



League Links

October 2025

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President's Message

Some days lately, when we get up in the morning, we just want to climb back in bed, because there is too much going on. But we don't! We get up and we do the work. We see local and state League members across Michigan stepping up and speaking out in defense of democracy. We are all meeting this moment with courage and resolve. We want to say thank you to all of you!

The next few weeks bring us through another election season. All of the work of voter service, advocacy, and mobilization will pay off by mid November when the election is certified. We know many Leagues are hosting candidate forums, tabling at events, working the polls, uploading VOTE411, hosting educational forums, and observing boards of canvassers. With the League's collective efforts our elections remain secure, accessible, transparent, and free. This is where it all happens for our democracy, and every League member is playing a part.

In this issue you will read about ways you can get involved in this push over the finish line and what work we have yet to do.

Thank you again for your dedication.

In League,
Lynne Kochmanski and Denise Hartsough
LWVMI Co-Presidents

Voter Service Updates

Voting Reminders

Here are some important dates for the November 4 election.

Monday, October 20, is the last day to register to vote or to update voter registration information online or by mail for the November 4 General Election. Starting Tuesday, October 21 (through 8 p.m. on Election Day), voters can only register to vote or update their registration by visiting their city or township clerk's office, completing a registration application, and providing proof of residency. Proof of residency is a document with both the voter's name and the address where they currently live. They can use any of the following:

- A Michigan driver's license or state ID card.
- A utility bill.
- A bank statement.
- A paycheck.
- A government check.
- Any other government document.

For most voters, Tuesday, October 21, is the last day we recommend dropping an absentee ballot in the mail. Starting Wednesday, October 22, we recommend returning ballots in person to the city or township clerk's office or to a secure drop box in their city or township. This helps to ensure that the clerk will receive the ballot by 8 p.m. on Election Day (November 4). Voters can find the drop box(es) in their city or township by going to mi.gov/vote and clicking on **Your voter information**.

Serving in the military or living overseas? The absentee ballot deadline is different for these voters—their ballots must be postmarked by Election Day (November 4) and received by November 10 in order to count.

Polls are open on Election Day from 7:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Voters can confirm their polling locations at Michigan.gov/vote, under **Your Voter Information**.



The November 4 election is just around the corner. That means our post-election activity will begin soon after. Our BOC orientation for observers was held Monday, October 20, with presentations by Mark Brewer, Attorney, Lynne Kochmanski, Co-President, Sara Weertz, Project Manager and Judy Florian, VP for Voter Service. The recording of the orientation session, along with links to the materials, is available on the LWVMI website, Members Only section. Contact a local League president/leader for the password. All observers must review this recording before observing a canvass meeting. SignUpGenius will be open on October 24. Questions regarding BOC observation can be directed to Sara Weertz at saraweertz.lwvmi@gmail.com.



Know What You Sign Campaign

Thanks to the 61 people who attended our tutorial session on September 29. We received excellent feedback on both the presentation and script and made adjustments accordingly. Please be sure you have the most recent version before making your presentations. Both the presentation and script are available on the LWVMI website. You can view the recording of the tutorial at this [link](#).

As a reminder, each local League will receive a grant of \$200 for the first presentation, and \$100 each for up to two subsequent presentations. Maximum grant funds per League or Unit are \$400. Payments will be made in March 2026, based on the following conditions:

- Presentations must be made between October 1, 2025, and February 28, 2026.
- Presentations must be to the community, either in person or virtual.
- Record at least one presentation for viewing on your YouTube Channel or website, if possible.
- Partner with other organizations in your community, if possible.
- Seek out local community venues for your presentations
- Complete the KWYS Report Form, which is on the LWVMI website under Members and LWV Only. (Contact your president/leader if you need the password.)
- All presentations are educational only-**no advocacy** permitted.

