

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF VIRGINIA

The Virginia Voter

— 100+ Years Strong —

President's Message

The League of Women Voters of Virginia Ready to Combat Mis and Dis Information for 2024 Elections

- Joan Porte, President, LWV-VA

We Need Your Help!

In lieu of a traditional President's Message, I am excited to announce our three-fold "attack" on mis and dis information this fall.

First, we've partnered with Aaraj Vij and Jeremy Swack of VerbaAI to launch Election Facts: a one-stop-shop for fact-checking U.S. election news: verbaai.org/election_facts. Aaraj and Jeremy previously directed DisinfoLab, and after years of researching mis/disinformation, now they're building tools to combat it.

Election Facts has two key components:

Fact Check Feed: Election Facts monitors relevant reports from leading fact checking organizations that investigate the veracity of political stories. The work of these fact-checking

organizations is crucial, and by consolidating their research into one place, we hope to make fact-checking political news easier than ever.

Misleading Media: This tab contains misleading articles and social media posts that LWV members would like to flag to the public. More details on how you can contribute to this effort are below! Election Facts is live and fully functional without a VerbaAI account. If you would like to customize your news feed further, you can create an account for free.

YOU CAN HELP: If you see misleading media online about the election, please fill out this [Google Form](#). Misleading articles and misleading social media posts will be displayed on the Election Facts "Misleading Media" tab, and Russell will track down the social media posts so that we can attack on both levels.

Our second attack is being helmed by one of our wonderful interns, Russell Swartz. Russell is going to be watching mis and dis information on social media apps and responding to them. By the way, you do NOT combat mis and dis information by responding directly to that post--it only boosts that bad information in the algorithms. He will be posting correct information refuting this bad news. See the next article for how you can help produce information for social media.

Then we have our Poster Contest for High School Students (more information below), a product of our Mis and Disinformation Task Force. It will offer cash awards to students who produce the best posters that spread correct information on voting.

Let's stamp out mis and dis information!

A special thanks to our Mis and Disinformation Task Force for working with VerbaAI and assisting in developing this program.

Thanks for all you do!

- Joan

FACT FAKE

CALLING ALL STUDENT MEMBERS – WHO WANT TO COMBAT MIS AND DIS INFORMATION!

We are embarking on a summer program to combat mis and dis information by producing videos with correct voting information for social media. We are now on TikTok and Snapchat in addition to our usual, Facebook, X, Threads, YouTube, and Instagram.

Student members are needed to produce these videos – we have the material; we just need the “stars.” For more information, email Joan at President@lww-va.org.

Students under 18 will need to sign parental permission forms.

LWV-VA Advocacy

Latest News from the General Assembly

Thanks to Lisa Koteen Gerchick of the Voting and Elections Issue Group who provided the bulk of this information.

First, the budget: When they met on April 16, the General Assembly rejected all of the Governor’s Budget Amendments, setting up a special session which will take place May 13 – 15.

There were some victories over some “recommendations from the Governor” on some bills supported by the League although the process is not finalized.

On [HB 819](#) and [SB 238](#) which would allow health insurance coverage for contraception, the Governor sought to add wording that would have allowed non-governmental health plans exempt under Federal or State law to withhold this coverage for “sincerely held religious or ethical beliefs.” This wording in HB 819 was defeated by the House by a vote of 15 – 84 and SB 238 was defeated by the Senate 19 -21.

Sadly, no other gun violence or reproductive rights bills were able to overcome the veto or recommendations. However, we saw some success with some voting and elections bills...so far.

The reconvene session on April 17 has clarified the outcome of the Governor’s recommendations (proposed amendments) to six bills related to voting and elections.

[HB 111](#), which binds Presidential and Vice-presidential electors selected by a party’s process: The Governor’s amendment, which was technical, to change a day, was adopted by the House on a block vote, 100-0. The Senate adopted 40-0.

