



League of Women Voters of Virginia
1011 E. Main Street
Suite 214A
Richmond, VA 23219
United States

March 2026 Vol. 74 No. 9

President's Message



Hello all,

In March we celebrate Civic Education Week, and the League of Women Voters of Virginia is kicking this off with a project that is being fueled by our wonderful Youth Council members. We are creating six pamphlets on the basics of Virginia civics. These are designed for people who did not go to Virginia grammar and high schools or did, but it was a few years ago and they have forgotten some of what they learned. The pamphlets will also have a quiz at the end allowing local leagues and partners to do “classes” or quiz nights. We will also make these available to the Virginia Library Association. We hope to have these available by summer.

On another note, what a great League Day we had! We delivered 92 packets to members of the General Assembly and already delivered our legislative priorities to all of the offices where we don’t have local leagues. For the first time, every General Assembly office was visited by a member of LWV Virginia! See our photos from League Day below. Thanks to all who came! Pictures are below!

Thanks for all you do.

Joan

Post “Crossover” Legislative Report

- Barbara Boardman, Advocacy Chair

For those of you who know the Virginia legislative process, we are halfway through the session. This means “crossover” is complete. By crossover, surviving bills must move to the opposite chamber, and the process of amending and aligning the surviving bills will commence. The second half will also be defined by budget negotiations which are predicted to be challenging. Cuts at the

Federal level to health care and safety net programs, as well as tax base changes resulting from lost federal jobs in the state, are expected to significantly decrease projected revenue while increasing the need for state funded services.

This year, the climate has been more favorable to many -but not all - of the LWV-VA's legislative priorities. Our various issue groups have been actively tracking legislation. We have a lot to be happy about as many bills pertaining to our legislative priorities have been advancing.

Amendments: Our priority amendments to the Virginia Constitution on Reproductive Freedom, Marriage Equality and Voting Rights Restoration have passed both houses and the enabling legislation has been signed by the Governor and will go before the voters in November.

Voting and elections: In addition to passage of the Voting Rights Restoration amendment, the National Popular Vote and an expansion of Ranked Choice Voting passed the House and Senate! Voter protections, including rejoining ERIC, protecting and preventing purges of voter rolls, improving registrar and election board function, (including amending the dreaded "Zuckerbucks" bill to allow us to buy tokens of gratitude for election officials) and voter protection have moved forward. Sadly, many campaign finance bills died.

Gun Safety has had a lot of support in the General Assembly with multiple bills already passed in both houses and with high hopes of receiving the governor's signature. The long list includes closing the "boyfriend loophole," regulating "ghost guns" and "assault-style" firearms, child access prevention and permitting lawsuits against firearm manufacturers.

Environmental legislation on various issues is also moving forward on energy efficiency, solar power, and environmental justice. Data centers were the target of many proposed bills, some of which are still moving forward, though many have been “continued” to 2027 suggesting an absence of legislative consensus.

Reproductive health bills have done well leading with the passage of the reproductive rights amendment but also including right to contraception.

Budget issues can be expected to dominate in the second half of the session. LWV-VA priorities for expanding programs supporting *affordable housing* such as the housing trust fund have a cost that must be addressed. Federal government changes to the *health care* industry are projected to have major impacts on health care coverage and health industry services in the Commonwealth over the next four years. Any attempts to buffer Virginians against these cuts will be costly, but failure to do so is projected to result in loss of insurance coverage for many individuals and resultant cutbacks in health industry services for all. LWV-VA is supporting legislative efforts to amend the budget to include increased funding for such programs as “safety-net clinics, ACA subsidies, and increasing child health (FAMIS) coverage.

Those of you who participated in our League Day lobbying efforts and those who have supported our efforts through advocacy alerts, and communications with legislators, should be proud of how much you have helped move this legislation forward. Thanks for your efforts. Don't let your efforts lag now.

Our issue groups will be tracking this legislative session continues, and we will continue to need your help to get these bills and budget amendments over the finish line.

League Day, 2026

On February 10-11, 104 Leaguers from around the state came to Richmond to persuade their legislators to vote for bills, budgets and amendments ranging from Ranked Choice Voting to Reproductive Justice. The Virginia League was honored in the General Assembly, and numerous delegates, senators and staff members took the time to listen and respond to our advocacy. Here are just a few photos from what was a successful day.



