



League Links - January 2022

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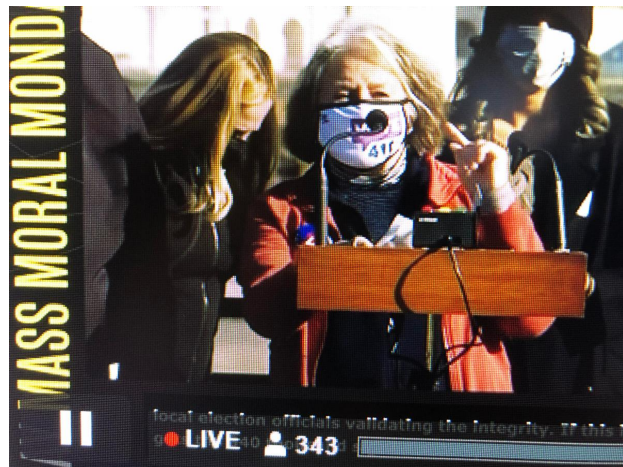
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Co-Presidents' Messages

Voting Rights has been the focus of the League of Women Voters forever and even more so now that they are being attacked. The national League has called attention to the need for Congressional and White House support for action to be taken at those levels through more than social media.

Lobbying efforts and the action request to all members at least received the attention of the White House. When President Biden gave his speech this week in Georgia, the LWVUS CEO, Virginia Kase Solomon, was invited to be part of the special



group in attendance. She was also invited to be part of the Congressional group that met after. The invitations were to recognize the continued effort by [LWV to protect voting rights](#).

LWVMI was invited to do something similar in December. We were invited to speak at the Poor People's Campaign rally/march to elevate the need for Congress to issue federal voting rights protection by bringing attention to the assault we face in Michigan. The audience enthusiastically supported our efforts. *The photo above shows Christina at the rally.*

Local Leagues/Units are doing their part to protect voter rights through the Make Democracy Work grant presentations and [the Anti-SecureMIVote campaign](#).

Don't stop now! Democracy is at stake.

-- Christina Schlitt, LWVMI Co-President

Last week, Judy Florian, VP Voter Services, joined Christina Schlitt and me to represent LWV Michigan at the Election Protection Program meeting called by [Promote the Vote](#), a coalition of organizations and individuals committed to increasing the power of the people in our democracy. Nearly 25 organizations and 40 people participated in this day-long virtual meeting to look back at successes and challenges in 2020, and work on goals for 2022.

Broadly, the goals are

- Boost participation of historically disenfranchised voting groups, thus expanding the electorate and reducing disparities in civic participation
- Build capacity of organizations led by and serving historically disenfranchised voting groups for future democracy work in Michigan.

Some of the topics the participants discussed were barriers to voting and potential ways they can be removed, public education (materials, social media, direct voter contact, etc), poll worker recruitment, rapid response, poll watchers and challengers and working with public officials (i.e. clerk engagement). Many League members will recognize these tasks as ones they were involved in two years ago.

A key LWV project that was of interest to the Coalition was our post-election observer program of Boards of Canvassers. The Coalition and the League recognize that this program is growing in importance as we enter an era where the process of election certification is no longer recognizable as the routine mathematical exercise it should be. In many counties, it is becoming an unnecessary political challenge. We know we can count on League members to once again be the eyes and ears of our democracy partners who can help us guarantee fair elections. Watch for more information later in 2022.

-- Paula Bowman, LWVMI Co-President

Oppose "SECURE MI VOTE" Petition

The League opposes the "Secure MI Vote" petition being circulated and **urges members not to sign**. Do not be fooled by its "Require ID" slogan; Michigan has had a voter ID law since 1996.

For more information on our voter ID law read [this paper](#) prepared by [Promote the Vote of MI](#). (scroll down to download the Voter Identification Report).