[HB 904](#) and [SB 300](#) (companion bills) provide new rules to improve the accuracy of voter list maintenance. The Governor recommended reenacting the bills in 2025 and added a requirement that the Department of Elections convene a workgroup of stakeholders to make recommendations by November 30, 2024, on collecting and sharing voters’ data. The House rejected the Governor’s recommendations, 99-0. The Senate rejected the Governor’s recommendations on SB 300 by a party-line vote of 21-18.

[SB 188](#) responds to Virginia Beach’s decision to comply with the court’s mandate to create districts to prevent dilution of minority votes. The Governor recommended reenactment in 2025, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 21-18. If the governor overrides the Senate again, then this bill will have to be passed again in 2025. If he lets it stand, then the bill goes into effect.

[SB 196](#) set more stringent data-matching requirements to improve the accuracy of the voter lists and also repealed a law allowing general registrars to hear voter registration challenges. The Governor recommended removing specific terms from the data matching and omitted the repeal of the old law. The Senate rejected the amendments, 21-19.

[SB 364](#) adds protections to election officials (and defined “election official”). The Governor’s amendment removes the private right of action for election officials against election-related harms and excludes presidential electors from some of the protections.

The Senate concurred, 40-0 and the House adopted the Governor's recommendations 52-47.

When the Governor's recommendations are rejected, the bill is returned to the Governor, who has the power to sign the original bill or veto it. Therefore, we do not yet know the ultimate fate of **HB 904**, **HB 819**, **SB 238**, **SB 188**, **SB 196**, or **SB 300**. HB 111 and SB 364 will become law in July.

JUNE ELECTION DATES



Virtual Voter Registration Training

Virtual Voter Registration for All Members of LWV Virginia, Partners and Individuals Interested in Doing Nonpartisan Voter Registration

July 13, 2024
2:00 – 3:00 PM

Conducted by the Virginia Board of Elections

This training will satisfy Commonwealth requirements to conduct third party voter registration drives for the period July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.

All attendees MUST sign up by July 7, 2024 to receive the zoom link.

<https://forms.gle/b2gte1VSNDhsrZdf7>

*Effective July 1, 2013, all individuals or organizations requesting twenty-five (25) or more voter registration applications from the Department of Elections (ELECT) or local voter registration office must register for and complete ELECT certified training.

LWV Council 2024

Come one, come all to our virtual Council meeting, **June 8, 2024 from 9:00 – 12:30 PM.** Council is our mini conventions that the State Leagues hold in the year that LWV US has convention. In addition to our plenary session, we will:

- Get an update on strategic transformation
- Participate in a membership visioning project
- Get an update on our Universal of Voting Rights study
- Learn about the possibility of changing LWV VA to a 501 (C) 3 only
- Find out about the 2025 Convention

Admission is free. This link is for observers only. Do NOT use this if your president has designated you as a local league delegate.

<https://secure.everyaction.com/P8uYLRTO8EKuZXYbMHvd-A2>



New LWV Position?

Adoption of Washington State Local News Position on Council Agenda

- Alice Tousignant, Program Director LWV VA

As a reminder, the League of Women Voters of Washington conducted a study entitled *The Decline of Local News and the Impact on Democracy* and is seeking national concurrence on their study and approved position at the 2024 LWVUS Convention. LWV-WA also requested that state Leagues adopt the position by concurrence. If it becomes adopted by national concurrence, all Leagues will be able to advocate with it.

After attending a November 16th presentation by LWV-WA that was open to all Virginia League members, the LWV-VA Board voted at its December Board meeting to include adoption of the LWV-WA Local News position on the 2024 LWV-VA Council Agenda. What this means is that at the June 8th Council meeting we will be voting on whether to adopt the LWV-WA position by concurrence, and, if adopted, this position will be included as one of the LWV-VA positions.

Please take time to review the study, the position and the meeting presentation [here](#), or their [seven minute video](#) prior to the Council meeting. In case you're a new member and this is the first time you're hearing about the study, all those who have read the study or attended the presentation, thought the study was thorough, unbiased, well-researched, and overall, very professionally done. If you have questions, please contact Alice Tousignant, LWV-VA Program Chair, at program@lww-va.org.

