

League of Women Voters of Virginia  
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United States

**September 2025 | Vol. 74 No. 3**

### **President's Message**

The second Unite and Rise Playbook from LWV US is out! In addition to all the things Leagues can do to mobilize people to protect our Democracy, there is something for individuals to do every day. These [Daily Democracy Actions](#) are especially good for people who are looking for things to do from home, or have limited time. Of course, there are many things for local leagues which have been sent to the Presidents, but they can't do that alone. They need all members to support this effort – so please reach out to them to lend your support. There is a role for every league member to Unite and Rise. We need to mobilize 250,000 Virginians to vote and respond. We can do this!

Thanks for all you do.

- Joan

P.S. LWV Washington County member, Rose Ann Jenny was inspired to write about the [the power of one vote](#) while watching a Ken Burns documentary about Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony

OK one more thing. Our podcast is back up rebooted by some of our terrific Youth Council members. See the article below with the viewing link for DemocraZY! And yes, I forgave them for the "olden days" in the '70s crack and so should you. :)

Thanks Gang!

Ok I am really done now.

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### **What is Unite and Rise 8.5?**

The number 8.5 million is the estimated number of nationwide voters it would take to bring about change through nonviolent protest. This is based on the findings from the Carr-Ryan Center for Human Rights, which state that engaging a threshold of 3.5% of the population has never failed to bring about change.

According to the University of Florida, approximately 245 million Americans were eligible to vote in the 2024 general election, if 3.5% of these eligible voters -8,575,000 people - engage in nonviolent protests, we *will* bring about meaningful change.

The League defines a Constitutional Crisis as: When the executive, the legislative, or judiciary branches cannot or will not adequately

protect the US Constitution, when there are explicit attempts to dismantle a functional democracy within any of the three branches, or when any level of federal government takes action to destroy democratic institutions in a manner that intentionally or purposefully jeopardizes the US Constitution. When these events occur, the constitution is deemed at the highest serious risk and warrants full-scale action to preserve and protect democratic institutions.

Unite and Rise to save our Democracy! Be part of the solution.  
Mobilize! Vote!

**Commit to action-** Use this QR coded to commit to rise for democracy!



**Protect democracy:** Tell your Senators to oppose the anti-voter SAVE Act.

**Raise your voice about illegal deportations:** join mobilizations around immigrant rights and due process with organizations like the

National Partnership for New Americans, United We Dream, and others.

**"Turn Up Heat" on elected officials:** on the issues that matter via Town Halls or calls.

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### **Get Connected with our League in Action App**

Do you want to remind your friends to check their voter registration? Do you want to inoculate them from mis and disinformation with correct election information? Do you want them to join Unite and Rise? Do you want to share action alerts with them? Do you want to take part in our nonpartisan Get Out the Vote (GOTV) text banks or assist other states with their text banking? Great! LWV US has just the app. It is called League in Action, and it is easier than ever to download and use.

LWV Virginia has our own page on League in Action. There we will post action alerts and other correct election information that you can send to friends.

To get League in Action go to your app store on your phone and find and download League in Action. It will have the LWV US logo. To find the Virginia page, use this QR code on your phone or search on your phone for [this](#).



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### **Vote411 Goes Live September 9**

- Janet Boyd, Director of Voter Services

Virginia's next regular election is on Tuesday, November 4. Local Leagues throughout the Commonwealth, partnering with the State League, have been working with candidates on the ballot to make sure you and other Virginia voters have the information needed to make educated ballot decisions. As a reminder, Early Voting in Virginia begins 45 days before an election, or September 19 for the November Election. Questions? Reach out to [me](#).

What will you see on September 9? Vote411 will include:

When you enter the address where you live, you will see all the candidates on your ballot, candidate answers to our questions, and details on how to contact your candidates. You will have statewide candidates (governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general), your Virginia House Delegate, and probably one or more local races.

A detailed outline of all the rules you need to know on how to vote in Virginia, including Vote by Mail, Vote by Drop Box, and In-Person Voting during the Early Voting Period and on Election Day.

You may also see where your Local League has scheduled a candidate forum or debate.

We need your help to encourage every candidate to answer our questions. For any candidate who has not answered our questions, you can use the contact information from Vote411 to let them know you care about seeing their answers.