Highlights of "Secure MI Vote":

- Mandates that people disclose partial Social Security numbers when registering to vote; (not required now)
- Restricts options for registered voters to verify their identity. Acceptable forms of photo ID would include a driver license, state ID card, passport, military ID, tribal ID or student ID issued by a university, junior college or community college; if not, voter is given an ID-only provisional ballot; (eliminates the use of the affidavit)
- Discards ballots of those who received an ID-only provisional ballot unless they provide an ID within 6 days of the election; (eliminates the affidavit process)
- Requires voters applying for an absentee ballot to include their driver license or state ID number, or the last four digits of their Social Security number, on their application; (not required now)
- Prohibits election officials from sending or providing absentee applications unless asked; (now clerks can mail applications and have applications available on website)
- Bans charitable contributions, including volunteer time, to help administer elections; (currently charitable contributions and volunteers are allowed)
- States that drop boxes close at 8 p.m. on Election Day (current law)
- Mandates clerk offices be open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for the five weekdays leading up to the election to accept ballots OR that drop boxes be made available for return ballots. (new requirement)
- Spends \$3 million providing free photo identification for those who declare need; (new appropriation)
- Allows the Legislature to adopt the legislation without a vote of the people and block a peoples' referendum vote after adoption. (by placing \$3 M appropriation in the initiative, no referendum is allowed)

To read the petition go to [Petition Affidavit \(michigan.gov\)](#).

-- Judy Karandjeff, LWVMI Advocacy Committee Chair

MICRC Adopts Congressional, State Senate, and State House Maps

Final Maps

The MICRC adopted the following maps on December 28, 2021:

- U.S. Congressional Districts:
Chestnut Map
- State Senate Districts:
Linden Map
- State House Districts:
Hickory Map



Following the requirements in the Michigan Constitution, they adopted each of the maps by a majority vote that included 2 Democrats, 2 Republicans, and 2 Independents.

The maps will take effect March 1, 2022, unless the Michigan Supreme Court requires the Commission to redraw any or all of them.

Partisan Fairness

The League of Women Voters has been advocating for fair maps ever since the Michigan Legislature adopted the current maps in 2011. As a result of LWVMI's 2018 Lawsuit, the Federal Courts found 34 of the 2011 state House and Senate maps to be unconstitutional because they were the result of partisan gerrymandering.

As a result of the passage of Proposal Two in 2018, the Michigan Constitution requires the MICRC to follow specific, ranked redistricting criteria in drawing the maps. The fourth criterion states, "Districts shall not provide a disproportionate advantage to any political party, as determined by using accepted measures of partisan fairness".

The MICRC's partisan fairness analysis for each of the final maps shows the following:

Chestnut: Republican Lopsided Margin Advantage of 4.0%

Linden: Republican Lopsided Margin Advantage of 4.5%

Hickory: Republican Lopsided Margin Advantage of 5.3%

Lawsuits

The Detroit Caucus, which includes current and former Detroit legislators, has sued the MICRC in the Michigan Supreme Court. The Caucus claims that all three types of maps - Congressional, state House, and state Senate - dilute the votes of Detroit's Black population because of the Black Voting Age Population statistics used by the MICRC when they created the Voting Rights Act districts.

MICRC Closed Session

The MICRC went into closed session for the first time on October 27, 2021. Several newspapers sued the Commission. The Michigan Supreme Court ruled (4/3) that the MICRC should not have used the Open Meetings Act as

a reason for going into closed session on October 27 because the MICRC is not covered by the Act. Instead, the Commission must set its own rules.

The Court ordered the release of the two memos discussed during the session as well as the recording of the October 27 meeting. All are posted on the website, www.michigan.gov/micrc.

MICRC Adopts Rules and Procedures

The Commission adopted rules and procedures on January 13, 2022 that allowed them to go into closed session to discuss litigation strategy with their attorneys - which they did.

Future MICRC Meetings

The Commission approved the following meetings through December 2022:

- January 13 – September 30: Second and Fourth Thursdays of the month; 10 am-2 pm
- October 3 – December 31: First and Third Thursdays of the month; 10 am-2 pm

LWVMI Monitoring Team

Our League Monitoring Team will continue to observe and report on each MICRC meeting, which they have been doing since September 2020. The Team has also worked with local League Community of Interest Teams to identify and train Communities of Interest across the state.

The Team continues to meet monthly and to provide valuable feedback on redistricting in our state.

