



The Virginia Voter

100+ Years Strong

League of Women Voters of Virginia
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United States

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President's Message

We made it through the Election Season! Congratulations. We are still compiling the final reports, but we know that our local leagues sponsored at least 30 nonpartisan candidate forums and distributed more than 2000 pounds of voting information throughout the Commonwealth in several languages. That is in addition to the work that our Voter Services Teams did to load Vote411.org with nonpartisan information on candidates and voting. We also texted 120,000 voters!

All of this is more remarkable because in Virginia, we never get a break from elections. We have elections every single year –

sometimes more than three or four when you count special elections.

So, take a break now and enjoy the holiday season. You all deserve it, and I can't thank you enough for your constant hard work.

We will have several elections next year, but I know our team is ready to again to provide election information no matter what. Because this is who we are!

Please take time with your family and friends to enjoy the Season, however you celebrate, and give yourself a pat on the back for the work you all do to defend Democracy.

Happiest of Holidays,

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO

Joan

Responding to Hunger in Virginia

Please Contribute to the LWV VA Youth Council and DEI Committee Food Drive

Due to the continuing food crises in Virginia due to the effects of the Federal shut down and SNAP delays, the League of Women Voters Youth Council and DEI Committee are sponsoring our first Holiday Food Drive.

All money donated by Dec 15 will be divided equally among the eight major food banks in the Commonwealth that supply local food banks.

National Capital Area Food Bank

Blue Ridge Food Bank

Second Harvest

Feeding Southwest Virginia -

Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank

Foodbank of Southeastern and the Eastern Shore

Feed More Richmond

Your donation IS tax deductible but will not be mingled with LWW Virginia money. Hackclub will hold the money and we will distribute right from there on December 15.

Use the QR code on the flier below or use [THIS LINK](#) to help us defeat hunger!

Feeding our Future: A Statewide Youth-Led Food Drive

The LWV VA Youth Council and DEI Committee announce a Holiday Fundraiser for Virginia Food Banks. Directly support our local food banks by donating below!



<https://shorturl.at/9WpCm>

This first fundraiser will run from **Nov 15 to Dec 15**, and the money will be divided among the eight major food banks that feed local ones throughout the Commonwealth!



Our DEI Committee is Also Collecting Food for the Blue Ridge Food Bank





We Are Looking For a Social Media Team

We are very lucky to have a dedicated Social Media Coordinator on the State Board. However, this is a big job, and we need to build out a team of people. We need people to help make planned social media posts and a “rapid response team” to address issues that are popping up out of the blue. This would require about 2 hours of work

a month – less if we get enough people to sign up. Contact Phoebe for information [here](#).

Calling All Young Members!!!

We have a Board member now dedicated to making sure that all the voices of young members of LWV are heard. To make this work she needs to hear from young members. What do you want from the League? What projects would you like to see us pursue? How can we reach a broader group of young people? Contact [Fiona](#)

Get a Jump on Holiday Shopping with the League!



Have you seen our new League swag?? Our DEI T-shirts are amazing, our "Vote" mugs are terrific. Do you need a new water bottle for stocking stuffers? We have it all, including caps and bucket hats. Just go to our [shop site](#).

EVENTS

Last Call for Pre-Session! Dec. 3, 2025

Pre-Session, when we learn of the legislative priorities of our partners and of the League of Virginia, will be held virtually starting at 9A on Wednesday, Dec 3.

[RSVP HERE](#)

[AGENDA](#)

Advocacy Training - Dec 8, 2025

We will have virtual advocacy training conducted by LWV VA Advocacy Chair, Barbara Boardman, beginning at 7P.

[RSVP HERE](#)

Women's Legislative Round Tables (WLRTs) 2026

WLRTS are Forty-Five Years Old!!!

All WLRTs are virtual this year and begin at 8:30 AM.

Jan 14 – Campaign Finance Reform, Election Security, Zuckerbucks Bill

Jan 21 – Ranked Choice Voting, The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, Risk Limiting Audits

Jan 28 – Reproductive Health

Feb 4 – Health Care/Gun and Domestic Violence

Feb 18 – Housing

Feb 25 – Environment/Transparency

Mar 4 – Education/Child Care

March 11- Wrap Up

RSVP to each [here](#)

There will be several events in Richmond during the week of Jan 19.

We are looking for teams of people who participate in events AND deliver cards with our legislative priorities to members of the General Assembly where we have no local leagues.

Even though the WLRT's are virtual, we want more of a presence in Richmond - and this is the way we do it. LWV VA will pay for mileage and lodging for anyone who can come to Richmond that week and help with this project. Contact Joan for information.

34th Annual MLK Day Vigil and Day of Advocacy to End Gun Violence. Jan. 19, 2026 - 2p Vigil at Bell Tower

The Virginia Center for Public Safety will have their Vigil at the Bell Tower at the Capital Square and then day of Advocacy.

