



League Links

August 2026

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Co-Presidents' Message

This month we celebrate our state and local League efforts for the [August 8th National Day of Action for Voting Rights](#).

On August 8, 2026, LWVMI along with 17 local Leagues around the state, participated in the National Day of Action, sponsored by LWVUS. There were 350+ events held nationwide,

Several local Leagues held tabling events and hosted speakers in their communities. LWVMI sponsored a livestream of the film [Selma Sisters March On](#) (formerly titled Three Marches, Two Sisters, One Bridge) along with a panel discussion featuring Charles Thomas, Jr., Alice Moore and Denise Jarnigan-Holt, both of whom are featured in the film. Local Leagues hosted watch parties with over 500+ participants viewing the program live. Since then, the program has been viewed over 200 times on our LWVMI YouTube page. [Here](#) is the link to the LWVMI program.

In addition to these activities, the LWV of Detroit along with LWVUS, hosted a poetry slam at the University of Michigan Detroit Center. Detroit was one of only 5

major cities chosen by LWVUS for a special event, due to Detroit's civil rights history. The event brought together community leaders, organizers, artists, advocates and residents to promote civic engagement and voting rights.

Deborah Bunkley, LWV Detroit member states, "The turnout for the August 8th Day of Action was wonderful, demonstrating that both poetry and politics remain vibrant in Detroit. Having the LWVUS present truly made the event. Along with the coverage from local news, the participation of high school students and local Leagues, the workshop was exceptionally well presented."

Nineteen-year-old Faith Coats, who had cast her first ballot in the Primary Election on August 4th, attended and read a poem. She encouraged other young people to vote, saying her first voting experience was easier than she expected. League leaders emphasized that the organization's role is to educate and engage voters—not tell them how to vote.

The Detroit event, along with all the other events happening around the state and US were part of the League's **Unite & Rise 8.5 initiative**, which aims to engage and mobilize 8.5 million voters by November 2026 through nonpartisan civic engagement.

Thank you to all who participated and helped make this such a powerful Day of Action.

In League,
Lynne Kochmanski and Denise Hartsough
Co-Presidents
League of Women Voters of Michigan



L to R: LWVUS CEO Celina Stewart,
Dearborn/Dearborn Heights member Betsy
Cushman, LWVUS President Sania Irwin and
Dearborn/Dearborn Heights
Member Elayne Boismier.



LWVUS President Sania Irwin



Macomb County League, Shelly Lotocki
August 8th Day of Action



Deborah Bunkley, Detroit League
engages young voters

Voter Service Updates

Thanks to our Election Workers

The August Primary is behind us, and I want to extend a heartfelt thank-you to all of our members who participated in Election Day activities and other election-related efforts. Whether you served as an Election Inspector/Poll Worker, worked on an Absentee Voter Ballot Counting Board, supported early voting, served as a challenger or poll watcher or contributed in another way, your time and dedication helped make our elections successful.

Don't forget to complete our Election Worker Survey at this [link](#). Your feedback is valuable and will help us plan for future elections.



LWVMI Print Voter Guide

We still have several local Leagues that have not submitted their orders for the LWVMI print voter guide. We are coordinating with library collaboratives to avoid duplication of orders. We encourage local Leagues to distribute voter guides to

their community libraries—just be sure to include the libraries in your voter guide order. Also, if your League is producing its own local voter guide, please be sure to identify the Michigan House and Senate districts for which you would like us to provide VOTE411 data.

The deadline to order is August 28, but we encourage you to get your orders in as soon as possible! The voter guide order form is at this [link](#).

Local League Guides

The Voter Service Template Committee has also developed many excellent resources to help local Leagues create their own voter guides. These resources are available at lwvmi.org under the Members Only section. LWVMI will reimburse local Leagues up to \$2,000 for expenses related to producing their local voter guides. You can find the resources at this [link](#).

Get Out The Vote (GOTV) Postcard Campaign

Thanks to all local Leagues who are participating in the GOTV postcard campaign. If your League hasn't signed up yet, you can do so by completing the 2026 GOTV Postcard Campaign Application, available at this [link](#).

