link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYpd-6qrTsrHNROvRtv6kK3QWkh_HJ_-pvp](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYpd-6qrTsrHNROvRtv6kK3QWkh_HJ_-pvp)

One-third of U.S. adults have had some experience in the justice system which has had a tremendous impact on voting rights.

All Delaware citizens have a right to equal treatment under the law and to a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and that foster public trust at all stages, including policing practices, pre-trial procedures, sentencing, incarceration and re-entry.

The DE General Assembly will reconvene in January 2022 with 13 criminal justice bills. *This will be a critical chance* to have an impact on policy reforms in our state.

League advocacy stems directly from the Position Statements we adopt as an organization. It is time to review our LWV of Delaware Position to make sure it supports suitable action.

Rather than undertake a two-year study, the LWV of Delaware Advocacy Committee Criminal Justice Team's preferred option is to concur with the more robust LWV of California (LWVC) Position that evolved over 4 years of study. This would allow us to have a more effective criminal justice position in place for Delaware's upcoming legislative session. The state Leagues of AZ, NC, MI, and NY have adopted California's Position by concurrence already.



We are fortunate to have with us **Ashley Raveche**, the Deputy Area Director of Social Policy for the LWVC. She was on the state task force that developed the California Criminal Justice Position being proposed for concurrence. She also participated on the drafting committee for the LWVUS's Emergency Resolution on Racial Justice.

Ms. Raveche will share the process for adopting a new criminal justice position for Delaware by concurrence, and discuss the California position, with Q&A to follow.

This important LWVDE presentation is sponsored by the LWV of Delaware Advocacy Committee Criminal Justice Team. The full California position can be found at lwvc.org/our-work/positions/position-criminal-justice and the current Delaware position (that we'd like to update) is on page 18-19 of our

Program document, here: my.lwv.org/delaware/position/league-women-voters-delaware-positions

Please participate in the concurrence process so we can adopt a more robust and resonant criminal justice position for Delaware by January 2022.

ADVOCACY CORPS REPORT

Submitted by Linda Barnett, Advocacy Corps Chairperson (pages 5-9)

The League's Advocacy Corps welcomes League members who wish to actively challenge the State Legislature and the Executive Branch to do the right things for Delawareans.

Over the past several months, we have taken the opportunity to reflect on our efforts during the January - June 2021 Legislative Session, to conduct special studies, reinforce our networking with coalition partners, and prepare for the General Assembly to resume its work in January.

The table below gives an overview of what the Advocacy Corps accomplished in the first six months of 2021. It shows the number of bills tracked, as well as other particulars. Testimony on bills happens when they are heard in legislative committees. Some bills never make it to a hearing, which explains the gap between the number tracked and the number for which testimony was presented.

Legislative Tracking by the Advocacy Corps Overview: January – June 2021

ISSUES	# of Bills Tracked	# that Passed	Active Advocacy: Testimony &/or contact with Bill sponsor
Climate Change	2	2	2
Criminal Justice	25	15	13
Education	13	11	13
Elections/Voting	21	3	7
Gov/Finance/ Taxation	16	2	10
Health	8	3	4
Land Use & Transportation	5	2	4
Natural Resources	6	4	4
Money/Politics	2	0	1
Reproductive Choice	4	1	3
Social Policy	15	9	7

Our policy work is broken down into committees, in which specific portfolios (issue areas) are addressed. New members are always welcome. Below are descriptions of the work in each of these portfolios, along with contact information, in hopes that you will want to join in and become part of this work.

(Continued on page 6 Advocacy Corps Report)

(Continued from page 5 Advocacy Corps Report)

The Climate Change/Energy Portfolio is guided by the League's support for climate goals and policies that are consistent with the best available climate science, to work toward a stable climate system for future generations. Specifically related to energy, our advocacy is directed toward policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation, and encourage the use of renewable resources.



The Portfolio's chief ongoing focus is an offshore wind project for Delaware, and we lead a coalition of organizations that support offshore wind, called POWER (People for Offshore Wind Energy Resources). The coalition led a successful move to initiate a UD study on offshore wind options.

Current legislative issues with which we have engaged are Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) of 40% and Community Solar, campaigns led by the Sierra Club. We look forward to a deep discussion of the upcoming DNREC climate change action plan for the state, as well as working to increase to at least 50% the state RPS. We welcome new participants. Contact Peggy Schultz for meeting details (schultz_peggy@yahoo.com).