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### **Disability Voting Rights Week**

- Carolyn Caywood, Member LWV of South Hampton Roads and member of LWV VA DEI Committee

Some disabilities necessitate accommodations in order for a person to vote. In recent years, Virginia has made real strides in providing voting options to meet different people's needs. Early voting, in person or by mail, helps some voters with disabilities. Curbside voting is another accommodation. All polling places are required to have an accessible ballot marking device that reads the ballot aloud to the voter. A voter can ask for assistance or bring an assistant. Because these are available to all voters and because people may have family members with disabilities, be sure to inform everyone about the different options when you are offering voter registration.

Still there are barriers to voting for some people with disabilities. At the next General Assembly Session we will be advocating for the constitutional amendment that will restore the right to vote, both for people who've been convicted of a felony *and* for people who lost their right when they were assigned a guardian, even though they understand voting and want to vote.

The League of Women Voters of Virginia is part of the REV UP Virginia coalition that will celebrate Disability Voting Rights Week on September 8 to 12 this year. REV UP stands for Register, Educate, Vote, Use your Power and is an initiative of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). Some of our local Leagues are collaborating on events for Disability Voting Rights Week.

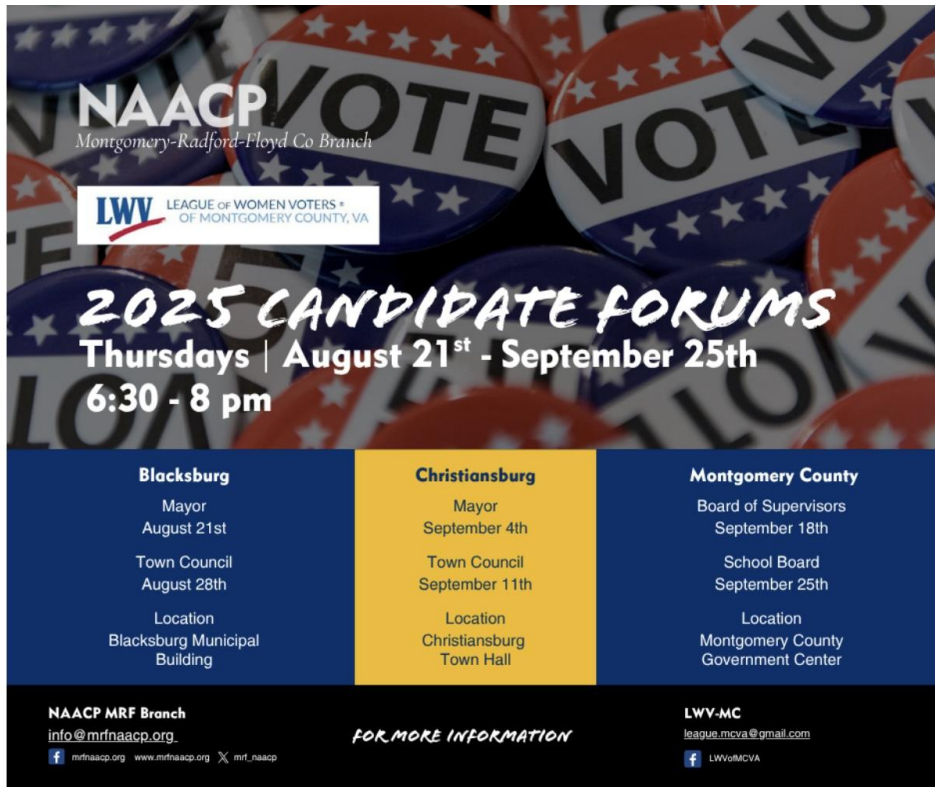
When you apply the League of Women Voters DEI lens, remember to include people with disabilities.

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## EVENTS & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

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### Candidate Forums

A poster for the 2025 Candidate Forums. The background is a collage of red, white, and blue circular buttons with the word "VOTE" and stars. The NAACP logo is in the top left, and the LWV-MC logo is in the top center. The main text reads "2025 CANDIDATE FORUMS" in large, bold, white letters, followed by "Thursdays | August 21st - September 25th" and "6:30 - 8 pm". Below this, there are three columns of information for Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Montgomery County, each listing the Mayor, Town Council, and School Board meetings, along with the location. At the bottom, there are contact details for NAACP MRF Branch and LWV-MC, and a "FOR MORE INFORMATION" link.

