

The logo for the League of Women Voters of Virginia features the letters 'LWV' in a large, bold, blue serif font. To the right of 'LWV', the words 'LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS' are stacked above 'OF VIRGINIA' in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. A red brushstroke underline is positioned beneath the 'LWV' letters. The background of the logo is a faded image of a classical building with white columns.

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF VIRGINIA

The Virginia Voter

100+ Years Strong

League of Women Voters of Virginia
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Suite 214A
Richmond, VA 23219
United States

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President's Message

We have been hearing a lot about DEI lately. However, what is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion really? Well for one, it would have prevented brilliant Black women who were the backbone of the 1960's space race from having to do their work in secret and most receiving no recognition in their lifetime.

Had we embraced DEI during WWII, perhaps Japanese Americans would not have been placed in concentration camps and their homes and jobs destroyed while white Germans and Italians remained free even though their countries were at war with America too.

DEI allows people with disabilities to have accommodations at work so they can be productive and fulfilled. It also allows for ramps and curb cuts and close captioning for the deaf and transcriptions on things like Zoom.

DEI gives us changing rooms in men's bathrooms, family restrooms and parental leave.

DEI is Title IX.

Pay equity, workplace harassment laws and floating holidays are all DEI. As are domestic violence laws.

Before DEI, Alan Turing, a brilliant scientist who greatly contributed to the British and Allied victory in WWII, and invented, among other things, the [Automatic Computing Engine](#), was forced to be chemically castrated because he was gay. He died at age 41 by suicide.

DEI is hair and skin products for people with skin that isn't pearly white.

DEI stops discrimination against people who are not white. It opens the doors – hence Inclusion – that have been slammed on people for centuries. As a white woman of European descent, I have never felt threatened by other people having an equal shot at the playing field. Why would you feel threatened if you are confident in your skills?

DEI stops segregated bathrooms, trains, and other public places.

Women don't have to stay home and make babies if they don't want to because of DEI.

Because she lived before DEI, Rosalind Elsie Franklin, the brilliant British scientist whose groundbreaking work led to the sequencing of DNA, has mostly been forgotten to history.

The work of DEI isn't finished. Let's keep it going.

Thanks for all you do.

- Joan

P.S. All members are invited to join our DEI committee. Contact our State DEI chair, Evette Barton [here](#).

Standing Up for DEI

Evette Barton -DEI Chair

On Feb 15, 2025, LWV VA DEI Chair Evette Barton, LWV VA Program Chair Alice Tousignant and LWV VA Advocacy Chair, Denise Harrington braved the rain to join partners NoLefTurns and Virginia Defenders for Freedom and Justice at the NAACP's *Forward Together: Virginia State Conference Youth & College Empowerment Rally*.

Despite the continuous rain, a large crowd gathered, many holding signs—some under umbrellas and others braving the weather without. Among us were children as young as nine. Our shared goal is to continue working together to build equity and inclusion for all, with a particular focus on uplifting Black communities. We also hope to empower young people to speak out, make an impact, and recognize that their voices matter.



Executive Overreach And and LWV Call for Congress to Act



Connie Potter and Michael Shea of LWV-Arlington & Alexandria City, expressing their views.

The League of Women Voters of the United States recently sent a letter to leaders in the U.S. House and Senate regarding executive overreach and their need to act as a co-equal partner. You can read it [here](#).

The Nexus Between Disinformation and Our Lax Campaign Finance Laws in VA

Joan was interviewed by "[Democracy Docket](#)" about the spread of election disinformation.

“I think you’re going to see untold amounts of unaccounted money in Virginia pouring in in this election. There are no boundaries, there are no rules,” she said. “With our ridiculous campaign finance laws, I think we’re going to be playing whack-a-mole to try to stop disinformation.”



Mary Crutchfield gives League testimony about campaign finance reform. Leaguers testified frequently throughout the session, sometimes several times in one day.

LWV US Federal Judiciary Study

Alice Tousignant - Program Chair

As previously reported in the January Virginia Voter, at the 2024 LWVUS Convention in June, approval was given for a fast-track study of the US Federal Judiciary as an essential component of US democracy. The goal is to adopt a position at the 2025 LWVUS Council in June. The study's purpose includes, but is not limited to, addressing concerns and clarifying judicial accountability, transparency, independence, and ethics.