Voter Service Network Meeting

The next Voter Service Network Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 23, 7:00 p.m. Please use this [link](#) to register for the meeting. Once registered, you will receive instructions on how to join the meeting. An agenda will be sent to the

Network the week of October 20. If anyone has any agenda items, please send them my way.

In the meantime, if you have questions, don't hesitate to contact me. Please note the change in my email address below.

Judy Florian
VP for Voter Service
voterservice@lwvmi.org
313-402-6786

Why the League Sponsored No Kings 2

Shirley Jackson, President of LWV of Livingston County, responded to a community member challenging the nonpartisanship of the local League, which sponsored the No Kings 2 rally in Howell. The community member argued that our country is not a democracy and insinuated that rally attendees were paid.

Yes, the League of Women Voters is nonpartisan. The League never supports candidates or political parties, but we do take positions on and advocate for issues which we have studied. From the national level on down to local leagues, it has been determined our country is currently in a Constitutional Crisis.

LWVUS 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 and civil society.

The No Kings rally isn't about just one person. It's about an entire administration, Congress, and the judiciary.

We are aware there are some people who say our country is a republic, not a democracy. There are many types of republics, just as there are a variety of democracies, making it necessary to add an adjective (or several) before the noun. For example, China is a socialist republic – not simply a republic. The U.S. is a democratic republic – not simply a republic, and to be more precise, it's a representative, federalist, democratic, constitutional republic. Yes, all those adjectives together fit the definition of our government!

All members of The League of Women Voters of Livingston County are volunteers, and no one gets paid anything. Holding a rally on public sidewalks while allowing passersby unimpeded access, is free. The League strongly supports the No Kings commitment to nonviolent action and is working with the area police department to keep the event peaceful. Everyone's voice

deserves to be heard as long as respect is the guiding light.

As a loyal American and member of the LWV, I will end by quoting The American's Creed, written by William Tyler Page and recognized by the U.S. House in 1918:

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people, whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a Republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect Union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.

NOTE: Shirley is a long-time active member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, which recites The American's Creed at its meetings.

LWVMI Advocacy Committee Report

The Advocacy Committee has been busy analyzing State Senate Bills and State House Bills and other legislative and non-legislative issues. In this Legislative Session (since January 2025), the Advocacy Committee has recommended and the Board has approved positions on 16 non-legislative matters, such as ballot proposals and funding requests, and 98 legislative matters, such as bills and resolutions.

You can see the full list in our chart located on our website under Advocacy 2025, which can be found [here](#).

If a League member would like to suggest a legislative or non-legislative matter for the League to consider supporting or opposing please contact Advocacy@LWVMI.org or fill out the Support/Oppose Form here:

<https://fs16.formsite.com/lwvmi/InteractiveSupportOppose/index.html>

Here are some highlights of recent actions:

SUPPORT DC STATEHOOD

LWVMI joins all other League of Women Voters in the US in support of the District of Columbia becoming the 51st state. Statehood for the people of D.C. is consistent with the LWVUS position on D.C.-Self Government and Full Voting Representation. [Read the Resolution here](#) wherein LWVMI supports legislation that will establish statehood for the people of the District of Columbia.

CONSEQUENCES FOR MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS ABOUT AN ELECTION

The League supports SB 633 which would amend Michigan Election Law to prescribe civil fines for knowingly making a false statement about an election with intent to prevent another individual from voting.

SUPPORT FOR DECISIONS BY LIBRARY DIRECTORS

The LWVMI Board voted to support HR 4251, the Freedom to Read Act. The Act

would empower district library directors with final responsibility for selection of materials for inclusion or withdrawal from a library's collection and to set standards for requests for consideration.

REGULATION OF MICROPLASTICS

The League supports SB 503, 504 and 505 which would regulate and prohibit microplastics in consumer products, personal care products and drinking water and would establish a strategy to regulate microplastics as a hazardous product.

SUPPORT FOR "USE OF FORCE" TRAINING

LWVMI supports SB 333 which would require use of force training for law enforcement agencies. Additionally, the bill would require law enforcement agencies to adopt certain policies on the use of force by law enforcement persons.