**NAACP**  
Montgomery-Radford-Floyd Co Branch

**LWV** LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS \*  
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VA

**2025 CANDIDATE FORUMS**  
Thursdays | August 21<sup>st</sup> - September 25th  
6:30 - 8 pm

Blacksburg	Christiansburg	Montgomery County
Mayor August 21st	Mayor September 4th	Board of Supervisors September 18th
Town Council August 28th	Town Council September 11th	School Board September 25th
Location Blacksburg Municipal Building	Location Christiansburg Town Hall	Location Montgomery County Government Center

**NAACP MRF Branch**  
[info@mrfnaacp.org](mailto:info@mrfnaacp.org)  
[www.mrfnaacp.org](https://www.mrfnaacp.org) [f](#) [X](#) [mrf\\_naacp](#)

**LWV-MC**  
[league.mcva@gmail.com](mailto:league.mcva@gmail.com)  
[f](#) [LWVofMCVA](#)

*FOR MORE INFORMATION*

### Be an Election Protection Worker this November

Our friends at the Virginia Civic Engagement Table (VCET) are once again looking for people to help make voting available and safe for all eligible voters this November. This is **the largest nonpartisan voter protection effort in the Commonwealth.**

You can become a voter advocate at the polling sites, work remotely on the phones fielding and categorizing calls or put up election protection signs at polling sites.

For more information and to sign up as a volunteer, go to the Election Protection [website](#) and scroll down to "create a volunteer profile."

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### **Join the Statewide Candidate Forum with the Disability Community – Sept 15**

Mark your calendars for Monday, September 15, 2025, from 6:00 to 7:30 PM for an important virtual, statewide candidate forum hosted by the Arc of Northern Virginia, REV UP Virginia, LWV Virginia and the Autism Society of Northern Virginia among others in the REV UP Coalition.

This nonpartisan event offers an opportunity to hear directly from candidates running for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Attorney General as they address issues that deeply affect the disability community — such as protecting Medicaid, expanding employment opportunities, inclusive and affordable housing, and ensuring voting access and rights.

Your attendance supports inclusive democracy and amplifies civic engagement.

Register [here](#) to be part of a conversation that matters.


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### **Democracy Teach-In Petersburg, VA Sept 20**

The League of Women Voters, The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy, the Black Women's Roundtable of Virginia, The John Mercer Langston Institute for African American Political Leadership and the Virginia State University will host a "Democracy Teach In" at VSU Petersburg on September 20.



This is a free all day class for anyone interested in building community power. Use the QR code below to register or go to [this link](#).



**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS


# DEMOCRACY

TEACH IN

Join neighbors and changemakers for one-day civic action event in Petersburg for civic skill-building, community power, and effective organizing. This teach-in equips you with the tools to take action and empower local voters.

**REGISTER HERE:**  
[FORMS.OFFICE.COM/R/KXFXGFWWDK](https://forms.office.com/r/KXFXGFWWDK)

**09.20.2025**  
VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS  
10:00AM - 3:00PM ET



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View the Recording of the August 26, LWV VA DEI Committee  
Fireside Chat on Women's In-Equality Day

Karen Perham-Lippman - Member LWV VA DEI Committee

On August 26, 2025, the League of Women Voters of Virginia hosted a Women's Equality Day Fireside Chat that welcomed a total of 74 participants, including both members and non-members from Virginia and other states such as Maryland, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Illinois, Colorado, Texas, and California.

Our panelists and moderator led a thoughtful conversation connecting Women's Equality Day to democracy and political engagement. Each panelist introduced themselves and addressed questions focused on the historical and ongoing importance of women's suffrage, equity, and inclusion.

Audience members had the opportunity to ask questions via chat, sparking meaningful dialogue. A survey was shared at the end of the session to gather feedback. We will continue to have dialogue throughout the year, focusing on women, especially women of color, and encourage everyone to stay engaged.

For those who missed the session, the Fireside Chat is available on [YouTube](#) for viewing.

This event reinforced that everyone has a seat at the table as we continue to learn—and relearn—about women's suffrage and civic engagement. The LWV-VA remains committed to fostering these conversations and encouraging broad participation in advancing equality and protecting democracy.

