

## LWVNEW MARCH 2021 NEWSLETTER

### LWVNEW

#### OPPORTUNITY

Want to become a board member and attend meetings in your pajamas? (All right, maybe your pajama bottoms...but still!) The board meets once a month, via Zoom. Contact Eileen Nadelson to find out more: [judgenadelson@gmail.com](mailto:judgenadelson@gmail.com)

### NATIONAL LEAGUE NEWS (LWVUS)

#### THE FOR THE PEOPLE ACT

The House has passed the *For the People Act*. This legislation will put power back into the hands of American voters by making voting easier and more accessible and by modernizing future elections. It will:

- Restore the Voting Rights Act
- Modernize our voter registration system
- Update the public financing of elections through small donor matching funds
- Curb partisan gerrymandering, and
- Make campaign contributions more transparent.

Over the last two years, we saw this legislation pass in the House of Representatives but stall in the Senate. There is still time to urge your senators to support the *For the People Act*  
>If you have not already done so, why not contact your senators through the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and tell them to Vote Yes on the *For the People Act*? Put control of our government back where it belongs—into the hands of the people.

#### THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

From LWVUS President

Dr. Deborah Ann Turner:

*Despite Abigail Adams's famous advice to her husband to "remember the ladies," he and the rest of the founders left any mention of women out of the founding documents. As a result, the U.S. Constitution does not mention women at all.*

*This is ironic, to say the least, in our current day and age, when women fill the halls of Congress and hold leadership positions, from Speaker of the House to Vice President of the United States.*

*It's been **101 years** since the 19th Amendment granted women the right to vote.*

*It's been **98 years** since the Equal Rights Amendment was first introduced in Congress.*

*It's been **49 years** since the ERA was passed by Congress.*

*And it's been **one year** since the ERA was ratified by the required 38 states.*

*But the Equal Rights Amendment still needs to be added to the Constitution.*

*The House and Senate have introduced legislation to remove the time limit on the Equal Rights Amendment. The League has supported ratification since the ERA was first passed by Congress in 1972 and has worked for decades to see ratification by the states. Last year, Virginia ratified the ERA, making it the required 38<sup>th</sup> state. Now is the time for the legislative branch to pass it and finally include women in the U.S. Constitution.*

Read more here, including how to contact your congressional representatives: [Make Women's History: Add the ERA to the Constitution | League of Women Voters \(lww.org\)](#)

### **FROM BLOODY SUNDAY TO TODAY, THE FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO VOTE**

Please join in on Tuesday, March 9, at 7pm for an in-depth discussion on "Bloody Sunday," the Voting Rights Act, the rise of new forms of voter suppression, and how passing voting rights legislation in 2021 is an urgent matter of racial justice and strengthening our democracy.

On March 7, 1965, 600 civil rights marchers were beaten and gassed by Alabama state and local police as they crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge on their way from Selma to Montgomery to insist on their constitutional right to vote. "Bloody Sunday" ignited the conscience of the nation and led to passage of the Voting Rights Act five months later.

LWVUS is co-sponsoring the webinar with several other organizations and the panel sounds terrific: Leigh Chapman, Andrea Miller, and Ari Berman.

Read more and RSVP: <https://bit.ly/3ecirPL>

### **IMPACT ON ISSUES 2020-2022**

*Impact on Issues* is designed to help League members understand LWVUS public policy positions and use them effectively at the national, state, local, and regional levels.

This is a great resource for both new and established members. (Note: A summary runs from page 11 to page 16):

[Impact On Issues 2020-2022 | League of Women Voters \(lww.org\)](#)

### **PEOPLE-POWERED DAY OF ACTION**

On April 29, the League is hosting a People Powered Day of Action as an opportunity for state and local Leagues and partners across the country to come together to shine a light on the redistricting process and demand fair maps.