SUPPORT FOR DE-ESCALATION TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

The League supports SB 334 and 335 and 341 that would provide training on de-escalation to limit use of force by law enforcement officers. The bills would amend the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards Act to require comprehensive mental health and de-escalation training.

SUPPORT FAIR EV REGISTRATION FEES

LWVMI supports SB 593 which would revise vehicle registration fees to provide a fairer approach to electric vehicle fees as compared to gas powered vehicle fees. Michigan's current tax formula penalizes drivers who choose EVs by requiring an increase every time the gas tax goes up. SB 593 is the solution. It amends the Motor Vehicle Code so EV and hybrid fees don't spike with every gas tax increase.

SUPPORT FOR UNIFIED HEALTH CARE COVERAGE IN MICHIGAN

The League supports HB 4407 which would establish a universal and unified health care coverage system in Michigan and would reform the current payment system for health care coverage in Michigan.

END PRISON GERRYMANDERING

The League supports SB 537 to end prison gerrymandering. The Corrections Department would be required to gather information on pre-incarceration addresses and provide them to the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission after the federal census.

SUPPORT FOR PRE-NATAL CARE

The League supports SB 414 and 415 which would require insurers and the medical welfare program to cover group prenatal care.

ABORTION IS NOT HOMICIDE

The League opposes HB 4670 and 4671 which would adjust all definitions in assault and homicide cases to apply to an "unborn child in the same manner as they would if the victim were an individual who had been born alive." This legislation seeks to extend legal personhood to fetuses and fertilized embryos and would allow for women who receive abortions to be charged with homicide.

DON'T FUND COPPERWOOD MINE

LWVMI sent a letter to Nancy Jenkins-Arno, Chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor and Economic Opportunity concerning the proposed funding for the Copperwood Mine located adjacent to the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. Expansion of the Mine would threaten the area's

irreplaceable natural resources. [Read the letter here.](#) Fortunately, the funding was not approved as part of the 2025-2026 Budget.

PLEA TO REJECT ENBRIDGE'S PERMIT REQUEST

The League sent a letter to EGLE requesting that it carefully analyze the Enbridge tunnel project wherein it would surely see that the project would pose risks to the Great Lakes and their bottomlands. [The letter](#) asks that EGLE reject Enbridge's permit request for the Line 5 Tunnel.

BAN ON GHOST GUNS

LWVMI supports SB 331 and 331 which would ban firearms without serial numbers.

NO BUMP STOCKS; NO GUNS IN THE CAPITOL

The League supports SB 224-226 which would ban the sale, manufacture and possession of "bump stocks". The bills would also prohibit a concealed weapon to be carried in the Capitol government buildings in Lansing.

SUPPORT FOR "POLLUTER PAYS" BILLS

The League supports SB 391, 392, 393, 395, and 386 and 387 which will hold polluters accountable for cleaning up their contaminated sites.

Observer Corps

Are you interested in learning about how local government works and the issues they are dealing with at the current time? Are you willing to share your knowledge with others in the league and voters in your community? The League has always stressed voter education, and this is an excellent way to inform voters of the day-to-day activities of their local government bodies.



The League of Women Voters of Michigan has 13 Observer Corps groups around the state, and all the groups could use a few more volunteers. Observer Corps members attend meetings of a government body (such as city council, board of commissioners, school boards, library boards, etc.) and file a report on the meeting. You pick the specific group you will observe based on your interest and time availability. Two or more people can share covering a specific group. Many groups have an online reporting form that you can use to file your report. Local leagues provide training. Your League president will write a letter of introduction to the presiding officer of the group. When attending the meeting, you wear your League name tag. As an observer, you take notes but do not make any comments.

If you think you might be interested in being an observer, contact your local League President or Tina Pawlak, Observer Corps Director at DirectorPawlak@lwvmi.org

On Saturday, October 18th, No Kings Rallies took place across the country, including many locations in Michigan. Here are some photos from across the state.