Join us in activating voices through civic engagement, education, and collective power through Unite and Rise 8.5. Visit the League of Women Voters “[Women Defend Democracy](#)” campaign

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### Join the Effort to "Save our Signs"

The Secretary of the Interior, following up on a recent Executive Order, is asking the National Park Service to take down signs in the parks that “inappropriately disparage Americans past or living.” A group collaboration of librarians, historians and data experts is asking for help in building a community archive of signs, exhibits and texts before they are erased. To learn more, click [here](#)

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### Advocacy Alerts

- From the LWV US Climate Interest Group

The EPA has proposed a rule to rescind the 2009 Endangerment Finding, with ramifications for future pollution regulation. LWVUS has already joined partner public comments, which we will post on our public-facing website after they’re submitted. We will also be submitting LWVUS comments with the expert support of the Climate Interest Group.

Rebecca Goldman of LWVUS staff is sharing an opportunity to support this advocacy effort in a **personal capacity**. If you’re interested, please click this [link](#) to our partner Climate Action Campaign’s (CAC’s) action alert, which you can use to submit draft comments directly to the EPA as an individual.

AND

Stop the Take Over of D.C.

The League of United States and the LWV of the District of Columbia have spoken out against the federalization of Washington, D.C.

Now it is your turn to write to your United States Members of Congress and Senators to stop this! Use this [advocacy form](#) to tell them to stop this dangerous march to militarized states.

You are writing as an individual, not representing LWV.

## Voting Rights Then and Now

# ARLINGTON COUNTY CIVICS: VIRGINIA VOTING RIGHTS 1965 - TODAY



**TUE. SEPT. 16**

**6:00 P.M.**

**SHIRLINGTON LIBRARY**

### **Celebrate National Voter Registration Day and the Right to Vote!**

As part of the "From Barriers to Ballots" commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, join us for a panel discussion examining the changes taking place for Virginia voters since the Voting Rights Act of 1965 until today.

Visit our exhibit, "[From Barriers to Ballots](#)" at Central Library.

*In partnership with the League of Women Voters of Arlington-Alexandria City.*

FOR MORE INFO  
& TO REGISTER



**Free.**

**The program will be recorded  
and available for later viewing.**



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS •  
ARLINGTON AND ALEXANDRIA CITY



**Arlington  
Public  
Library**

### **SHIRLINGTON LIBRARY**

4200 Campbell Avenue  
703-228-6545



**ARLINGTON  
VIRGINIA**



**Charlie Clark Center For  
Local History**

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## LWV US

### John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act

The US Senate introduced the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* (JLVRAA) to protect and strengthen our democracy. The League of Women Voters proudly supports this critical legislation. **Celina Stewart, Esq.**, CEO of the League of Women Voters, issued the following statement:

“Named in honor of the late civil rights icon and voting rights champion Congressman John Lewis, this bill is not just a tribute, it’s a necessity. The *Voting Rights Advancement Act* is a direct response to the relentless attacks on our democracy, including recent attempts by states to disturb current representation through mid-cycle redistricting. After a decade of US Supreme Court decisions that gutted key provisions, this bill would restore the *Voting Rights Act*’s full power and finally put guardrails back in place to stop racial discrimination at the ballot box. Without it, the right to vote remains vulnerable to manipulation and abuse.

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### LWV Files SCOTUS Brief to Preserve Access to Justice for Voting Rights Groups

League of Women Voters CEO **Celina Stewart, Esq.**, issued the following statement about the League’s amicus brief filed in the US Supreme Court case, *Bost v. Illinois State Board of Elections*:

“The League of Women Voters is proud to file a brief today in support of access to justice for organizations like the League who serve voters. The League challenges state voting laws that discriminate and burden voters and impair the League’s ability to carry out our core work: voter education, registration, and engagement.

“We don’t have to agree with the case to agree with the right to bring it. Standing is not a loophole; it is a pillar of democracy. When individuals who are truly harmed are denied the right to challenge

the process or law, the judiciary forfeits its role as a constitutional referee.

"Like the rest of us, Representative Bost deserves his day in court. To deny this right is to leave election rules above reproach—and the entire system without oversight.