The Criminal Justice Portfolio is looking forward to an active Legislative Year! While last year, strides were made to better serve Juveniles, and victory was seen in expungement laws, there is still much to do.

We invite you to join our advocacy work to: establish a more robust and resonant LWVDE Criminal Justice (CJ) Position by participating in a special educational opportunity via Zoom that has been announced separately; help us support the passage of police accountability and transparency bills, participate in prioritizing the many pertinent CJ Bills that our legislators will decide on this legislative year, and engage in proactive discussion about CJ issues that we identify as needing greater attention and action. We welcome you to this vital work! Email Lori Yadin (4hoping@gmail.com) for more information.

The 151st General Assembly will stand out in Delaware history as a landmark of reform in public education. **LWVDE's Education** Portfolio Team helped pass eleven bills in the 2021 session, including critical legislation codifying support for previously under-served children, in accordance with the Education Equity Lawsuit Settlement of 2020. But that's only the half of it! The momentum will increase in 2022, we'll need all hands on deck, and we invite you to join in.

We research, write, relate to professional colleagues in the public and private sectors, formally testify from LWVDE policy positions, and create informational media for LWV members and the public. We work on Equity, Funding and Finance, Early Childhood/Birth to Grade 12, Leadership, Teaching/Learning, and Civic Education. We welcome your contributions of time and talent. Contact Kathleen Baker (kmbdoremi@aol.com).

If you are interested in protecting voting rights in Delaware, please consider participating in the LWVDE **Elections and Voting** Portfolio. We need your help providing Delawareans with voting options, beyond just going to the polls. Last legislative session, we succeeded in passing automatic voter registration at the DMV but failed to get the required votes for HB75 (no excuse absentee voting). We will try again in January to pass HB75, along with same day registration.

(Continued on page 7 Advocacy Corps Report)

(Continued from page 6 **Advocacy Corps Report**)

Besides advocating for voting rights, the committee also works to register and educate voters. We sponsor in-person voter registration drives at schools, libraries, and community events, and host virtual webinars on how to vote in Delaware. This year we will be educating voters about early voting, which will be implemented in 2022 to allow voters to cast their ballots ten days prior to Election. We also provide support for our online voter tool, **Vote411**.

Next year we will be partnering with DelawareOnline to collect candidate information. We always need plenty of help in assisting candidates complete the Vote411 on line voters' guide.

As you can see, the Elections and Voting committee is involved in many activities that require your help. If you are interested in advocating for voting rights legislation, registering voters, or helping with Vote411, please contact Jill Itzkowitz (Jillitzkowitz@gmail.com).

NOTE: Please save the date November 8 from 6:30 - 8 when the Delaware Voting Rights Coalition will be hosting a virtual town education session with Rep. Bentz, Sen. Kyle Gay, the election commissioner Anthony Albence, and others. A formal invitation will be sent out shortly.

The Government, Finance and Tax Portfolio focuses on governmental issues involving the Executive and Legislative branches, particularly in the areas of the budget, administrative procedures, and taxation. We have requested successfully that the Governor increase the FY2022 budget by restoring it to pre-pandemic levels and have supported restructuring the budget stabilization process. In the General Assembly, the League has supported greater transparency in the legislative and redistricting processes, including the submission of new district maps for both the Senate and House. The League is the organizer of the **Fair Maps Coalition**, which includes such organizations as Common Cause, the ACLU and over 30 other non-profit organizations to address the redistricting process. The Portfolio continues to advocate for reforms in the House through the creation of a separate Grant-in-Aid Committee and greater opportunities to consider bills proposed by members of both political parties.

We invite you to make suggestions and to work with us on these and other government, finance, and tax issues. Join us by contacting Jack Young (young@sandlerreiff.com).

The Health Care Portfolio focuses on *access, cost of care and quality* as related to health care. In this past session, we supported expansion of Medicaid for pregnant women up to 12 months postpartum (access and cost), giving pharmacists prescriptive authority for birth control under a Division of Public Health standing order (access - to address the shortage of Primary Care Providers), support for legislation to set up a student loan repayment program for Primary Care Providers to encourage them to come to and/or remain in Delaware (access to care).