Democracy Day - Jan. 20, 2026

Our friends at Big Money Out are having Democracy Day on Jan 20, 2026. It will start with breakfast at 8 AM at St Paul's Episcopal Church, 815 East Grace Street in Richmond. [RSVP.](#)

UpVote Ranked Choice Voting Day - Jan. 22, 2026

LWV VA is pleased to be a sponsor of the UpVote Ranked Choice Voting Day and the evening reception. RSVP info. coming soon.

League Day and Reception the Night Before - Feb 10 -11, 2026

League Day will be held only in person at the Delta Marriott Hotel, 555 East Canal Street, Richmond, Va.

We will have a reception at 6p for members of the Virginia General Assembly on Feb 10 at the hotel, followed by our day of advocacy on Feb 11.

You can RSVP to either or both [HERE](#).

FOR THE FIRST TIME, THERE WILL BE CHARGE TO EITHER THE RECEPTION OR THE LEAGUE DAY - but we are asking for donations to help offset the cost.

Book your [ROOM](#) at the Delta Marriott at our group rate of \$180 - the cutoff date is Jan 20.

Pre League Day Talking Point Virtual Meeting - Feb 4, 2026

One of the requests that we get is to give members attending League Day more time to look at the our legislative talking points. This year, we will have the talking points to you by Feb. 1 and will host a virtual event at 7p where you can ask questions and get clarifications on these talking points.

[RSVP](#).

News from LWVUS

Comments Needed Today to Department of Homeland Security

Our litigation in the case of LWV v. DHS, which challenges the federal government's changes to Department of Homeland Security Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system (not to be confused with the SAVE Act), has prompted an open comment period by DHS.

LWV Virginia has joined LWV Louisiana and LWV US as plaintiffs in this case.

Our general objections to this are that the system is not secure and threatens the privacy of Americans and uses flawed data to suppress the vote of naturalized citizens.

We encourage all league members to write AS INDIVIDUALS - NOT REPRESENTATIVES OF LWV OR LWV VA - to express their concerns. Our national advocacy team has created some comments that you may use. If you have questions, please reach out to [this email](#).

COMMENTS ARE DUE TODAY DEC 1

SUBMIT COMMENTS [HERE](#). It will read USCIS - but DHS is listed.

Suggested comments:

"As a voter, I strongly disagree with the proposal from DHS to pool data from federal agency databases to assess voter eligibility. This is both a data privacy and voter suppression issue, as this multi-agency data pool would be illegal, and DHS has failed to sufficiently consider the risks to eligible voters in implementing the expanded system. The proposed process is illegal and flawed. The pooling of these databases will create an unreliable database, which would force eligible registered voters to re-prove their citizenship status and risks disenfranchising eligible voters. In addition to these risks, the overhauled system puts voters at risk of unwarranted criminal investigations of suspected noncitizen voting. DHS must reject this proposal to expand the SAVE system."

Lawsuit over Voter Registration Ban at Administrative Naturalization Ceremonies

League of Women Voters, Campaign Legal Center Sue USCIS, DHS and other Federal Officials over Voter Registration Ban at Administrative Naturalization Ceremonies. Find out more [here](#).

Youth Voter Power Initiative

The Young Voter Power Initiative (YVPI) is the League's national framework for activating, training, and sustaining young leaders as a core part of our democracy infrastructure. Over the past year, we have revisited and refined the model to ensure alignment with *Unite & Rise 8.5*, to integrate lessons learned from the pilot phase, and to address capacity realities while maintaining ambition.

The League of Women Voters' Young Voter Power Initiative (YVPI) is a national network of young leaders (ages 18–30) building youth power at every level of democracy. YVPI is not a stand-alone program—it's a core part of the League's organizing model, and the goal is to make sure young people are not just participants, but visible leaders in defending and expanding democracy.

Through YVPI, members join:

Regional Pods (based on where you live) that connect you with nearby peers and local/state Leagues.

Issue Pods (based on what you care about most) that bring young people across the country together around shared issues like voting rights, reproductive justice, or courts & democracy.

Pods give you the chance to connect with others, co-create actions, and lead campaigns that matter both locally and nationally. YVPI also runs trainings, provides resources, and offers leadership opportunities like serving as a regional or issue lead.

To join, click [here](#).

Should LWWUS Have a Privatization Position?

On November 13th, the LWV-VA held a zoom presentation and discussion regarding the proposed concurrence to update the national Privatization position that will be introduced at the 2026 National Convention. Presenters were Judith Esterguest of LWV-NY and Barbara Pearson, LWV-MA. The Update would add healthcare to its enumeration of "public goods" and "human needs" and makes it explicit that, under certain circumstances, the League may advocate for de-privatization. League members are encouraged to watch the recording (you can view the recorded meeting [here](#).).

Background: At the LWV US Convention in June 2024, there was a LWV Vermont proposed update for the LWV US Privatization Position. The proposal was for LWV US to oppose the privatization of healthcare. The proposal did not pass.