The League being honored in the General Assembly



The Richmond League with Senator Lamont Bagby



Lynn Willhoit, Beth Withers and Lisa Kaplowitz from the Arlington/Alexandria League, ready to rock and roll.



Chris DeRosa and Beth Obenshain are all smiles!



From Left, Anu Sahai, First VP, Joan Porte, Pres, and our speakers, Han Jones, Virginians for Reproductive Freedom. Michelle Moffit, Virginia Civic Engagement Table, and Sheba Williams, Nolef Turns



LWV Williamsburg ready for office visits!



Our pals from UpVote, Liz White and Tamara Allen, giving a big hug to Jane Newell, Director of Strategic Transformation, Joan Porte, President and Andrienne Konstas, Treasurer

Eligible Voters at Risk: Examining Changes to USCIS's SAVE System

The good people at the Fair Elections Center have published an excellent report on the Administration's efforts to use the USCIS system to purge voters. You can read it [here](#).

Election Protection

Our friends at the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law published a report on their wonderful 866 Our Vote Election

Protection hotline. We are proud to be partners with them and thank them for this terrific service. You can read the report [here](#).

This Photo Says It All



Update on LWV VA Women's Rights Position

Carolyn Caywood, Women's Rights Study member

The Women's Rights Position Update Study is under way. This will be presented at the 2027 LWV Virginia Convention. We are finding that areas where we lack positions are health and economic disparities by gender. With that in mind, I decided to reread *Nickel and Dimed, on (not) getting by in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich. I wondered what, if anything, had changed since her book was required reading for many college freshmen.

More than a quarter century has passed since Ehrenreich, then in her late 50s, worked for a month each at jobs that employed mostly women at a bit above minimum wage. In Key West she was a waitress and tried to add a second job cleaning hotel rooms. In

Maine she worked for a maid service and on weekends a nursing home. Finally in Minneapolis she was a Walmart “associate.”

Finding housing was her biggest difficulty while in these jobs. Nothing was really affordable, that is, taking 30% or less of her income. What she found to rent was either unclean and unhealthy or created other financial burdens for transportation or food (no way to cook). Also, while she had no emergencies during these one month experiments, they left her with no savings to cope with a car repair or an injury. Ehrenreich concluded that no one could survive on one full time low wage job. Either a person worked two jobs or had another wage earner sharing expenses.

I was reminded that, unlike the drudgery of low wage work, Ehrenreich’s book is engaging and a quick read. If you would like a set of discussion questions for *Nickel and Dimed*, let me know. It is a great way to prepare for our Convention work. [Contact me here.](#)

EVENTS

LWV VA DEI Committee Series: March 18

LWV-VA DEI Committee Webinar Series Continues With *Challenges and Controversies to Voting Rights* – March 18, 2026, 7 PM, A Virtual Event

As part of our Women & Democracy Webinar Series for Women’s History Month, the LWV-VA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is proud to present an important and timely conversation: “Challenges and Controversies to Voting Rights.”

Our Speaker is Dr. Kimberly S. Adams. Dr Adams is an accomplished political scientist and activist with more than 20 years of experience in academia and the private sector. She received her B.S. and M.S. from the University of Southern Mississippi and her Ph.D. from the University of Mississippi. She currently serves as a Visiting Assistant

Professor of Political Science at Roger Williams University, where she teaches and researches across a wide range of political subjects.

Her academic and professional expertise spans:

- American Government
- Women and Politics
- Campaigns and Elections
- Political Communication
- The Legislative Process
- American Political Parties
- Racial and Ethnic Politics

Voting rights remain a cornerstone of American democracy, yet they continue to face legal, structural and institutional roadblocks that disproportionately affect women, communities of color, young voters, and marginalized groups. This session will explore the evolving landscape of voting access, the forces shaping current debates, and the implications for equitable participation in our democracy. You can register for this presentation online [here](#).

Yale Campaign School: March 21



CELEBRATING
30
YEARS

TCS
THE CAMPAIGN SCHOOL
AT YALE UNIVERSITY

Special thanks to
YaleWomen and the
League of Women Voters
of the District of Columbia
for partnering with us!

