



League Links - March 2021

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President's Message

March is a month to highlight the accomplishments of women from the past, from now, and encouragement for the future.

We hope this video inspires girls (and all) to set their sites high for their goals.

The following is a link to a discussion by some of Michigan's outstanding women.

<https://youtu.be/dC8a6UuFIEw> or just click on the video below.

-- Christina Schlitt, LWVMI President

A CONVERSATION ABOUT WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

#CHOOSETOCHALLENGE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10
3:30 - 4 P.M.

- Governor Gretchen Whitmer
 - Chief Justice Bridget Mary McCormack
 - Muna Jondy, MI Women's Commissioner
 - Jocelyn Benson, Secretary of State
 - Dana Nessel, Attorney General
 - Charly Dean, MI Women's Commissioner

Women's History Month

Why do we celebrate Women's History Month in March? On March 8, 1857 factory women in New York City staged a protest over poor working conditions. In 1909 the first Women's Day was celebrated in the US in New York City. Congress established National Women's History Week in 1981 to be held annually the second week of March. This was expanded in 1987 from a week to a month. Each year Congress passes a resolution, and the President issues a proclamation designating March as Women's History Month.

What can you or your Local League do to celebrate Women's History Month?

- Urge your Senator to remove the ERA Amendment ratification deadline. The Equal Rights Amendment was first introduced in Congress 98 years ago and passed in Congress 49 years ago. It has been one year since the required 38 states ratified the amendment. It still needs to be added to the Constitution, but there is dispute over the ratification deadline. The House removed the deadline on March 17th and now the Senate must do the same. Go to lwv.org for the ERA Toolkit.
- Feature your 50-year Local League members
- Post Women's History Month information on your social media
- Go to www.womenshistorymonth.gov to see a listing of video and audio resources offered through groups such as the Smithsonian and National Archives.

- Check your local library for books on the many women who have made a difference.

-- Paula Manley, LWVMI VP Membership

Line 5 Action Alert

The League of Women Voters Michigan supports the actions of Governor Whitmer and Attorney General Nessel to terminate and permanently revoke the easement that has enabled Enbridge Line 5 (a Canadian Oil and Natural Gas Liquid Transport Pipeline) to operate in waters of the Straits of Mackinac.

We oppose Enbridge's continued use of the nearly 70-year-old Line 5 pipeline occupying the waters of the Straits, and We oppose Enbridge Energy Company's proposed tunnel through unconsolidated material under the Straits as fraught with its own set of environmental risks and out of touch with the need to immediately address the climate crisis by reducing fossil fuel production and consumption.

We request that our LWVMI members contact the Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, the Michigan Public Service Commission, your legislators, and the Governor in support of termination of the Line 5 Easement and in opposition to the proposed tunnel.

Here are the links:

Army Corps of Engineers Detroit District USACE Detroit District
Regulatory Office
477 Michigan Avenue
Detroit, Michigan 48222
Line_5_LRE@usace.army.mil

MPSC

https://www.oilandwaterdontmix.org/submit_line_5_public_comment_to_mpsc

Governor Whitmer

<https://somgovweb.state.mi.us/GovRelations/ContactGovernor.aspx>

Michigan Legislators

- [Michigan House of Representatives Website: Find Your Representative](#)
- [Michigan Senate's Website: Find Your Senator](#)

You may have heard the disappointing news that our state Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) determined that it was obligated by law to issue Enbridge the preliminarily required environmental permit necessary to continue with plans to construct a tunnel to house a replacement section of

Line 5 pipeline under the Straits of Mackinac.

But this does *not* mean Enbridge has the go-ahead to build an oil tunnel in the Great Lakes. With your help, we still have time to stop the flow of oil through the heart of the Great Lakes and the proposed tunnel!

Our attention should now be focused on the Detroit District of the Army Corp of Engineers, and the independent Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC), both of whom have the power to stop the Tunnel by denying the additional permits needed for construction to begin.