LWV New York has revised the proposal presented in 2024, to be voted on at the 2026 LWV US Convention and is requesting state and local Leagues to support the following revised position.:

“The League believes that healthcare, like other programs that provide and protect basic human needs, should be considered a public good. The League favors a system where fiduciary responsibility (for such programs) is to patients and the public. Because private for-profit corporations have a fiduciary responsibility to their shareholders rather than to patients or public health, the League believes the for-profit business model for healthcare is inappropriate for the common good or to meet the basic needs of the most vulnerable members of society.

In sum, the League opposes further privatization of needed healthcare. Where private entities fail to deliver programs that provide and protect basic human needs, the League supports de-privatizing them”

To learn more about the proposal, please watch the recording (You can view the recorded meeting [here](#).). Local Leagues are encouraged to add this to their upcoming Program Planning meetings, and if in agreement, to add this proposed concurrence position to their LWVUS Annual Survey they receive on January 2nd. LWVUS Annual League surveys must be submitted by each local

League by February 13, 2026. Questions may be directed to Alice Tousignant, LWV-VA Program Chair [here](#).

LWV-VA News

LWV Virginia Establish Its Third University Chapter

We are pleased to announce the formation of our third chapter at a Virginia university. The LWV of the Fredericksburg Area has established a chapter at Mary Washington University! They join already established leagues at George Mason University in Fairfax and The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg.

We hope to have more join us soon!

The Voting & Elections Issues Group in Action

Lisa Koteen Gerchick, Co Chair

The League of Women Voters of Virginia boasts eleven Issues Groups, which were established to support the League's legislative advocacy on particular topics. The most active and largest issues group—because it engages with the most legislation and because of widespread interest among League members—is the Voting & Elections Issues Group.

If you are wondering what “legislative advocacy” is, the answer is that each year the League picks priority issues to push for in the Virginia General Assembly. Sometimes we seek enactment of individual bills; sometimes we try to block enactment of bills we oppose.

Advocacy extends beyond lobbying, however. The Voting & Elections Issues Group, also called the V&E IG, conducts research on issues to

develop talking points consistent with existing official League positions. We recruit Senate and House patrons for bills we favor or propose. We prepare and deliver testimony before Virginia House and Senate committees and subcommittees. We advocate before our legislators and their staffs. We also educate League members and the public about the topic.

The V&E IG subgroups handle specific topics. Current subgroups and their leaders are:

Campaign Finance Reform (Kari Anderson)

Cyber- and Physical Security (collective leadership—contact Lisa Koteen Gerchick)

National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (Jane Newell)

Ranked Choice Voting (Chris DeRosa)

The IG also has point people on some of our specific priorities, such as List Maintenance (prevention of improper voter purges), Guardianship adjudications relating to the capacity to vote, amendment of the “Zuckerbucks” bill, which prohibits contributions to elections officials, and a Virginia Beach Charter bill to make local elections more equitable.

The work of the IG is demanding yet rewarding. Co-leaders Janet Boyd and Lisa Koteen Gerchick always welcome new members. If you like to research, write, debate or speak in public, or have technical skills, please join us. The best way to get started is to sign up on the League’s website, [here](#).

Letter to the Governor Elect

The League of Women Voters of Virginia sent a letter to Governor-Elect Spanberger encouraging actions that she can take on an executive level to take steps on voting, immigration, climate change and education priorities. You can view the letter [here](#).

Local Leagues

LWV Arlington-Alexandria City



Left to right: Susan Lewis, Lisa Backer, Judy Collins, Laura Leussing, Pat Suarez, Sandra Lawrence, Denise Fisher, Pamela Berg, Caroline Lake, Jaclyn O’Laughlin, Maryli Marcos, Lauren Newland, Debby Churchman, Beth Cogswell, Anne Murphy, Brittany Smith

Pam Berg, President, LWV Arlington and Alexandria City

In November, several members of the LWV of Arlington & Alexandria City had the privilege of touring the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial at Occoquan Regional Park, guided by Pat Wirth — past Executive Director of the memorial project and current President of the League of Women Voters of Northern Shenandoah Valley. The history itself is powerful, but what struck me most was seeing the memorial through Pat’s eyes and through the stories of the women (and the men who stood with them) whose persistence reshaped American democracy. I’ve read about suffrage before — enough to feel informed, enough to feel “League-literate” — but standing in the spaces built to honor their struggle landed differently this time. It reminded me that

knowledge can give us context, but sometimes only lived experience gives us meaning.

What became clear to me today is that women didn't win the right to vote the way we celebrate a holiday or check a box in a timeline. They won it because they insisted on being regarded — truly regarded — as full participants in their own democracy. Alice Paul once wrote that citizenship is rooted in “the right to consent,” and walking through the memorial made that feel newly resonant: the right to be heard, to be seen, to have one's experiences matter. That realization connects directly to why the League exists today. If we say we are “of the people,” then our work starts with regarding the people — all of them — with seriousness and respect. That's why your vote matters. And that's why our collective, ongoing work in the League still matters every bit as much as it did a century ago.

December 2025 Calendar

Dec 1 – World Aids Day

Dec 10- Human Rights Day

Dec 18 – International Migrants Day

[unsubscribe](#)