Team members come from across the state and include the following League members:

- David Allen, Marquette County League
- Cathy Brockington, Holland Area League
- Denise Hartsough, Kalamazoo Area League
- Donna Hornberger, Grand Traverse Area League
- Judy Karandjeff, Lansing Area League
- Marian Kromkowski, Leelanau County League
- Margaret Leary, Washtenaw County League
- Angela Ryan, Northwest Wayne County League
- Anqunette Sarfoh, Detroit League
- Fran Wallace, Manistee County League

-- Sue Smith, LWVMI VP Advocacy

Advocacy Committee Following MI Bills

The Michigan Senate and MI House of Representatives returned on January 12 and will be in session until the spring break on March 24.

- The Senate will have 22R and 16D.
- The House, because of 4 vacancies will have 55R and 51D. The Governor set the special elections for the four vacant House seats for March 1 (primary) and May 3 (general).

On January 4, the Advocacy Committee (Paula Bowman, Marty Couretas, Betsy Cushman, Judy Karandjeff, Carolyn Madden, Connie Mitchell, Christina Schlitt, Sue Smith, Sandra Sorini Elser, Maria Woloson, and Chris Zilke) met and made numerous recommendations to the LWVMI Board of Directors:

- Marty Couretas recommended supporting HB 5371-HB 5372, and SB 678-679, which prohibits possession of firearms and ammunition by persons convicted of a misdemeanor involving domestic violence. Updates sentencing guidelines. The LWVMI Advocacy Committee and Board approved.
- Sandra Sorini Elser recommended support for the Reproductive Health Care Act, HB 5542-48. These bills are needed if *Roe v Wade* is overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court. The LWVMI Advocacy Committee and Board approved.
- Connie Mitchell recommended opposition to the teaching of "Critical Race Theory" in HB 5097, SB 460. HB 5097 passed the House and is in the Senate Education and Career Readiness Committee. SB 460 is on the Senate floor awaiting a vote. LWVUS has guidance available on this type of legislation at [Talking Points: Culturally Inclusive History Curriculum | League of Women Voters \(lwv.org\)](#). The Advocacy Committee and LWVMI Board approved.
- Judy recommended opposition to the voucher legislative initiatives not yet been approved by the State Board of Canvassers. The initiatives would allow public money to go to private schools. The Advocacy Committee and LWVMI Board agreed. Judy recommended opposing the election audit initiative. The initiative would create a recount of the 2020 election and violate many current laws. It has not been approved by the State Board of Canvassers yet. The Advocacy Committee and the LWVMI Board agreed.
- The committee also recommended supporting the concurrence presented by the LWV of NY on amending the LWVUS Health Care position. The LWVMI Advocacy Committee and Board agreed.
- The Board also approved the Climate Change Resolution as revised.

As the Legislature returns, we will be watching to see what the Senate and House Elections Committee take up and keep you informed of any action. An up-to-date list of the status of the 39 voter-suppression bills is available on our website www.lwvmi.org.

-- Judy Karandjeff, LWVMI Advocacy Committee Chair

Take Action Now!

On January 11, the State Board of Education passed a resolution that calls for a 5% reduction of a public school's funding if it chose to ban the teaching of critical race theory or the New York Times 1619 Project.

At the same time, the Michigan Senate is considering SB 460, a bill to ban the teaching of "Critical Race Theory."

The League of Women Voters opposes SB 460. Go to the [TAKE ACTION](#) button at lwvmi.org and let your Senator know you oppose this bill.

LWVMI Adopts Climate Emergency Resolution

Global warming is happening faster than most of us expected. It seems like every day we read reports of devastating fires, hurricanes, rainstorms, droughts, toxic algae blooms, extinction of animals and other devastation -- all due to climate change.

The United Nations Secretary-General called the August 2021 report issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change a "*code red for humanity*."

The Board of Directors of LWVMI recognizes and strongly supports the importance of getting climate change under control while we still can.

On January 8, 2022 the LWVMI Board adopted a Climate Emergency Resolution. [A copy of the resolution is here.](#)

The Resolution cites scientific evidence and exhaustive studies concluding that human activity has caused global warming and has already resulted in fiercer heatwaves and droughts, longer fire seasons, heavier rainstorms, and more violent hurricanes.