LWVMI will reimburse local Leagues for printing and postage expenses up to a maximum of \$1,000. Local Leagues may exceed the \$1,000 limit but will be responsible for any costs above that amount. Expenses must be paid upfront by the local League. To receive reimbursement, local Leagues must submit receipts along with the GOTV Expense Reimbursement Request, available on the LWVMI.org website. Please submit your expense reports and receipts to Judy Florian at voterservice@lwvmi.org. Requests for reimbursement are due no later than **November 13, 2026** (reimbursements will be sent to all participating Leagues **after** November 13).

Save the Date-Board of Canvassers Debrief Meeting

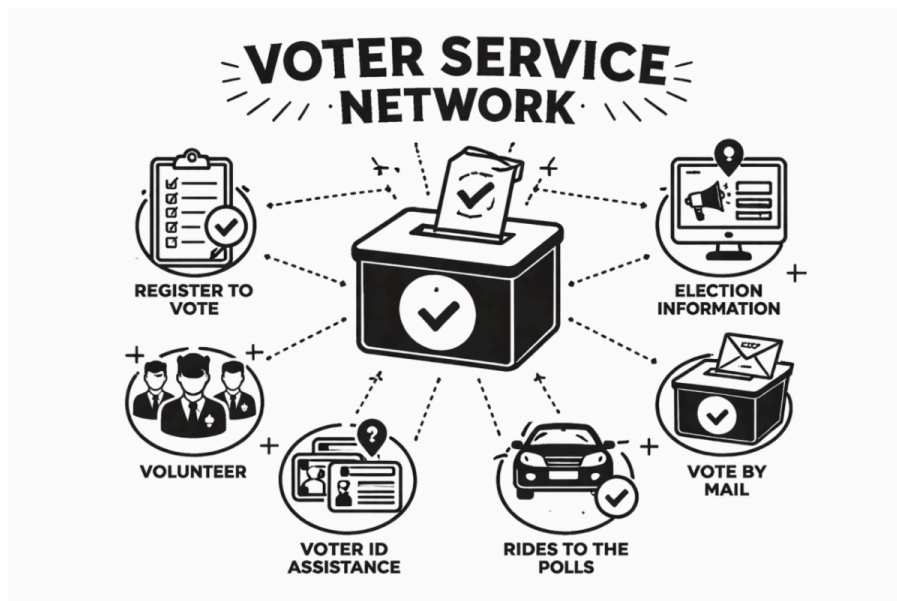
A big thank you to all of our members who participated in the Board of Canvassers post-election observation program! Your eyes and ears play an important role in helping ensure transparency and accountability in our elections.

Mark your calendars! Our Board of Canvassers Debrief Meeting with observers will be held Tuesday, August 25, at 7:00 p.m. We look forward to hearing about your experiences and learning from your observations. You can register at this [link](#).



Voter Service Network Meeting

Our next Voter Service Network meeting will be held on Thursday, August 20, at 7:00 p.m. **Note: This is an exception to our 4th Thursday schedule for August only.** You can register for the meeting at this [link](#). Only those actively involved in Voter Service work in their local League can attend. An agenda will be sent out the week of August 17.



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

Unite and Rise 8.5

If your League hosted a Day of Action event and received funding, please be sure to submit your data by August 21 using this [link](#).

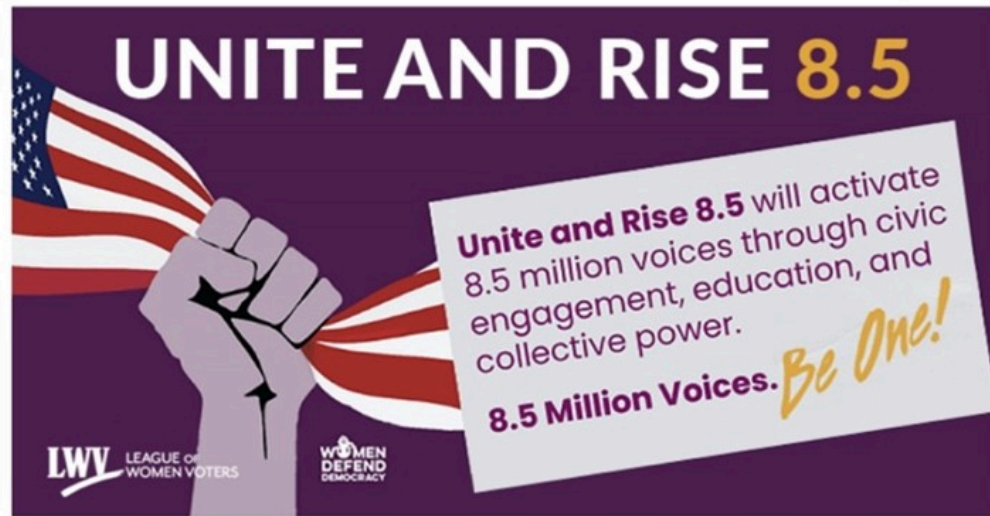
The *Unite & Rise 8.5 Playbook 6: Power Rising for Midterms* for August through October 2026 is now available. This is the final Playbook in the series. Playbook 6 can be found [Here](#).