The Army Corps of Engineers is considering Enbridge's application for a federal Clean Water Act permit. The MPSC must decide if Michigan actually needs Enbridge's oil pipeline before it can authorize it for another 99 years in a different location in the Straits.

Making sure the Army Corps does what EGLE was unable to do – conduct a full environmental review of the tunnel proposal – is critical. Here is a link provided by Oil and Water don't mix, of which the League of Women Voters Michigan is a member:

https://www.oilandwaterdontmix.org/president_biden_support_the_line_5_shutdown?recruiter_id=43255

For more information here is a link to Michigan's US Senator, Gary Peters, who is the chair of the US Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

<https://www.peters.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/peters-statement-on-state-of-michigan-revoking-line-5-easement>

Finally, it's important to continue to support the Governor and Michigan's Attorney General in their actions to halt operation of the existing Line 5. While we are confident that in the end the courts will uphold termination and revocation of the 1953 easement, Enbridge is pulling out all the stops to delay the closure as long as possible, and it plans to continue to operate Line 5 as a trespasser and in violation of the law until the courts confirm termination of the easement.

Here's the link to Governor Whitmer's office to show your support:
Governor Whitmer

<https://sombgovweb.state.mi.us/GovRelations/ContactGovernor.aspx>

-- Tricia Denton & Sandra Sorini Elser, LWVMI Advocacy Committee, Natural Resources

Voter Suppression

Voter suppression and intimidation cannot be tolerated in

Michigan!

Recently, the Michigan House of Representatives passed two bills that sound reasonable, but the devil is in the details. Using the guise of the recommendations made by the Auditor General, the Michigan House of Representatives has passed two bills that ultimately will eliminate voters from the Qualified Voter File (QVF).

House Bill 4127 was passed by the House with a substitute that requires voters who have a "placeholder birthdate" listed in the QVF to prove their birthdate to be a registered voter. While the problem with the birthdate was probably a clerical error, the burden of proof rests with the voter.

In addition, House Bill 4128 would require the 300,000 people who are on the QVF who have not voted since 2000 to verify their addresses to continue to be on the QVF, and their signatures would have to match the ones on file. If not, they are placed on the challenged list.

The bills are also opposed by the Secretary of State (SOS)

LWVMI also opposes House Bills 4132 and 4133. A person who knowingly filled out and submitted or caused to be submitted an absent voter (AV) ballot application containing or using another person's name and personal ID information, except as otherwise expressly authorized by law, would be guilty of a felony. Currently, it is a misdemeanor. LWVMI is concerned about voter intimidation being used to suppress the use of the absentee ballot.

LWVMI supports House Bill 4129 that requires the SOS to post on the SOS website in odd-numbered years the names of clerks who have not completed the required training.

House Bills 4127, 4128, and 4129 have passed the House and are awaiting action in the Senate Elections Committee.

House Bills 4132 and 4133 are awaiting action in the House.

For more information, go to www.legislature.mi.gov.

-- Judy Karandjeff, LWVMI Advocacy Committee Chair

Michigan ICRC Update

MICRC and Census Data Delay

The MICRC voted to petition the Michigan Supreme Court to waive the November 1, 2021 map approval deadline required by the Michigan Constitution. The Commission will suggest a later deadline to accommodate the delayed receipt of the 2020 Census Data. The new requested deadline has yet to be determined by the MICRC.

MICRC Public Hearings

On March 11, 2021, the MICRC approved the proposed Public Hearing Schedule. They will run from May 4 – June 24, 2021 and will take place in the following 16 communities:

Dearborn, Detroit TCF Center, Detroit - Wayne County Community College, Flint, Gaylord, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Marquette, Midland, Muskegon, Novi, Pontiac, Port Huron and Warren.

Dates of the Public Hearings will be posted on our website and at RedistrictingMichigan.org. Specific facilities are still being arranged.

The Hearings will be in-person meetings with appropriate COVID safety measures taken. The purpose of the Hearings is to share information about Redistricting and to receive testimony and maps from Communities of Interest, local governments and individuals. Meetings will be live-streamed over the internet.