It also recognizes that global warming has resulted in disproportionately adverse effects on already disadvantaged communities such as indigenous tribes, rural communities, coastal communities, workers, low-income households, women, children, and people of color.

To address these critical issues, the League has adopted as a State League Priority:

- advocating for solutions to climate change that would limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050 to prevent the worst effects of climate change, and
- working to rectify the disproportionately adverse effects of climate change on already disadvantaged communities.

Importantly the Resolution urges all local Michigan Leagues to adopt similar resolutions and advocate with their local city, county, and township governments to adopt and implement such resolutions.

It is up to us all to do our part. Talk to your local League board members and urge them to adopt a climate emergency resolution. And then take action

with your local governments by asking them to adopt similar resolutions addressing global warming and correcting the disproportionately adverse effects of climate change on disadvantaged communities.

-- Sandra Sorini Esler, LWVMI Advocacy Committee Vice-Chair

Voter Services: Special Elections, High School Voter Registration Challenge

Special Elections

Governor Whitmer has called for Special Elections to fill vacancies in the following offices:

State Representative 15th District
State Representative 36th District
State Representative 43rd District
State Representative 74th District

These elections will be based on the **current** district maps. The Special Primary will be held March 1 and the Special General Election will be held May 3.

Our Vote411 Directors, Anna Scott and Carolyn Vertin, will handle the set-up and questions for these elections. The questions were approved by the Board at its January 8 meeting.

MI Vote Matters High School Registration Challenge

A total of 33 schools have signed up for the MI Vote Matters High School Registration Challenge, 31 of which are served by a local League. All local Leagues have been notified to contact the schools for assistance with their voter registration events. All schools have been invited to participate via a joint letter from the Secretary of State and Michigan Department of Education. Schools have until May 27, 2022 to register students for the challenge,

The next Voter Services Virtual meeting will be held on Thursday, January 27, at 7 p.m. Agenda items can be sent to me at jflo@comcast.net.

-- Judy Florian, LWVMI VP Voter Services

Treasurers, Finance Chairs, Zoom Feb. 22

Twice a year local League treasurers gather via Zoom to share questions and answers with their peers and to hear LWVMI updates. Topics have included

- Education Fund accounts with LWVUS

- IRS Form 990-N
- financial reviews
- software
- PMP
- and credit cards

Treasurers and other League members interested in finances are welcome to join the upcoming Zoom meeting on Tuesday, February 22, at 7 p.m.

Join the Zoom Meeting:

- Online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84495390490>.
- Call in: 312-626-6799. Meeting ID: 844 9539.

Another resource for local League treasurers is a packet with:

- a guide to financial policies and procedures
- financial review procedure
- tips for new treasurers
- responsibilities by month
- insurance overview
- and IRS status and obligations of local Leagues

You can find the information packet at this [link](#)

Please feel free to contact me with questions at denise.hartsough@gmail.com

-- Denise Hartsough, LWVMI Treasurer

Annual Program Planning: Preparation for LWVUS 2022 Convention

Program Planning

All local Leagues in Michigan should hold annual Program Planning meetings during January or February to review national positions in preparation for the June 2022 LWVUS convention. After reaching a consensus on positions and/or agreement on a request for a new study or concurrence on an existing position, each local League should complete the online [LWVUS survey form](#) and submit it by March 1, 2022.

Health Care Position

The LWV of NY State has asked for concurrence support from local and state Leagues for portions of the LWVNY Health Care position that they believe will improve and update the current LWVUS' 1993 Health Care position.

After reviewing their position, the LWVMI Board agrees that discussion of the concurrence is valid and suggests that Michigan Leagues may also want to suggest that this concurrence be brought to the convention floor. For

more information on this and the wording of how you should include this support on your program planning form, [visit this link](#).

-- Maria Woloson, LWVMI VP, Program

Membership PMP Due January 31

A reminder!

January 31, 2022 is an important date. It's the date that local Leagues' Per Member Payment (PMP) obligation to both LWVMI and LWVUS for fiscal year (FY2022 – 2023) is determined. The amount is based on the number of members listed on each League's database.

Current PMP payment rates are \$23 to LWVMI and \$32 to LWVUS. When there are two or more members in a household, payment for the first member is the full PMP amount and the second is half. There is no charge for students or Life Members (those belonging to the League for 50, or more, years.)