Begin planning now for Civic Holidays in the fall by signing your local League up for:

- National Voter Registration Day: Tuesday, September 15
- National Voter Education Week: October 5-9
- Election Hero Day: Thursday, October 20
- Vote Early Day: Tuesday, October 27

Sign up information and partnership opportunities may be found at: <https://civicholidays.org/>. Election Hero Day is sponsored by LWVUS.

In addition to the Civic Holidays, emphasis now shifts to Voter Service as the series closes out. We encourage local Leagues to engage in voter education, registration, VOTE411, candidate forums, election work, and board of canvassers observation (to name a few).



LWVMI Advocacy Committee Report

Below are the highlights of the LWVMI Advocacy Committee work in July and August 2026.

Statewide Ballot Proposals

For the November 3, 2026, General Election, one proposal will definitely appear on the ballot, and two others may also appear:

1. **Michigan Constitutional Convention (Con Con)** – required by the Michigan Constitution to appear on the ballot every 16 years. This measure would open the state constitution to be rewritten.
2. **Michigan Utility and Government Contractor Campaign Finance Regulations (MMOP)** -- may appear on the ballot as a legislative initiative. This measure would prohibit regulated electric and gas utilities, and contractors with over \$250,000 annually in government contracts from making direct or indirect contributions to those who run for office.
3. **Michigan Citizenship Verification and Voter Identification Initiative (Americans for Citizen Voting MI)** -- may appear on the ballot as an initiated constitutional amendment. This amendment would provide that only

U.S. citizens can vote in state and local elections, and require documentary proof of citizenship to register to vote.

Once the Board of State Canvassers determines which proposals will be on the ballot, the LWVMI Education Fund will prepare an educational presentation. Local Leagues will be encouraged to offer educational presentations—not advocacy--on the ballot proposals.

LWVMI has positions on the three proposals:

- Against Con Con
- Support MMOP
- Against Americans for Citizen Voting MI

Once the State Board of Canvassers determines which ballot proposals will be on the ballot, LWVMI will connect League members who wish to advocate with partner organizations that have Ballot Question Committees.

It is important to advocate under the auspices of a Ballot Question Committee. Under Michigan's campaign finance laws, any entity raising or spending more than \$500 advocating for or against a ballot question must create a Ballot Question Committee and report finances quarterly to the State.

Watch for information in early September about education opportunities with the LWVMI Education Fund, and advocacy opportunities with partner organizations via LWVMI.

Action Alert on Line 7 Pipeline and Tunnel

[Email](#) to Governor Whitmer to Shut Down Line 5 Pipeline

Other Advocacy Actions in July and August:

JULY 15, 2026

- SUPPORT COMMUNITY SOLAR

The League of Women Voters of Michigan supports ACCESS Community Solar, HB 6041. The bill would make it easier for renters and others without the ability to install their own solar panels to benefit from clean, renewable energy by authorizing community solar projects. Community solar will provide subscriber bill credits, interconnection, consumer protection, low-income participation, and community benefits.

- SUPPORT MICHIGAN JOINING THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

The League of Women Voters of Michigan supports House Bills 6213 and 6214. Under these bills Michigan would join the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV). NPV ensures that the candidate with the most votes nationwide is elected U.S. President and ensures that every vote is counted equally. "One person, one vote" should apply to our U.S. Presidential elections and Michigan can help make that happen.

- SUPPORT DAM SAFETY REFORMS

The League of Women Voters of Michigan supports SB 947. This bill would vest greater power in the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) to regulate dams in Michigan, including the right to approve the sale or transfer of dams. The bill would also bring dams licensed under the Federal Power Act under EGLE's jurisdiction, increase dam permitting fees and inspection frequency, and require EGLE to establish a dam registration process. It also would allow EGLE to issue an

emergency order for the removal of a dam that was in imminent danger of failure or was threatening public safety or natural resources, conditions under which EGLE may currently take other actions that do not include a dam's removal.

