

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA MONICA

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#MakingDemocracyWork

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Re: Dispelling Common Misconceptions about the League of Women Voters

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to Robert Koronovet's August 7 [letter to the editor](#) regarding his displeasure with my [opinion piece](#) on the topic of the League of Women Voters of Santa Monica supporting SB902, state legislation supported by the League of Women Voters of California.

I deeply appreciate the opportunity that Mr. Koronovet has given us to correct some common misconceptions about the League and what we do. The League of Women Voters was founded in 1920, just six months prior to the ratification of the 19th Amendment as a "mighty political experiment" to help 20 million women carry out their new responsibilities as voters. From the beginning, the League has been a non-partisan, activist, grassroots organization that believes that voters should play a more active role in Democracy.

As with many grassroots membership organizations, there are different levels to the League. There are local Leagues such as [League of Women Voters of Santa Monica](#), state Leagues such as the [League of Women Voters of California](#), and the national [League of Women Voters](#). We are non-partisan, which means that we do not support or oppose any political candidates or parties. However, we are political and we do advocate for best practices on issues where we have studied and come to consensus about what we believe the best practices to be.

I believe Mr. Koronovet's confusion with regard to his mother's experience in the League stems from a misunderstanding of our Civic Education work versus our Advocacy work. On the education side, which includes our Voter Service work, we register voters, provide fact-based pros & cons on ballot measures, put on debates & candidates' forums, and more. On our advocacy side, we work to influence public policy with issues-based advocacy. Additionally, to reduce the confusion between these two sides of our organization, our advocacy work is done through our 501(c)4 nonprofit, the League of Women Voters of Santa Monica, while our education work is done through our 501(c)3 nonprofit, the League of Women Voters of Santa Monica Education Fund.

Mr. Koronovet's mother was most likely deeply involved in the Civic Education/Voter Service side of the League, and for that I am incredibly grateful. League members have been fighting to empower voters for literally 100 years and we are continuing that fight.

I invite Mr. Koronovet to support his mother's legacy of work with the League and [become a member](#) of League of Women Voters of Santa Monica.

Natalya Zernitskaya
President, League of Women Voters of Santa Monica