We have long supported programs which fund "reserved for Delaware residents" slots in two Philadelphia medical schools and a dental program (in lieu of Delaware having its own medical or dental schools). The students must meet all the academic requirements and pay their own tuition, but the programs do give Delaware residents an advantage over the thousands of applicants who apply to the schools each year. To become part of the group advocating for these kinds of initiatives, contact Joann Hasse (joannhasse@aol.com).

(Continued on page 8 **Advocacy Corps Report**)

(Continued from page 7 **Advocacy Corps Report**)

The Land Use/Transportation Portfolio supports initiatives that will lead to a balanced, intermodal transportation system interconnected with land use and based on interagency and inter-jurisdictional coordination. Its advocacy is also directed toward reducing transportation-generated greenhouse gas emissions by wiser land use planning and by enhancing public transit options. Promoting livable, walkable communities is another ongoing effort of the committee.

Efforts are also directed toward encouraging greater use of electricity to power both cars and light trucks, and medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. In addition to interacting with the General Assembly and the Executive Branch on these issues, the Portfolio also develops educational programs for both League members and the general public. To help with these efforts, contact Peggy Schultz (schultz_peggy@yahoo.com).

The Money in Politics Portfolio deals with issues that are primarily handled at the federal level, and that advocacy is addressed by the League of Women Voters of the US. Nonetheless, we need to be vigilant here in Delaware to make sure that our General Assembly does not take action that would allow for inappropriate use of money in political campaigns and that, in fact, it takes positive steps to protect representative democracy from distortion by undisclosed contributions and big money, and combats corruption. Contact Chris Asay to learn more and help with these issues (chrisasay@aol.com).

The Natural Resources/Environment Portfolio focuses on environmental issues facing Delaware including clean water, clean air, and trash/toxins affecting the land. We have worked with other environmental groups including the DE Nature Society and the Sierra Club on our Clean Water victory (HB200) this year. It was a multi-year effort. We have also joined forces with Plastics Free Delaware and the Zero Waste Coalition to address single use, throw away plastic products like plastic bags and the release of helium balloons - which are litter. We have drawn attention to toxins such as the “forever chemicals” like PFAs. We have pursued LNG (liquefied natural gas) projects, which might pollute our air.

We invite you to make suggestions or to work with us on these and other environmental issues. Join by contacting Charlie Garlow (301-312-7703 (charliegarlow350@gmail.com)).



LWVDE Natural Resources/Environmental Committee Chair Charlie Garlow, congratulates Governor Carper and Representative Longhurst at the signing ceremony for H.B. 200, the Clean Water Act, in Lewes, Delaware. Clean water proponents leaped for joy!

The Reproductive Choice Portfolio addresses the need to protect each individual’s constitutional right to privacy. We successfully supported a measure (signed by the Governor) that repealed provisions in Delaware’s Criminal Code which required that abortion be treated differently from other medical procedures. This legislation also removed provisions which criminalized persons performing abortions and women receiving the procedure. And thus far, we have successfully opposed measures that are designed to discourage women from having an abortion, when that is the choice they have made. To work on these kinds of issues, contact Joann Hasse (joannhasse@aol.com).

(Continued on page 9 **Advocacy Corps Report**)

(Continued from page 8 **Advocacy Corps Report**)

The Social Policy Portfolio works to secure equal rights and equal opportunity for everyone and promote social and economic justice. Among the measures successfully supported during 2021 were establishing Juneteenth as a state holiday, requiring that truthful black history be included in the public schools' curriculum, and increasing the minimum wage. We also supported a constitutional amendment to add race, color, and national origin to categories covered by the Equal Rights clause and legislation prohibiting discrimination against traits historically associated with race, such as African-American hair styles. We will be continuing to support a Bill of Rights for Individuals experiencing homelessness to ensure that all individuals, regardless of housing status, have equal opportunity to live in decent, safe, sanitary, and healthful accommodations and enjoy equality of opportunities.

To join in on this advocacy, contact Linda Barnett (luvchocdog@hotmail.com).