AUGUST 8, 2026

- **WATER = LIFE**

The Board of the League of Women Voters of Michigan approved joining the Water Equals Life Coalition. The mission of this group is to create a statewide water affordability program.

- **KEEP CORPORATE MONEY OUT OF ELECTIONS**

The League supports HB 6218, a bill which would ban corporate money for Ballot Proposals and Candidates. This bill would ban corporations from giving money to ballot question committees and candidates.

- **PROPOSED MICHIGAN GREEN CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT**

The League supports SJR-H, a Proposed Michigan Constitutional Amendment to enshrine the right to a clean, healthy environment for all of us. This amendment would guarantee that every person has the right to a clean healthy environment, that there would be public stewardship of Michigan's natural resources, and that Michigan residents serve as trustees for the state's natural resources.

- **LIMIT RATE INCREASES BY REGULATED UTILITIES**

The LWVMI Board supports SB 768 which would limit rate increases by regulated public utilities to once every 3 years instead of once every year. The bill would allow for long term planning by customers and public utility companies and help mitigate the impact of volatile fuel costs.

- **LIMITS ON STATE-INSTALLED LICENSE PLATE READERS**

The League supports limits on State Installed License Plate Readers HB 5492-5493 (limiting storage and use of data); and supports an end to MDOT's agreement allowing Federal License Plate readers and other surveillance technology on State land including highways by Federal Agencies including ICE.

For questions, please contact Sandy Sorini Elser at advocacy@LWVMI.org.

Sandra Sorini Elser
LWVMI VP for Advocacy
advocacy@lwvmi.org

Call for Volunteers

Ballot Proposal Educational Presentations

Are you interested in helping educate your community about the ballot proposals appearing on the statewide ballot in November?

The League of Women Voters of Michigan Education Fund (LWVMIEF) is preparing a presentation about these proposals.

The presentation will include:

- The facts about each ballot proposal.
- The organizations supporting and opposing each ballot proposal.
- The pros and cons of each ballot proposal.

The presentation will be available in **early September 2026** for League members to present to their local Leagues, community organizations, and the general public, either in person or virtually.

The program materials will include the presentation, a speaker script and frequently asked questions.

LWVMI will provide pass-through grants to local Leagues who choose to participate in delivering these presentations.

Please contact Judy Florian at voterservice@lwvmi.org if you are interested in being a speaker.

LOCAL LEAGUES:
Opportunity Ahead!

Make educational presentations about the ballot proposals for the November election.

BALLOT PROPOSALS

- YOU CAN INFORM.
- YOU CAN EMPOWER.
- YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

We encourage you **TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY!**

Your Donations Support LWVMI When You Can't Be There

Is it ever O.K. to just throw money at it? While LWVMI hopes all its members get engaged in the work we do, we know that sometimes that's just not possible. For a variety of reasons, you may support the work that is being done by the League but just don't have the bandwidth to do one more thing. If that is where you find yourself, that's O.K., but there is still something you can do to keep the League in action. You can make a donation to LWVMI.



As summer wraps up and we enter the busy election season, your state League (LWVMI) is providing your local League with the resources to do the work. You can still be part of the work, even if you can't be physically there right now. We need all of us in the fight. Yes, it is O.K. to throw money at it. Thank you for all you do.

Carrie Moon-Dupree
LWVMI Development Director
directordupree@lwvmi.org

August Meeting

We confirmed the monthly meeting schedule – 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm.

Youth Engagement in Local Leagues

Everyone brought their experiences with youth engagement to share. Here's the shortened version.

North Central Michigan – Christina Schlitt: We're doing high school voter registration, partnering with AAUW. We give the students some responsibility in this whole process and offer a \$25 honorarium; we were told that was huge for students. The principals we've met are happy to have our program and also the incentive to get the students involved. Since registration is done online, the students' part will be to advertise and advocate to get the other students there. The League and AAUW will be providing the information.

Northern Lower Michigan – Cheryl True: We have people reaching out to the high school and college to try to engage the kids. Susan Hanna and I are regularly at the farmer's market, and we pass out non-partisan 250th anniversary stickers and future voter stickers. We try to engage every kid that is 17 or so.