Local League databases should be updated by January 31, 2022, removing all those who haven't yet renewed their membership. Leagues are advised not to carry those who "always renew eventually" on the database, remembering that each will cost the League \$55 per person (for those who are not students or household members, who are half the PMP). Late renewals can be reinstated.

Information about the PMP payment process may be found on the [LWVUS League Management](#) website.

If you have questions about PMP, contact Camilla Davis.

Membership Leaders' Network

The Membership Leaders' Network met via Zoom for the third time on January 12. Representatives from 16 Leagues joined the meeting.

- The resource section included information about leadership development in local Leagues.
- Since the purpose of the Network is to facilitate the exchange of ideas between League leaders, the second part of the meeting was devoted to participants sharing successes and challenges.

This is a wonderful opportunity for local Leagues to learn from each other.

Membership leaders who are *not* receiving information about Membership Leaders' Network meetings and would like to be added to the contact list should contact Camilla Davis, LWVMI Membership VP.
cdavis.lwvmi@gmail.com

-- Camilla Davis, LWVMI VP Membership cdavis.lwvmi@gmail.com

Local League Spotlights

Grosse Pointe

LWVGP held an outdoor Holiday Cookie Exchange in mid-December, at the home of President Sue Acton. The group enjoyed getting together in person after nearly two years of virtual meetings.



Grand Traverse Area

The Grand Traverse Area League held a candlelight vigil on January 6 to remember the attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Lansing Area

LWVLA had a webinar on January 11 titled "A Discussion of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Michigan Schools: What is being taught?" The featured speaker was Professor Dorinda Carter Andrews, chairperson of MSU's Department of Teacher Education. The webinar will be available on [LWVLA's YouTube channel](#).

Donate Now and Gift Democracy

Your State League welcomes and needs your financial support to carry out its essential work of voter service and advocacy.

- You may donate in memory or in honor of a loved one or friend.
- You may donate to the LWVMI Education Fund (tax-deductible as a charitable contribution) or to LWVMI.
- You may arrange for a planned gift in your will or estate.

To donate

- online visit <https://lwvmi.org/donate-support-the-league-and-our-mission/>
- send checks to LWVMI, 600 W. Saint Joseph Street, Ste. 3G, Lansing, MI 48933-2288.

Thank you for your support!

-- The Development Committee

Local Leagues

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

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

League Leadership 2021-2023

Officers

Co-President: Christina Schlitt (Grand Traverse Area)
Co-President: Paula Bowman (NW Wayne County)
VP Voter Services: Judy Florian (Grosse Pointe)
VP Advocacy: Sue Smith (Washtenaw County)
VP Membership: Camilla Davis (Lansing Area)
VP Program: Maria Woloson (Oakland Area)
Secretary: Carla Barrows-Wiggins (Oakland Area)

Treasurer: Denise Hartsough (Kalamazoo Area)

Directors

Voter Services: Carolyn Vertin (Tecumseh/Lenawee)

Voter Services: Anna Scott (Lansing Area)

Membership: Connie Mitchell (Dearborn/Dearborn Heights)

Membership: Rebeka Islam (Detroit)

Communications: Vicki Granger (Grosse Pointe)

At-Large: David Allen (Marquette County)

At-Large: Kathy Poore (Macomb MAL)

Calendar

January 2022

- Local League Program Planning meeting this month or February
- Appoint budget committee
- Begin planning annual meeting
- Update membership roster on LWVUS by January 31

Jan. 26: Observer Corps Meeting 3 p.m.

Jan. 27: Voter Services Virtual Meeting 7 p.m.

Jan. 31: Deadline to update membership database on LWVUS



February 2022

Feb. 12: LWVMI Board Meets

Feb. 17: Local Presidents Call

Feb. 22: Treasurers Zoom Call

View the [calendar](#) on the LWVMI website

Connect with us! League of Women Voters of Michigan

Phone: 517-484-5383

Email: office@lwvmi.org

Website: lwvmi.org

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

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LWVMichigan>

League of Women Voters of Michigan | 600 W. St. Joseph Street 3G, Lansing, MI 48933

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