ELECTION AND VOTING COMMITTEE



The voting and elections committee met last week and established our priorities for the coming year. The voting and elections committee meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 11 am on Zoom. If you are interested in participating, please contact Jill Itzkowitz (Jillitzkowitz@gmail.com)

Our priorities for 2022

- ❖ We support the legislative priorities set by the Delaware Voting Rights Coalition. The highest priority is to pass HB75 - no excuse absentee voting. If this does not pass in January, we will focus on a vote by mail bill. We will also work to pass same day registration.
- ❖ We will also partner with the Rank Choice Voting coalition to promote rank choice voting in Delaware. After reviewing our options, we may work to implement rank choice voting for the 2024 Wilmington city elections.
- ❖ We will also work to promote early voting in Delaware, which will be implemented in 2022 from a bill passed in 2019. Delawareans will now be able to vote 10 days prior to Election Day.
- ❖ Improving the Vote411 process will also be another priority. We are finalizing our partnership with DelawareOnline staff to join forces in collecting candidate information. We are also working to expand the Vote411 team. If you are interested in assisting, please contact Jill Itzkowitz (Jillitzkowitz@gmail.com)
- ❖ We will continue to hold in-person and virtual voter education and registration events. In September we held high school and community in person voter registration events, and participated in Del Tech's Constitution Day, Peace Week, and National Voter Registration Day. You can view some of these events on our webpage. The Delaware Voting Rights Coalition will be hosting a virtual town hall November 8, from 6:30 - 8. Speakers include Rep. Bentz, Sen. Kyle Gay, Anthony Albence, perhaps Lisa Blunt Rochester, among others. More information will be distributed shortly.

find us on **facebook**

follow us **twitter**

Twitter provides a quick digest of the nation's leading headlines, while Facebook gives us an open forum where we discuss the important issues of the day. All posts and points-of-view are welcome as long as our nonpartisan and inclusive policies are being respected.

To join Facebook, go to www.facebook.com and follow the instructions. Once you join, search for the League of Women Voters of Delaware and send us a "friend request." To join Twitter, go to www.twitter.com and follow the instructions. Once you join, search for @lwvde and "follow" us!

CALENDAR

LWVDE COMMITTEE SCHEDULES AND STATE BOARD MEETINGS

- **Education Team Mini-Meets** are scheduled for Fridays at 10 a.m. for one hour via Zoom. Contact Kathleen Baker kmbdoremi@aol.com: October 29, November 12, and December 10, 2021. In the new year: January 14 & 28, February 11 & 25, March 11 & 25, April 8 & 22, and May 13 & 27, 2022.
- **Election Committee** meets the first Tuesday of the month at 11 a.m. Next meeting Tuesday, November 2, 2021. Contact Jill Itzkowitz, Committee Chair jillitzkowitz@gmail.com or call 302-571-8948 LWVDE office.
- **Climate Change and Energy Committee** usually met the first Friday of the month at 10 a.m. but will start meeting at 1 p.m. starting on November 5. Committee chair Peggy Schultz, contact schultz_peggy@yahoo.com or the LWV office 302-571-8948
- **Land Use/Transportation Committee** usually meets second Monday of the month at 10 a.m. contact schultz_peggy@yahoo.com or the LWV office 302-571-8948. Next meeting Monday, November 8, 2021, 10 a.m.
- **Criminal Justice Committee** usually meets the fourth Wednesday 10 a.m. Next meeting Thursday, November 24, 2021 at 10 a.m. Committee chair Lori Yadin, 4hoping@gmail.com or LWVDE office 302-571-8948.
- **Advocacy Corps** meets the second Wednesday, 10 am-12 noon usually by Zoom. Next meeting Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 10 a.m. Corps chair Linda Barnett, luvchocdog@hotmail.com or 302-571-8948 LWVDE office
- **LWVDE Board meeting schedule for September – June 2022** Contact Gwendolyn Miller, president grybm@outlook.com or call LWVDE office 302-571-8948.
- **State Board Meetings for the FY 2021-22.** All dates are for the fourth Wednesday unless otherwise indicated. Time 5 – 7 pm with check in starting at 4:45 p.m.
 - October 27, 2021 by Zoom.
 - November 17, 2021 by Zoom. Note week earlier because of Thanksgiving.
 - January 26, 2022 by Zoom.
 - February 23, 2022 by Zoom.
 - March 23, 2022 by Zoom.
 - April 27, 2022 by Zoom.
 - May 25, 2022 in person.
 - June Council/ or board meeting to be determined.



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