Lansing Area – Ann Marston: We participate with MSU Votes, the student voter efforts on campus. We do high school voter registration and presentations in the high schools. Some schools are happy to have us and others are not quite bought in yet. We started going to farmers markets. In the fall we do Souls to the Polls, an effort to get people to vote, and we tie it in with Halloween, so we have treats for the kids. In a few years, some of those children might become members or vote. This year we're starting to do trunk-or-treat with a new social equity group that works with unhoused people.

Kalamazoo Area – Terri McDonald: We go to the seniors' graduation rehearsals and have a table for registering to vote. We're looking at making some posters to put in the high schools with "Your Vote Is Your Future" and the top five reasons to vote.

Detroit – JoAnn Spencer: We met with the DPS Community District Family and Community Engagement Director. They have a Youth Council with 26 students. We met with 7 or 8 students and invited them to the September board meeting and to the Day of Action last Saturday, but only one student came. We hope to pay for their League memberships and get them acquainted with the League and the work that we do, and it would be great if they could also help us with social media and voter services.

Flint Area – Debbie Fish: We have a high school voter registration program. Using grant money, we trained students from U of M Flint and Mott Community College and partnered them with league members to do 35-40 minutes sessions with voter registration and what to expect once you go to the polls. The college students all graduated and left, so it's exciting hearing what other Leagues are doing to bring in new recruits on a regular basis. Previously we did a grant-funded 2-week democracy summer

program. We had the kids for 90 minutes and had two different age groups, elementary and middle school.

Holland Area – Kay VandenElst: When the seniors are getting their caps and gowns, we have a table outside the door, giving them information on registering to vote. We also have a young woman who comes to the board meetings and is developing our social media platform and we have two young women just out of high school who are interested in the League. A member is working with these three young women to start a youth committee to think about ways that we can better reach youth.

Jackson Area – Ruthann Thulin: Our program “Your Democracy, Your Vote” has League leaders go into a junior high school and hold mock elections for a class in 15 minutes, using stuffed animals as the candidates. The kids and teachers like it, and the kids learn about voting. We recruited youths from the Youth Council and the Girl Scouts, but they are very active elsewhere, and the Girl Scouts seem to have lost their leaders. My son, a teacher, recommended we contact the government teacher and the student council and honor society members, who may have a public service requirement.

Lynne Kochmanski noted the state Co-Presidents had a meeting with a statewide representative from the Girl Scouts, and she expressed interest in trying to connect with local Leagues to develop a program, perhaps a democracy and civics badge.

Washtenaw – Lynne Kochmanski: Washtenaw is potentially partnering with the NAACP and When You Vote I Win to use the video from August 8 at Eastern Michigan University to try to get youth engaged, get them registered, and get them fired up to vote. We also have a student board member, and part of their duties is, number one, to be the voice of youth when we are discussing things at the board level, but also to reach out to local high schools and organize our high school voter registration. They send the emails to the schools and get the teachers. The students are recruiting their replacements so we hope this will be self-sustaining.

Grosse Pointe – Catherine Dumke: Recently we gave a high school student a gift membership so she can help us with our social media and graphics. We recruit students, through high school voter registration, to come and help us with programs, offering them gift memberships and community service hours, which seems to be appealing to them. We had two high school students who designed a wonderful t-shirt that we use for fundraising. We found that high school librarians are great contacts; they know their students very well.

Oakland Area – Carla Barrows-Wiggins: We’re just starting a program where we’re trying to engage youth going through people who have connections in the schools, either former teachers or librarians or people who were members of the school board. We can get the youths involved in various Voter Service activities such as candidate forums.

Other Suggestions: Catherine Dumke suggested taking youth along to test the voting machines, especially the VAT machines.

Our next meeting is September 9 at 7:00 pm. For additional information please contact me.

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

Action Alerts from LWVMI and LWVUS

Click on the links below to take action:

- [Oppose the Voter ID Act](#)
- [Tell Congress to Stop Interfering in DC](#)
- [Oppose the SAVE Act Suite of Bills](#)
- [Tell Congress the Census Must Count All People](#)
- [Tell Your Representatives to Protect Equal Voting Rights](#)
- [Demand Equal Rights](#)
- [Support the Expansion of Voting Rights](#)
- [Tell Governor to Shut Down Line 5 Pipeline](#)
- [Co-Sponsor National Popular Vote Compact](#)



Hurray for Macomb County League!