Way to represent the League!



LWV Crawford County



LWV Washtenaw County



LWV Crawford County



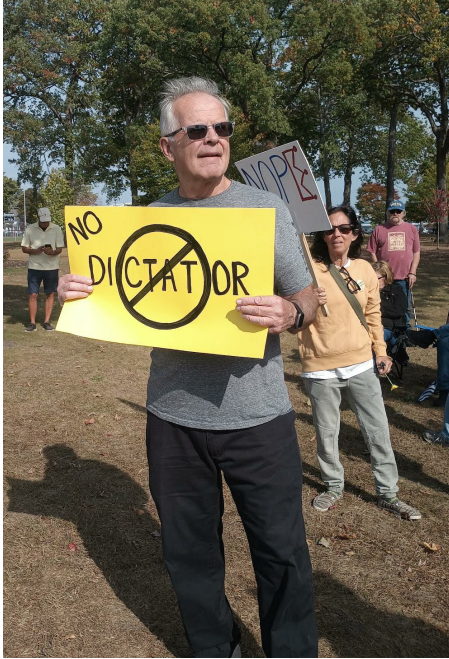
LWV Lenawee County



LWV Greater Grand Rapid Area



LWV Northeast Michigan



LWV Macomb County



LWV Kalamazoo Area



LWV Manistee County



LWV Northwest Wayne County



LWV Washtenaw County

2025 Student Voting Summit

The 8th Annual Michigan Student Voting Summit was held at Macomb Community College on October 3. Sponsored by the Fair Elections Center's

Campus Vote Project, this summit was geared toward student leaders across Michigan. Workshops, conversations and connections were the focus of this event, with excellent speakers available to help young people shape our democracy for the future.

A special thanks to the Macomb League for handling the tabling during the summit



LWVMI sponsored the inaugural Michigan Student Impact Award. This year's recipient is Abdullah Aljanabi, a student at Wayne State University. Abdullah is majoring in Political Science with a minor in law. His ultimate career goal is to be a Civil Rights Attorney.

Pictured presenting the award are Judy Florian, LWVMI VP for Voter Service, Aghogho Edevbie, Deputy Secretary of State, Tieanna Burton, Michigan Coordinator, Fair Elections Center and recipient Abdullah Aljanabi.



Save the Date - LWV National Convention

Save the Date! Plans are underway for the 2026 LWV National Convention. This biennial convention will be held Thursday, June 25 - Sunday, June 28 in Columbus, Ohio. The call to the 2026 LWV National Convention went out on September 25. Registration will open in January.

LWVUS Nominations

Nominating Committee

- Applications for LWVUS board members & officers and for Nominating Committee members & chair are now available on the League Management Site
 - Applications are due December 1
 - Please direct any questions to the Nominating Committee at NominatingCommittee@lwv.org
 - Links:
 - [2026-2028 LWVUS Nominating Committee Application](#) (includes chair application)
 - [2026-2028 US Board of Directors Application](#) (includes officer applications)
 - [Candidate Suggestion for Application to 2026-2028 LWV Board and Nominating Committee](#)
-

Membership Network Notes

Nora Pullen, Senior Manager for Membership of LWVUS, joined us for the October Network meeting, held on October 8. She showed us how to use the website available to each League through ChapterSpot and gave us helpful information about what texting and emailing through ChapterSpot can do. And, of course, she answered all the other questions we threw at her. Many thanks to Nora Pullen for a wonderful discussion.

At the November Network meeting (November 12 at 7:00pm Eastern time) we'll discuss local League highlights and our local League New Year resolutions that each of us hope to accomplish.

Meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm Eastern time. The meetings are recorded so you can check them out (at double speed if you want!) for helpful information (see the lower right corner of the video for "Speed" settings).