The League has officially launched the [People Powered Fair Maps \(PPFM\) landing page!](#) This is a public-facing page where anyone can learn more about PPFM and get a glimpse into the work that is being done across our nation to ensure a fair and transparent redistricting process. Check it out: [People Powered Fair Maps | League of Women Voters \(lww.org\)](#)

### **STATE LEAGUE NEWS (LWVNY)**

#### **STATE SENATE PASSES VOTING RIGHTS RESTORATION BILL**

This week the Senate passed S.830A, a bill to restore voting rights to all formerly incarcerated individuals including those on parole. This legislation would codify and improve an Executive Order put forward by Governor Cuomo in 2019 that allowed partial pardons to those who were on parole to allow them to re-register and vote. The Executive Order was limited in that each person would have to be regranted their voting rights by the Governor's office and would have to re-register themselves without assistance from the Board of Elections or another agency. S.830A will automatically restore voting rights to justice involved individuals after they complete their sentencing. The legislation also ensures that there is adequate notice to the affected parties that their rights have been restored and of the opportunity to easily re-register as a voter.

The Assembly Election Law Committee has moved A.4448A to the Assembly Floor Calendar. A.4448A is the same legislation as S.830A. The bill is on the calendar in the Assembly but it is unclear when it will go to a vote.

#### **LEAGUE OPPOSES ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION DEADLINE CHANGE**

The Assembly Election Law Committee also moved A.5783, legislation that would reduce the timeline for a voter to request an absentee ballot by mandating that voters submit their request fifteen days before an election instead of seven days before. The League is working to oppose this legislation because it has the potential to disenfranchise voters who have grown accustomed to the current deadline.

#### **FUNDING OF REDISTRICTING COMMISSION**

Governor Cuomo has released [30-day amendments](#) to his Executive Budget. The Governor did not allocate any new monies for the state's Independent Redistricting Commission or for elections.

The League will continue to encourage the Senate and Assembly to add additional funds to the budget for both the Independent Redistricting Commission and the Board of Elections. The Senate and Assembly typically release their version of the budget in mid-March.

#### **NYREDISTRICTING.ORG**

The League has added new resources to its [NYRedistricting.org](#) page. These new resources include the archived webcast of LWVUS's training on creating and presenting testimonies on redistricting. **Check it out: [NYRedistricting.org](#)**

#### **LWVNYS CALLS FOR TRANSPARENCY**

The State League signed onto a joint letter to the Governor and Legislative Leaders, calling for transparency in the reporting of past and future response to the COVID-19 emergency. Our joint organization called for open COVID-19 data, oversight hearings, and an independent assessment of the state's response.

The letter urged the Governor and Legislature to publish all COVID-19 data as open data, to hold an independent National Transportation Safety Board-style assessment of state and local systems' response to the pandemic, and to hold additional oversight hearings of all state agencies involved in COVID-19 response.

**[Read the full letter here: Watchdogs Across the Political Spectrum Say New Yorkers Deserve Full Transparency About the COVID-19 Emergency and State Response – Reinvent Albany](#)**

#### **COUNTY LEAGUE NEWS (LWVW) ENVIRONMENT**

The Environment Committee is organizing a Zoom workshop for municipalities on how they can implement their Climate Smart Communities projects to lower their emissions and take advantage of newly available grants. Co-sponsors include the County of Westchester, Sustainable Westchester, Federated Conservationists of Westchester and ELLA of Teatown. The committee is taking shape; volunteers from the League community hope to advocate for electric school buses and cars, charging stations, building codes, and infrastructure. Climate Leaguers around the state will craft a declaration of climate emergency and other actions. LWVUS also has an active nationwide Climate Team.

**LWVNEW**

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

**Our Voting Districts**

**Bedford**

US Congressional: 18 (Maloney-D)

State Senate: 37 (Mayer-D)

State Assembly: 93 (Burdick-D)

County Legislative: 2 (Covill-D)

**Lewisboro**

US Congressional: 18 (Maloney-D)

State Senate: 40 (Harckham-D)

State Assembly: 93 (Burdick-D)

County Legislative: 2 (Covill-D)

**Mount Kisco**

US Congressional: 17 (Jones-D)

State Senate: 40 (Harckham-D)

State Assembly: 93 (Burdick-D)

County Legislative: 2 (Covill-D)

**North Salem**

US Congressional: 18 (Maloney-D)

State Senate: 40 (Harckham-D)

State Assembly: 93 (Burdick-D)

County Legislative: 2 (Covill-D)

**Pound Ridge**

US Congressional: 18 (Maloney-D)

State Senate: 40 (Harckham-D)

State Assembly: 93 (Burdick-D)

County Legislative: 2 (Covill-D)



at *League of Women Voters of North East Westchester*



at **LWVNEW**