LWVUS National Convention is Coming and Volunteers Are Needed

The 2024 National Convention will take place June 27-June 30 at the Washington Hilton in Washington, DC and online. The agenda for LWV US Convention is now out:

[Agenda - 2024 LWVUS National Convention \(cvent.com\)](#)

Registration is open until June 10

[Admission Item - 2024 LWVUS National Convention \(cvent.com\)](#)

The Speaker for the Saturday dinner is Kimberly Teehee! Ms. Teehee is director of government relations for the Cherokee Nation and senior vice president of government relations for Cherokee Nation Businesses, as well as a delegate-designate to the US House of Representatives from the Cherokee Nation

LWVUS is looking for volunteers from local area Leagues to support our upcoming Convention. All volunteers will receive complimentary access to all Convention activities (minus Lobby Day and the Saturday dinner) on the day that they volunteer. Plenary access would be as a non-voting observer only.

If you intend to be a delegate you **MUST** register and pay. You can still volunteer for non-plenary positions. Delegates can't volunteer for plenary jobs.

Discounted parking will be available for people coming in just to be volunteers.

We thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you in June!

If you have any questions please email cdavis@lwv.org .

Sign Up [HERE](#)



Sexual Harassment Awareness Month

President Joan Porte, joined Lisa Sales, President of Virginia NOW for their Sexual Harassment Awareness Month press conference in Alexandria, Virginia on April 23. According to the Center for Disease Control, more than half of women and almost 1 in 3 men have experienced sexual violence involving physical contact during their lifetimes.



Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Who is Patsy Mink?

- Chris de Rosa

In March 2024, the U.S. Mint released the 12th coin in the American Women Quarter series. That quarter features Patsy Takemoto Mink. Who was Patsy Mink and why is she being honored by this program?

Patsy Takemoto was a “Sansei” – third generation American of Japanese Ancestry (AJA) who grew up on the island of Maui in the U.S. Territory of Hawaii. She excelled in academics and leadership at Maui High School, graduating as valedictorian in 1944 and serving as student body president for two years.

Patsy went to Wilson College (PA) and the University of Nebraska but returned to the University of Hawaii to finish her B.A. after facing discrimination. One barrier she faced was she was not allowed to live in a dorm with Caucasian students because she was a woman of color.

After graduating in 1948 with a Bachelor’s degree with majors in zoology and chemistry, she applied to several medical schools but was rejected by all of them. So, she decided to pursue a degree in law. After earning her law degree from the University of Chicago, she applied to several law firms in Honolulu, but was not hired by any; her marriage to a Caucasian man, John Mink, was cited as a reason for not being offered a position. Patsy decided to open her own law practice and became the first Japanese American woman to practice law in Hawaii.

Patsy Takemoto Mink became active in Democratic politics but met challenges and resistance from the older “established” leadership of the Party. She ran for local, state, and national office, losing some races, but winning others. She was elected to the Hawaii legislature in 1956. In 1964 she was elected to represent the state of Hawaii in the House of Representatives. She was the first woman of color and the first Asian-American woman to serve in Congress. She championed the causes of women, children, and immigrants, and fought against discrimination. She often broke with her caucus on some issues and legislation.

Mink helped to support the Comprehensive Child Development Act which passed Congress (as part of the Economic Opportunity Act) in 1971 but was vetoed by President Nixon. Mink considered the failure of the CCDA, which would have instituted a national daycare system to support low-income households, as “one of the real disappointments” of her political career.

Nevertheless, Mink persisted, and successfully introduced and led the fight to pass the Women's Educational Equity Act through Congress in 1974. This law promoted gender equity in schools, increased educational and job opportunities for women and girls, and sought to get rid of gender stereotypes in textbooks.