Town Halls

The MICRC plans to supplement their 16 Public Hearings with Town Halls which they plan to do in conjunction with local community organizations like the League as well as with local governments. Several Commissioners would attend if possible.

Local Leagues have been offered pass-through grants to host Town Halls in their communities. Town Halls will cover redistricting, the MICRC and Communities of Interest. The purpose of the Town Hall is to educate the public and to encourage them to participate in MICRC Public Hearings as individuals or as Communities of Interest. I will share the local League Town Halls dates with the MICRC Communications and Outreach Director so that he can coordinate them with the individual Commissioners.

Local League Communities of Interest (COI) Teams

Local League Presidents have recruited 3 or 4 local League members to serve on local League teams, led by a member of the state League MICRC Monitoring Team. Over 100 League members have been recruited and trained. State Team leaders are meeting with their teams to plan next steps including identifying and educating Communities of Interest. The goal is to identify and train COIs on how to submit maps and testimony to the MICRC at their Public Hearings which begin May 4 in Marquette.

-- Sue Smith, LWVMI VP Advocacy

**LWVMI Advocacy Committee
Invites YOU**

What kind of advocacy is LWVMI doing on Line 5 and other

environmental issues, voting rights, prison reform, education, gun safety? How can you advocate in your own community?

Come join the Advocacy Committee on Zoom, March 23, at 7 p.m. to discuss these issues and more.

If you're interested, contact your local League President for more information.

Lame Duck Study Winding Down



We appreciate all the Leagues who have participated in this study process over the past several months. The concurrence responses are due by March 31 and should be sent to VP of Program: Paula Bowman paulabowman9000@gmail.com. Those Leagues who were part of this process can take special pride in the position that will be developed since they represent the 'grass roots' tenet of the League of Women Voters.

LWVMI Convention 2021 is May 21-22

Are you as excited about the LWVMI state convention as we are? We're lining up a robust list of local, state, and national speakers for our workshops and panel discussion. We know you'll find plenty that interests you!



The on-line registration form is now available on our website. ANY League member can attend convention, but before you register, check with your League president to find out if you're a voting delegate. The fees and the access links are different for voting delegates and non-voting members, so it's important that you check the right box on the form.

The [AWARDS packet](#) is already on the website. Nominations for the League's competitive awards and the non-competitive "Belle Ringer" awards are being accepted through April 15. Please click on the Awards packet link on the website to get the full details and instructions. We hope that local Leagues will take this opportunity to recognize the hard work that our dedicated members have done these past few years.

-- Paula Bowman, LWVMI VP Program

LWVMI Convention: Silent Auction

We hope that you will consider supporting LWVMI through the Silent Auction that will be offered on the state convention website.

Bidding will begin at 8:30 p.m. on May 21, and end at 2 p.m. on May 22. Bidding will be by email, so watch for special instructions.

Auction items include the "South Haven Escape " vacation, the last bottle of "VOTE" wine, and many more. All items will be featured on the convention website.

If you have an item to add to the auction, call Ken Manley at 269 330 8579. The end date for adding items to the auction is May 15.

There will also be an opportunity for outright gifts to LWVMI through the 15 for \$100 campaign. It looks like fun.

See you at the auction!

-- Ken Manley, LWVMI Director - Development

Sunshine Week is All Year Round

Sunshine Week was launched in 2005 by the American Society of News Editors — now News Leaders Association — and has grown into an enduring initiative to promote open government.

LWV-US Position: Citizen's Right to Know / Citizen Participation
The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

This year Sunshine Week was March 14-20, but promoting open government is always important.

The League has long worked for the citizen's right to know and for broad citizen participation in government. Leagues are empowered to apply that position at the state and local levels.