In February, League members received an email about the study with a [LINK](#) to the Management Site containing the study guide, process and consensus questions. LWVUS has asked local and state Leagues to hold consensus meetings and complete an online form by April 14, 2025. These meetings will be an opportunity for local and state Leagues to educate members about the federal judiciary system and ways that it could be improved to protect and strengthen democracy.

The LWV-VA will hold a Consensus meeting on the Federal Judiciary study

via zoom on Wednesday, March 19th from 6:30pm to 8:00 pm. Many local Leagues in Virginia will be conducting their own Consensus meetings, others have asked the LWV-VA to be part of their March 19th Consensus meeting. If you are not affiliated with a local League, or you belong to a League that has asked to participate in the March 19th meeting, or you are unable to attend your local League meeting, you are welcome to attend the March 19th meeting. Please register [here](#).

You are encouraged to review the study briefs including the “Key Terms for the Federal Judiciary Study” that are available on the management site prior to attending either your local League consensus meeting or the March 19th meeting. These briefs will be summarized at the March 19th meeting but there will not be time to review each topic in depth nor will we have a LWVUS federal judiciary study expert at the meeting. Please [contact me](#) with questions.

Welcome Members of Our Youth Council!!

Erni Bridges - Second Vice President

We have a wonderful and growing cadre of young people in our newly formed Youth Council. Youth Council is open to all students 16 -21 years old. They are full members of the League but work on special projects. Our team is working on starting local League chapters at VA Tech and William and Mary, churning out social media posts and a host of other projects. We hope to start a speakers bureau soon.

Our initial members of the Youth Council are:

Charvi Deorah - Maggie Walker High

Zoon Farhan - Rock Ridge High

Emma Lindsey - Maggie Walker High

Alia Marzyie - Thomas Jefferson High for Science and Technology

Fiona Morris - William and Mary

Mia Nicholson - William and Mary

Nikki Rajan - Douglas Freeman

Kristina Savage - William and Mary

Phoebe Scarborough - Virginia Tech

Kylie Totten - William and Mary

Ayla Zang - Thomas Jefferson High for Science and Technology

Information and the application for Youth Council are on our [website](#).



Sixtieth Commemoration of Bloody Sunday in Selma

On March 7, 1965, hundreds of civil rights protestors attempted to march the 50 miles between Selma and Montgomery, Alabama to [protest the suppression of Black votes](#). Led by the late John Lewis and Hosea Williams, they made it to the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma, where local police officers and state troopers brutally attacked them.

LWV Alabama in coordination of LWV US will hold a memorial walk on March 9. Information is available [here](#)

For more information on the first Bloody Sunday go [here](#).

Another Successful Roundtable Series



Del. Debra Gardner, District 76, speaks to Leaguers about child care bills. The Women's Legislative Roundtable met weekly throughout this year's General Assembly time, on topics from climate change to child care, voting rights to reproductive justice. LWW-VA is grateful for our many lively and well-informed speakers.

Find Past Events

Did you miss Pre-Session or a Women's Legislative Roundtable? What about the data center forum or electoral college training? No worries - they are on our YouTube page [here](#).

Find all of our past events by bookmarking our Youtube page!

WLRT recordings are on our website too. Go [here](#).

Stop the SAVE Act!

Congress is considering the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act, a bill that would create unnecessary barriers to voter registration by requiring citizenship documents—even though voters already affirm or verify their citizenship when registering.

The SAVE Act is unnecessary and harmful. It would make it harder for eligible voters—especially citizens of color, married women and the rural and urban poor to register and cast their ballots. Compared to white citizens, citizens of color are three times more likely to lack access to required documents like passports or birth certificates. We should be making voting more accessible, not adding more obstacles.

[Tell your Members of Congress](#) to oppose the SAVE Act and protect the freedom to vote!

LWV members are speaking as individuals, not for the League.

Conference Committee Budget Available

Budget negotiators, or conferees, have released their proposed [compromise](#) between the House and Senate budget proposals. The Commonwealth Institute has updated a side-by-side comparison of key budget proposals throughout this session to include the proposed compromise that was released Thursday, February 20.

March 2025 Calendar

- Women's History Month
- Deaf History Month
- National Foreign Language Month
- 7: 60th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday - Selma
- 8: International Women's Day
- 26: Anniversary of SCOTUS *Rucho* arguments (for more, go [here](#))
- 31: International Transgender Day of Visibility

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