Election laws shape the rights and realities of voters, candidates, campaigns, and civic organizations working to ensure full participation and often hitting hardest in communities long denied equal access. The League is unwavering in our commitment to keeping the courthouse doors open to those harmed by state action, including our own organization when necessary."

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### **LWV Statement on Mail-in Ballots and Voting Machines**

The League of Women Voters CEO, **Celina Stewart, Esq.**, issued the following statement in response to President Trump's vow to eliminate mail-in ballots and voting machines:

"Free, fair, and accessible elections are the cornerstone of a healthy democracy. President Trump's call to eliminate vote-by-mail is a direct attack on Americans' freedom to vote.

"Vote-by-mail is secure, accurate, and trusted by millions of voters — including older adults, military members, rural communities, tribal communities, voters of color, and voters with disabilities. Vote-by-mail has proven to expand voter participation in recent elections.

"President Trump has no constitutional authority to take this action. Under our US Constitution, the states have the power to run elections, and only Congress can step in to regulate those elections

when needed. This move is yet another overreach by an unpopular president who seeks to silence the public to hold onto power.

“President Trump’s attacks on voting machines are similarly misleading and dangerous. Voting systems in the US already meet strict standards for security, accuracy, transparency, and accessibility, with paper ballots or audit trails to verify results. Scrapping machines in favor of hand counting would undermine election integrity and efficiency, not strengthen it. The League of Women Voters stands firmly for secure, modern systems that protect every vote and uphold public trust in our democracy.

“The President should get his facts straight: he does not have the authority to regulate elections, states have strong measures to ensure voting equipment is secure, and many countries successfully utilize vote-by-mail.

“The League of Women Voters will not stand by while politicians spread lies to limit democratic participation. We will be looking at the forthcoming Executive Order very closely and will use every tool in our toolbox to push back on these threats to our free, fair, and accessible elections.

“We will fight to protect vote-by-mail and every method that makes casting a ballot accessible. Our democracy is strong when every eligible voter can make their voice heard, whether at a polling place or through a mail-in ballot.”

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### **LWV Poetry Anthology for 250th Anniversary of America**

In 2026, we will celebrate our country’s 250th birthday during a time of unprecedented threats to our Constitution and our Democracy.

It's a time to remember, reflect and recommit—a time to hope, dream and build—a time to show up, stand solid, and lead with strong voices that cannot be silenced.

As poets, writers, and members of the League of Women Voters, we recognize the power of language to connect people—to stir hearts and minds, and to reaffirm the enduring promise of Democracy. Through poetry, we aim to illuminate its beauty, its fragility, and its strength, especially at a time when we can no longer afford to take its core principles for granted.

One way we express our love of country and Democracy is by lifting our voices together. Inspired by artist Niki Johnson's *Pillars of Democracy* we are compiling a national poetry anthology featuring one hundred poems by League members from across the country

### **Timeline**

#### **Submission Deadline**

October 15, 2025

#### **Selections Finalized**

December 31, 2025

#### **Advance Orders Begin**

February 14, 2026

#### **Design, Layout & Production Completed**

April 30, 2026

#### **Release Date**

June 1, 2026

The publication will be produced via print-on-demand.

This is a project of the LWV Wisconsin and LWV Milwaukee on behalf of LWV.

Please submit your poem [here](#).



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## LWV-VA NEWS

### Reboot of the LWV VA Podcast Thanks to Our Youth Council

"Introducing the LWV Virginia's new youth-led podcast, DemocraZy! Each monthly podcast episode interviews a different guest based on topics ranging from misinformation in the media, youth engagement, storytelling in politics, polarization, and a multitude of other topics related to voting, politics, and the government. The main purpose of the podcast is to motivate younger and more recent generations to take civic and political action by educating them on local, state, and national issues, as well as giving them the tools and information they need to kickstart change.

A peek into the first episode, "New Phone, Who 'Dis?", features LWV Virginia's President Joan Porte, as she speaks about her journey to the LWV as well as its history and significance in Virginia, later delving into topics such as political efficacy and youth confidence in the government. Stay tuned for new and future episodes, as Gen Z continues to explore our DemocraZy!"