In Michigan, the League has used this position to call for transparency in State Education and Redistricting positions. This year's Sunshine Week is likely to see both

- More attention to the campaign launch by Progress Michigan for a ballot proposal to eliminate the exemptions in Michigan's FOIA law, and
- Legislation intended to improve Michigan's transparency. Currently, both the State Legislature and the Governor's Office are exempt from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

In 2015 Michigan ranked 50th out of 50 states in government transparency by the Center for Public Integrity. Only two states

still don't require lawmakers to disclose finances – Idaho and Michigan. The League's State Advocacy Committee and State Board monitor legislation and ballot proposals and will call for action when appropriate.

If your League already has or is creating an Observer Corps program, volunteer if you can. You will learn a lot, and it's an excellent way to learn about transparency in your local municipalities and school boards. In May, the LWV-MI State Convention will offer a workshop on Observer Corps Programs.

Another action which a Local League Board could take is to write a Letter to the Editor and/or post on your Social Media. Members may also write, but not in the name of the League.

-- Betsy Cushman, LWVMI VP Voter Services

Making Democracy Work Grant from LWVUS to LWVMI

All Michigan's Local Leagues empower voters before every election in many ways. In 2020, 14 Local Leagues and their geographical units were offered an opportunity to participate in an LWVUS-EF grant to assist with Voter Service activities.

These leagues include Ann Arbor Area - Brighton/Howell Unit, Dearborn – Dearborn Heights, Detroit, Eastern Upper Peninsula, Flint Area, Grosse Pointe, Holland Area, Jackson Area, Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids Unit, Calhoun Unit, Lansing Area, Leelanau – Emmet/Charlevoix Unit, Marquette County, Mt. Pleasant, and Northwest Wayne County

All Leagues consciously reached out to communities who are historically underserved and underrepresented, building upon established relationships or conducting outreach to make new friends and coalitions.

[Click here](#) to read the full report.

-- Betsy Cushman, LWVMI VP Voter Services

The Future is Female: Equal Pay Day Conversation

The Future is Female: From a SHE-cession to a SHE-Surge

MARCH 24, 2021 *at* 4 P.M.



speakers

Governor Gretchen Whitmer

Julissa Reynoso

Co-Chair, Gender Policy Council &
Chief of Staff to First Lady Jill Biden

Ruth Archer

Strategy Officer, Michigan Bureau
of Labor Market Information &
Strategic Initiatives



WHAT: Join Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Julissa Reynoso, Co-Chair of the White House Gender Policy Council and Chief of Staff to First Lady Jill Biden, for an Equal Pay Day conversation about women's economic recovery.

Wednesday, March 24, marks Equal Pay Day in the US, raising awareness about the pervasive gender wage gap. At this virtual event, the Michigan Bureau of Labor Market Information will unveil Michigan Women in the Workforce, a report on the pay gap for Michigan women and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Michigan women's employment.

Following the report, Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Julissa Reynoso will discuss initiatives to address pay equity and women's economic recovery at the state and federal levels.

WHEN: Wednesday, March 24, at 4 p.m.

WHERE: Watch the conversation live on the [Michigan Women's Commission's YouTube Channel](#).

LWVUS Education Fund Q and A

Does your local League have an account with the LWVUS Education Fund? If it does and you are wondering how best to manage that account, you have the opportunity to hear an explanation on Wednesday, March 31 at 7 p.m. on Zoom.

Kevin Ringkamp, LWVUS Senior Director of Operations, will join local League officers for a question and answer session. He will highlight how best local Leagues can place funds in and retrieve funds from their accounts with the LWVUS Education Fund.

Please email denise.hartsough@gmail.com for the meeting link.

Upcoming Webinar: Sorting out Sex and Gender

SAVE THE DATE: Thursday, June 17, at 7 p.m. for *Sorting Out Sex and Gender*, a webinar presented by the Membership Committee of the LWVMI Board.

Gender is one of those things most of us think we understand, but we probably don't. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or; sometimes it's both/and.

An experienced trainer from Equality Michigan (Michigan's statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) political advocacy organization) will help League members learn the nuances of gender. By educating ourselves about this topic, we can make our League more inclusive and welcoming to all.

Registration details for this webinar will be available in April. This webinar will be held on Zoom.