YaleWomen

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Interested in...
Running for Office? **JOIN US!**
Running a Campaign? **JOIN US!**
Learning How to be a Leader in Your Community? **JOIN US!**

TCSYale:
The Basics
ONE DAY TRAINING

SATURDAY
MARCH 21, 2026
10AM-3PM
Washington, DC

TCSYale.org/Register

REGISTER TODAY!
Fee: \$100
Low income/Students: \$25
Registration is non refundable
Venue shared upon registration

Questions? Info@TCSYale.org OR 203.734.7385

The Campaign School at Yale University is a nonpartisan, issue-neutral leadership program whose mission is to increase the number and influence of women in elected and appointed office in the United States and around the globe. Founded by Andrée Aelion Brooks in 1994, The Campaign School at Yale University has been inspiring and training women to lead for over 25 years. Applications are now open!

No Kings - March 28



The next No Kings Day will be on March 28, 2026. LWV-US is a partner with No Kings. For more information, and to find the event nearest to you, click [here](#). Local leagues may sponsor their own marches or join others.

LWV DC Special Presentation and Movie: "The Last Battlefield" April 16

Join the Washington DC LWV at the movies on **April 16 at 6:30 pm** to watch "The Last Battlefield," concerning the struggle for DC Statehood. To register, click [here](#).

There will be a discussion of DC Statehood by members of LWV DC as well.

LWVCO's Position on Religious Freedom and the Threat of Religious Nationalism: A Presentation: April 9

The League of Women Voters of Colorado recently passed a position on the threat of religious nationalism in the United States. LWVCO is

asking local and state Leagues to urge the LWVUS to adopt this position by concurrence at the 2026 LWVUS Convention in June.

The LWV-VA Board voted to hold an educational session **on Thursday, April 9th from 6 to 7pm to hear a summary of the LWVCO study and subsequent position. You can register for this session ([here](#)).**

The goals of the LWVCO study were:

To describe the history of the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment, noting the importance of the steps taken in our country's history to ensure and enshrine secular governance and free exercise of all religions.

To describe how contemporary religious nationalism may threaten the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment.

To articulate the proposed position statement of LWVCO related to current challenges to the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment.

The April 9th session will be presented by Jeff Oster, LWVCO Study Committee Chair. The full study can be viewed [here](#).

For questions, contact Alice Tousignant, Program Chair, [here](#).

LWV Maryland Virtual Presentation *Democracy Dialogues: Anti-Science and Public Health: March 17*

ANTI-SCIENCE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

THE MOVEMENT TO DISCREDIT SCIENCE AND UNDERMINE OUR PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM



Ed Hunter, MA



Peter Hotez, MD, PhD



March 17, 2026



7:00–8:00 PM



Virtual

[RSVP](#)

LWV-WI: A Constitutional Crisis: Pre-Recorded Presentations

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin sponsored a series of three webinars on the National League's declaration of a "Constitutional Crisis."

The series includes excellent speakers on the state today of the three branches:

[Speaking about the Executive Branch](#), Attorney Lauren Miller-Carolounis, is Counsel at the Brennan Center of Law and was a special assistant attorney in Cook County, Illinois.

[Speaking about the Legislative Branch](#), Professor Eleanor Powell, is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and co-founder of Women in Legislative Studies.

[Speaking about the Judicial Branch](#), Attorney Steven Vladeck, a Professor of Law at Georgetown University, who focused on the Shadow Docket orders in the U.S. Supreme Court.

NEWS FROM LWV US

Fair Voting in Utah: VICTORY

The LWV-US has joined with Mormon Women for Ethical Government to intervene in a lawsuit challenging Utah's fair congressional map. The case was decided in LWV's favor. Read more [here](#).

Ohio's Senate is Trying to Purge Voters. The LWV-Ohio is suing.

Find out more [here](#).

What Former Attorney General Eric Holder Said About LWV

Former Attorney General Eric Holder joined Nicole Wallace on "The Best People" to discuss ways Americans can engage in our democracy and civic participation, including joining organizations that are actively fighting for our democracy, like the League of Women Voters. You can watch it here on [Instagram](#).

LWV-VA in the News

President Joan Porte's column on the National Popular Vote was published in the Richmond Times Dispatch. Many thanks to Jane Newell, Chair of National Popular Vote Interstate Compact Task Force, for actually penning this. You can read it [here](#).

March 2026 Calendar

Women's History Month

March 7 - Bloody Sunday, Selma

March 8 – Women's History Day

March 9 -13 - Civics Learning Week

March 21 - International Day of Elimination of Racial Discrimination

March 26 - Equal Pay Day

March 31 - Transgender Day of Visibility

[unsubscribe](#)