Patsy Takemoto Mink's lasting legacy is probably Title IX (aka Educational Amendments of 1972). She served as primary sponsor and co-author of this bill and fought hard against attempts to repeal parts of Title IX in following years. Title IX bars sexual discrimination in any school or educational program that receives federal funds. It has opened up fields of study and opportunities in athletics for women and girls. Without Title IX, we may not have heard of Mia Hamm or Caitlin Clark. Ketanji Brown Jackson, Kamala Harris and Dr. Leana Wen may well have benefited from Title IX. If you or your daughters or nieces or granddaughters have participated in high school and college athletics, you can thank Patsy Takemoto Mink for her work to provide those opportunities.

After Patsy Mink died in 2002 following a month-long fight against pneumonia, Title IX was renamed the Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act. The 12th quarter in the American Women series honors this champion of people's rights.

For more information:

[MINK, Patsy Takemoto | US House of Representatives: History, Art & Archives](#)

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/patsy-mink>

Fierce and Fearless: Patsy Takemoto Mink, First Woman of Color in Congress. by Judy Tzu-Chun Wu and Gwendolyn Mink. New York University Press 2022.



How Would You Like to Get Out the Vote and Protect Elections

- Janet Boyd, Voter Services Chair

With the 2024 General Election drawing near, we would like to learn how we can mobilize voters and protect elections. LWV US can assist us with text banking, phone banking and door-to-door canvassing instructions. Please complete this brief [questionnaire](#) to let us know how you might be able to help.

Please complete by June 1. Thank you.

Update on Poster Contest

- Terry Newell

The Poster Contest we launched in April is well underway - but we need help reaching students directly. They don't see press releases and may not spot us on social media. So we've developed a on e-page flyer with a QR code (like that used in stores) that when scanned with their phones will take them directly to the contest web site. We need your help! Please send, print, post or otherwise distribute this flyer in your community. You can give it to middle and high school-age children you know, their parents or take it to your local schools' civics, arts and social studies teachers. You can also place it on bulletin boards or post it on local community online sites.



DO YOU LOVE ART AND OUR
DEMOCRACY? LWV OF VA IS
HAVING A POSTER CONTEST!

OPEN TO MIDDLE AND HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS

Deadline: June 30th



Local League - LWV of Washington County

Happenings in Our Community for Improved Health and Child Care

- Jane Hill, Co-President

In recent months, our LWV educational programs and volunteer efforts highlighted new health and child care initiatives in our community. These programs included the following:

The Mended Women project in Washington County was the recipient of the first Opioid Abatement grant awarded in Virginia. With this money, other donations and extensive volunteer efforts, a vacant nursing home was purchased, and 70 residential beds were established for women recovering from substance abuse. The purpose of Mended Women is to provide temporary housing, treatment, and training for the residents' transition back to community life.

A newly elected School Board member discussed the Community Schools concept and a pilot project for telemedicine clinics coordinated between our local schools and our local health care provider, Ballad Health.

United Way of Southwest VA established its headquarters in a renovated 87,000 sq ft former K-Mart building in Abingdon. This facility will offer 300 child care spaces for our community, STEM labs for teacher training, plus a workforce development and training facility.

A physician in our area spoke regarding the social aspects affecting health. She estimated that only 20% of health can be affected by our current healthcare system. The other 80% of health is the impact of social factors. These factors include affordable housing, income, food insecurity, domestic violence, and education. These factors reflect many of LWV's legislative priorities.

May 2024 Calendar

May 3 - **Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Month, Women Pay Equity Day**

May 6 - the beginning of **Teacher Appreciation Week**

May 6- **National Nurses Day**

May 27 - **Memorial Day** (If you grew up hearing this day referred to as "Decoration Day,"

This is why <https://www.abmc.gov/news-events/news/decoration-day-memorial-day-american-tradition-nearly-150-years>)



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The League of Women Voters was founded in 1920 when U.S. women won the right to vote. We work to encourage informed and active participation in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. The League is dedicated to empowering voters and defending democracy. We are proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.

For more information, visit the League of Women Voters of Virginia at lwv-va.org and on social media [@lwvva](#) and [@leagueofwomenvoters](#).

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