--Te ra Moon, LWVMI Membership - DEI

Did You Know?

..... that the EVENTS page on our state's website lists all local League websites and encourages visitors to check out the calendar events in their nearby League? We will be 'pointing' to this page more often in the next few months as Leagues organize events around the People Powered Fair Maps grant program. Be sure that any programs that the public can attend are highlighted and detailed on your website so visitors can find them easily.



Local League Spotlights

LWVAAA Brighton/Howell Geographical Unit celebrated Women's History Month by partnering with the Howell Carnegie Library to offer a Zoom presentation with Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins on March 16. Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins is a former LWVUS National President and author of *The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters*.

LWV Holland Area members joined with community members to celebrate International Women's Day on March 8. About 25 people gathered at the Centennial Park in Holland to hear various speakers encouraging women to be active in leadership roles.

LWVKA members were joined by Anquette Sarfo from LWV Detroit in presenting a three hour "Cast Your Vote" Zoom workshop for Girl Scouts on March 6. The girls, ages 5-11, were working on the Michigan Women's Right to Vote Centennial patch. They were given information about the history of the struggle to pass the 19th Amendment, how to vote, virtual tours of suffrage items at the Grand Rapids Public Museum and Kalamazoo Valley Museum, and conversations with several elected female officials. Most of the Scouts were from Michigan, but with Zoom two girls from Nevada and one from Oklahoma also participated.

-- Paula Manley, LWVMI VP Membership

DONATE NOW

Local Leagues

Ann Arbor Area (with the Brighton Howell Geographical Unit)
Berrien/Cass Counties
Copper Country
Dearborn/Dearborn Heights
Delta County
Detroit
Eastern UP State (MAL) Unit
Flint Area
Grand Haven Area
Grand Traverse Area (with Crawford County Geographical Unit)
Grosse Pointe
Holland Area
Jackson Area
Kalamazoo Area (with Grand Rapids Geographical Unit, and Calhoun County Geographical Unit)
Lansing Area
Leelanau County (with Emmet/Charlevoix County Geographical Unit)
Macomb State (MAL) Unit
Manistee County
Marquette County
Midland Area (with Bay County Geographical Unit)
Mt. Pleasant
Northeast Michigan (formerly Alpena County)
Northwest Wayne County
Oakland Area
Saginaw County
Tecumseh/Lenawee County (MAL)
Troy

For more information go to www.lwvmi.org
or check out Facebook pages for state and local LWVs

League Leadership 2019-2021

Christina Schlitt (Grand Traverse Area) - President

Paula Manley (Kalamazoo) - Vice Pres. Membership
Betsy Cushman (Dearborn/Dearborn Heights) - Vice Pres. Voter Services
Sue Smith (Ann Arbor) - Vice Pres. for Advocacy
Paula Bowman (NW Wayne County) - Vice Pres. for Program
Denise Hartsough (Kalamazoo) - Treasurer
Leah Bectel (Kalamazoo/Grand Rapids Geo) - Secretary
Darlene Allen (Marquette County) - Director-at-Large
Deborah Bunkley (Detroit) - Voter Services Director
Megan Chenoweth (Northwest Wayne County) - Voter Services Director
Vicki Granger (Grosse Pointe) - Communications Director
Ken Manley (Kalamazoo) - Development Director
Tera Moon (Oakland) - Membership/Leadership Director
Maria Rivera (Macomb State MAL) - Director-at-Large

Calendar

March 2021

- March 23: LWVMI Advocacy Info via Zoom
- March 24: Wage Equity Webinar
- March 31: Local Leagues Lame Duck study due to LWVMI
- March 31: LWVUS presents Q and A on Ed Fund via Zoom



April 2021

- April 10: LWVMI Board meets
- April 15: Convention awards nominations due

May 2021

- LWVMI Convention (Virtual) May 21-22

Connect with us! League of Women Voters of Michigan
517-484-5383

[email](#)

Website: lwvmi.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lwvmichigan/>

Twitter @MiVoterPower