Please join us in congratulating Macomb County on officially attaining the status of Independent League!

Reach out to their president Kathy Poore and their membership at lwvmacomb@gmail.com.



In April you saw the announcement that the LWVMI Board approved Macomb County's application to become an Independent League. Next, Macomb County submitted their application to LWVUS. In August, LWVUS notified Macomb County that their application to become an Independent League had been approved at their August board meeting.

They've worked long and hard for this moment and then, due to the timing relative to the LWVUS convention and summer schedule, had to wait an excruciating 4 months before they heard anything.

LWVMI Environmental Network August 2026 Report

The LWVMI Environmental Network will meet via zoom on **August 20, 2026, at 11:00 am.**

Kevin Kamps, Executive Director of Don't Waste Michigan, will join us for the first 15 minutes for a brief discussion of environmental concerns raised by restarting the Palisades Nuclear Plant.

A link to Kevin's bio can be found [here](#).

Following Kevin's presentation, we will have our usual Round Robin discussion of what is happening on the environment in our Local Leagues.

The Zoom meeting link can be accessed [here](#).

All League members are welcome to join the Environmental Network.

Please contact Sandy at advocacy@LWVMI.org for more information.

Local League Advocacy Network

Our next Local League Advocacy Network Meeting will be on **August 25 at 3pm** via Zoom.

The Zoom meeting link can be found [here](#).

LWVMI Co-President, Denise Hartsough, will join us at the beginning of the meeting to discuss the role of local Leagues in education and advocacy about the Ballot Proposal that will appear on the November 3, 2026, general election ballot.

****See the separate League Links Article on the three ballot proposals that may be on the ballot this November****

After we hear from Denise, we will have our usual round robin discussion of what our local Leagues are doing for advocacy.

All League members are welcome.

For questions, please contact Sandra Sorini Elser at advocacy@LWVMI.org or Christina Schlitt at bcschlitt@gmail.com.

We hope you will join us.

Sandra Sorini Elser, LWVMI VP of Advocacy
Christina Schlitt, LWV North Central Michigan

League of Women Voters works to engage first-time voters ahead of midterms

The Detroit event was part of a nationwide Day of Action

League of Women Voters works to engage first-time voters ahead of midterms



The news story features the League's nationwide **Unite & Rise Voting Rights Day of Action**, held on Saturday, August 8, and the special hallmark event held in **Detroit**, one of the five cities chosen for their special voting rights history.

"Detroit's history of Black civic leadership and organizing underscores the power of communities to expand access to the ballot." ...LWVUS

Featured in the Detroit news story are: LWVUS Board President Sania Irwin, LWVUS CEO Celina Stewart, LWV Detroit Communications Coordinator Deborah Bunkley, and first time Detroit voter Faith Coats.

NOTE: when clicking on the link, instead of showing the video on the LWV event, the link may show only the text of the story, and the actual video may be difficult to find. Once in the link, the video for the LWV news item may be found scrolling down to the Watch More box, and then scroll back or forward until landing on the LWV piece's video of the broadcast.

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

Grosse Pointe

Holland Area

Jackson Area

Kalamazoo Area (with Calhoun County Geographic Unit)

Lansing Area

Leelanau County
Lenawee County
Livingston County
Macomb County
Manistee County
Marquette County
Midland Area
Mt. Pleasant
North Central Michigan State Unit
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 2025-2027

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.



August 2026

[Civic Health Month](#)

August 20: [Environmental Network Meeting](#) | 11:00 am
August 20: [Voter Service Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm
August 25: [Local League Advocacy Network Meeting](#) | 3:00 pm
August 25: [Board of Canvassers Debrief Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm
August 26: Women's Equality Day
August 28: Deadline to [Order](#) Print Voter Guides from LWVMI

September 2026

September 7: Labor Day
September 8: Advocacy Committee Meeting | 2:00 pm
September 9: Membership Network Meeting | 7:00 pm
September 15: National Hispanic Heritage Month Begins
September 15: International Democracy Day
September 15: National Voter Registration Day
September 16: Observer Corps Network Meeting | 3:00 pm
September 17: Constitution 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/>

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

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