WATCH [DemocraZy! here.](#)

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### LWV-VA Lawsuit Allowed to Continue

*Federal Judge Rejects Broad Bid to Toss VACIR Voting Rights Case  
Plaintiffs' core claims proceed and the case moves to discovery.*

**Alexandria, VA**— In a major win for voting rights and the rule of law, Judge Patricia Tolliver Giles of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, the defendants' motion to dismiss in *Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights (VACIR) v. Beals*. The ruling keeps plaintiffs' central claims intact and clears the way for discovery.

To find out more, go to the LWV-VA website, [here](#).

On August 27 there was a virtual press conference with plaintiff organizations and Progress Virginia plus Counsel from the Protect Democracy and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

The [recording is here](#). Use Passcode: =FvCgM68.

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### **LWV-VA condemns Governor Glenn Youngkin's plan to deploy the Virginia National Guard to support Federal ICE actions.**

"Deploying the National Guard on Virginia communities further erodes our democracy. These people have received no due process, which is one of the basic tenants of our freedom," stated Joan Porte, President of the League of Women Voters of Virginia. "As the granddaughter of immigrants, it sickens me to think of my hard-working grandparents being treated the way these people are. People come to this country for a better life not to be treated like criminals."

The Governor says that the Guard will be used only for administrative purposes, but any support is too much. We urge the Governor to reverse this decision, and we urge all Virginians to respect and honor our immigrant communities.

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### **Healthcare Advocacy**

Stephanie Lowenhaupt and Mimi Bender – LWV VA Health Task Force

The Healthcare Task Force is continuing to monitor issues at the local, state and national level, primarily through participation in collaborative efforts with other LWV groups and healthcare coalitions. We want to apprise our membership of a proposal made by LWV New York that it plans to present at the 2026 LWV convention. The new proposal revises the defeated 2024 proposal by

the LVW-VT to update the LWV US Privatization Position to oppose the privatization of healthcare.

The revised LWV New York proposal states:

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.

The group spearheading this effort is [HCR4US](#). Their goal is to have this position adopted by LWV US at the 2026 Convention. The LWV-VA will provide further education and guidance on this issue prior to local Leagues' Annual Program Planning events.

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### **We're on YouTube!**

Did you know that LWV-VA has a YouTube channel? The YouTube icon at the bottom of each LWV-VA web page will take you there or just go to <https://www.youtube.com/@leagueofwomenvotersofvirginia>. DON'T FORGET TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR CHANNEL. You will find lots of our League videos, long and short, and among them are authentic Registrars explaining some of the parts of the election process that voters wonder about. You can feature these on your social media:

How can you vote in college in Virginia? 0:35

How to Vote Absentee in Virginia 1:32

How the Absentee Ballot System Works 4:30

The Absentee Voting System; Process and Security 4:30

The Absentee Voting Process in Virginia 3:30

Absentee Ballots: How Are They Tracked? 2:00

What is a Virginia Drop Box and How to Find Yours! 3:01

You can track your ballot when you use mail in or drop boxes 2:00

Drop Box Safety and Security 0:45

What is an Election Risk Limiting Audit? 6:01

Logic and Accuracy Testing of Voting Machines 8:16

Report Mis and Dis Information 0:20

There are many ways to get to the polls 0:23

Virginia has same day voter registration 0:41

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## **Right to Vote Amendment**



Our own Chris DeRosa with Virginia Interfaith For Public Policy's Robert Lester, at a Virginia Civic Engagement Table Meeting on the Right to Vote Amendment.

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**LOCAL LEAGUE NEWS**



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## Voter Registration in Action



With the LWV of Charlottesville

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...and LWV-Roanoke Unit



In Washington County: Delivering Voter information kits for teacher contacts in our four high schools. Meanwhile, we held a successful Emory and Henry University tabling event. RUR is “Are You Registered?” The kids love it.

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### **A Leaguer for 50 Years!**



The Prince William Fauquier Area League congratulates Barbara Amster for reaching her 50 year anniversary as a League Member. She will be honored at their Annual Kickoff Breakfast on Sept 13!

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### **September 2025 Calendar**

**Sept 9 - 13**– Disabled Voters Rights Week

**Sept 9 - Vote 411.org goes live for VA elections.**

**September 16** - [National Voter Registration Day](#)

**September 17** – Constitution Day

**September 19** - Early Voting Starts in Virginia

[unsubscribe](#)

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