Please join us at the November meeting and if you have questions or would like more information, please contact me at:

Carla Barrows-Wiggins
VP for Membership
Membership@lwvmi.org

Consider a Donation to LWVMI

Northwest Wayne Co. is my local league. I joined after the 2016 election and felt compelled to "do something." Researching where I could do the most good, I joined four organizations. Six months later, the League became my full-time commitment and the others dropped by the wayside. When people ask why, I say because the League gets things done.



Getting things done doesn't happen by magic. It happens because of the passion of our members, the giving spirit of our donors and the heightened awareness that our democracy is in danger. As a local President I am well aware that the natural inclination is to donate to your League to keep the grass roots work humming. As the LWVMI Development Director, I am asking you to consider the work you are doing and how that is supported by LWVMI. At the local level we could not do it without the guidance, grants, research and training of the State League. Yes, please keep supporting your local league, but give a little extra to LWVMI to support the work that they do. If you are making a donation, please consider donating to our Advocacy side (501(c)(4), which is not tax deductible. That is where our need is most urgent. Just click the "Donate" button at lwvmi.org Thank you in advance for keeping democracy alive.

Carrie Moon-Dupree
LWVMI Development Director

LWVMI Local League Advocacy Network Monthly Meeting - October 28, 2025 at 3:00pm Via Zoom

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ld0_EJaeS16vlj9BEjKn9g

Please join us on Tuesday October 28, 2025 at 3pm via zoom for the monthly meeting of the Local League Advocacy Network.

All League members are welcome to attend.

Our Agenda will begin with introductions and follow with brief presentations on:

- The importance of our advocacy work by Judy Karandjeff, former LWVMI President and Vice President for Advocacy.
- Using the Local League Support/Oppose form by Christina Schlitt president of the Crawford County League
- Using the State Support/Oppose form by Sandra Sorini Elser, VP for Advocacy
- Round Robin discussion of what's going on in your League on Advocacy
- Q&A with network members

Please invite other League members.

MLWV Grosse Pointe Celebrates 75th Anniversary

The League of Women Voters of Grosse Pointe marked its 75th anniversary on October 5th with a joyful celebration at the Country Club of Detroit. More than 130 members and guests gathered to honor the League's long history of nonpartisan civic engagement and community service.

The evening featured a compelling presentation by Barbara McQuade, University of Michigan law professor, MSNBC legal analyst, and former U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan. McQuade spoke about the importance of the League, specifically citing our position on book bans and our efforts to safeguard democracy.

The League was honored to receive congratulatory tributes from Senator Elissa Slotkin, Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, State Senator Kevin Hertel, State Representative Veronica Paiz, League of Women Voters US CEO Celina Stewart, and LWVMI Co-Presidents Denise Hartsough and Lynne Kochmanski. Each expressed appreciation for LWV Grosse Pointe's decades of leadership in voter education, advocacy, and community engagement.

LWVGP has served the Grosse Pointes and Harper Woods communities since 1950. They printed their first Voter Guides just a few years later, and from 1954-56, printed 7,500 Voter Guides for the pre-primary election on their very own mimeograph machine. The local paper called this effort "one of the most complete and unbiased reports to ever reach our desk."

LWVGP was organized in early 1950 as the League of Women Voters of Grosse Pointe Park, a Provincial League with 30 members. The impetus was a Citizens Committee that formed due to some questionable things happening in city government. It was promoted by the Park Village President during the late 1940s, primarily to add transparency in government.

The first *This is Your Grosse Pointe* booklet, with information about all five Pointes, was published in 1954 and updated every decade until the 2000's, when the internet made such information easier to find.

The 1960's ushered in the first candidate forums. By the early 1970's the League was often called upon to moderate candidate and community forums and even worked on ABC TV's election night reporting.

During this time, the League was also developing local positions and often gathered to learn more about their study items and local big issues, including water conservation, equality of opportunity in education and employment, trade measures, and the need for a community college in Wayne County. That college opened in 1967.

In the 1980s, the League launched the Pointe's first recycling efforts. In more recent years, the Grosse Pointe League added many members from Macomb County. It nurtured their education and growth until they were ready to become an independent unit in 2018. That Macomb County League is going strong today.

Currently, LWVGP distributes 6,000 *Your Government Officials* brochures and thousands of Voter Guides. It collaborates with VOTE411.org to inform voters about their local candidates. They register new voters at four local high schools and hold public events to explain changes in the voting laws, and continue to conduct candidate forums for local, contested elections.

To quote Barbara Thompson, a Grosse Pointe League member who joined in

1953: *"The League member is one who craves the stimulation of diverse thinking, who is considerate of others' differing positions, and who believes that the best work is based upon study, research, and fact."*

As it looks ahead to its next 75 years, LWV Grosse Pointe remains committed to empowering voters, defending democracy, and ensuring that every voice is heard.



Voter Registration in front of J. C. Pennings
Mrs. John Kirlin, Mrs. Eugene Most and Mrs. Donald Jennings
September 17, 1955



Publicity photo for distribution of voter guides 1954

Local Leagues

Berrien/Cass Counties

Copper Country (with Gogebic County Geographic Unit)

Dearborn/Dearborn Heights

Delta County

Detroit

Eastern UP MAL State Unit

Flint Area

Grand Haven Area

Greater Grand Rapids Area

Grand Traverse Area (with Crawford County Geographic Unit)

Grosse Pointe

Holland Area

Jackson Area

Kalamazoo Area (with Calhoun County Geographic Unit)

Lansing Area

Leelanau County

Lenawee County

Livingston County
Macomb County MAL State Unit
Manistee County
Marquette County
Midland Area
Mt. Pleasant
Northeast Michigan (formerly Alpena County)
Northern Lower Michigan
Northwest Wayne County
Oakland Area
Saginaw County
Troy
Washtenaw County

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

LWVMI Leadership 2025-2026

Co-President: [Denise Hartsough](#) (Kalamazoo Area)
Co-President: [Lynne Kochmanski](#) (Washtenaw County)
VP Voter Service: [Judy Florian](#) (Grosse Pointe)
VP Advocacy: [Sandra Sorini Elser](#) (Washtenaw County)
VP Program: [Ellen Lafferty](#) (Livingston County)
VP Membership: [Carla Barrows-Wiggins](#) (Oakland Area)
Secretary: [Maria McCarville](#) (Saginaw County)
Treasurer: [Tom Wells](#) (Grosse Pointe)

Directors

VOTE411: [Anne Jackson](#) (Washtenaw County)
Advocacy: [Connie Mitchell](#) (Dearborn/Dearborn Heights)
Observer Corps: [Tina Pawlak](#) (Holland Area)
League Links: [Courtney Winell](#) (Greater Grand Rapids Area)
DEI Team: [Sheryl Theriot](#) (Detroit)
Development: [Carrie Moon-Dupree](#) (Northwest Wayne County)
Director at Large: [Charles Thomas Jr.](#) (Detroit)

Calendar

October 2025

Voter Education Month

October 20: [Board of Canvassers Orientation](#) | 7:00 pm
October 24: United Nations Day
October 23: [Voter Service Network](#) | 7:00 pm
October 27: VOTE411's 19th Birthday
October 28: [Vote Early Day](#)

November 2025

Native American Heritage Month

November 4: Election Day | Polls Open 7:00 am - 8:00 pm
November 5: [Unite & Rise 8.5 Network](#) | 7:00 pm



November 8: LWVMI Board Meeting | 9:30 am
November 11: Veteran's Day
November 13: [Presidents/Leaders Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm
November 20: Board of Canvassers Debrief | 7:00 pm
November 25: [International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women](#)
November 27: Thanksgiving
November 28: Native American Heritage Day

All LWVMI meetings are posted on [LWV Only page](#) of our website with links added when available.

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/>

Instagram: [#lwvmich](https://www.instagram.com/lwvmich)

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

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

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