

BREAKING NEWS

LWVUS LAUNCHES MILLION DOLLAR CAMPAIGN TO ENSURE FAIR REPRESENTATION FOR ALL

With our first ever tele-town hall, The League of Women Voters of the United States announced the launching of a \$1,000,000 campaign to address redistricting challenges and to ensure fair representation for all.

We are the League of Women Voters of South Carolina ... AND we are the League of Women Voters of the United States ... and TOGETHER, we are going to be a **powerful collaboration!**

“We have done a lot of groundwork on redistricting in South Carolina. National’s 50 state + DC redistricting campaign meets us where we are and helps us network with other Leagues and get some financial as well as messaging support to go to the next level,” says former LWVSC Co-President Julie Hussey, who is now serving as a director on the LWVUS board.

LWVUS says we’re not backing down; we don’t have an equal playing field when it comes to election maps across the country and our 2021 redistricting process is in danger.

Strategies will include education and advocacy, organizing and mobilizing, partnership building, ballot initiatives and referendums, state constitutional options and litigation and federal legislative fixes.

In South Carolina, we expect to seek a legislative fix. We will be sending action alerts, letters to the editor, op-ed columns

for newspapers, training our members in testifying and lobbying, power mapping and supporting legislative drafting. There are 22 states who, like South Carolina, will be seeking legislative fixes.

Some states will work on constitutional initiatives after Pennsylvania’s success with their “free and fair” constitutional wording, suggesting that other states may be able to act with a similar state constitutional option.

The LWVUS Board has authorized a \$1,000,000 campaign – with financial help for every state League as we develop effective state specific strategies. Education will no doubt be a part of every state’s action; building partnerships to seek our goal will be part of our effort; independent citizen-led redistricting commissions will be a part of some state’s efforts; and, of course, we will all be working to restore the federal Voting Rights Act prior to the redistricting cycle in 2021. The pending Voting Rights Advancement Act modernizes the VRA of 1965 and, according to LWVUS, “has great momentum in the House.”

The People Powered Fair Maps campaign launched in September and is expected to be a signature national campaign for the League through 2022.

We in The League of Women Voters, founded when women got the vote, will celebrate our 100th anniversary in

2020. Clearly, we are going to mark that momentous occasion with another campaign that will be hard fought – making sure every vote counts by assuring that redistricting maps are fair and are drawn to give people the power to exercise the vote in a meaningful way.

*Linda Powers Bilanchone,
LWVSC Voter Co-Editor*

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Co-president's Message: COUNTDOWN TO 100!

It is fall, start up time for our local Leagues as we look ahead to municipal elections, the next legislative session, the primaries, and most of all, a year long celebration of the 100th year of women being able to vote. We know that most of our Leagues are planning some kind of celebration, to thank our forebears who fought for suffrage and birthed the League, which turns 100 in February 2020.

As you dive into local programs, voter registration, election issues, and working with your local legislators, the state League is here to help you. That's not really the right way to say it because we, all 1,100-plus of us, ARE the state

When the board had its retreat in July, we set some ambitious goals. All five goals involve local Leagues, who are our face, our voice, and our ears in the communities around the state.

League. When the board had its retreat in July, we set some ambitious goals. We want to strengthen our advocacy work, broaden and diversify our membership base, empower local Leagues, increase our visibility and impact on the public, and develop a fund-raising strategy. All

five goals involve local Leagues, who are our face, our voice, and our ears in the communities around the state. But I want to call particular attention to some of the ways we hope to empower local Leagues.

One lesson the state board took away from convention was a need to have a better way for local Leagues to provide input into the budget, nominating, and program planning process ahead of conventions. We will try to get information out earlier and use LEAD to invite input from local Leagues on how we communicate with each other. We want to strengthen the ties among local Leagues but also to invite you to offer your state board guidance and direction in the decisions that lie ahead. The strength of the League is and always has been in grassroots democracy, not top-down.

We also want to find ways to support local Leagues in expanding and diversifying our membership. Diversity has many dimensions—age, gender, race, ethnicity, political leanings, urban/rural, education. I recently recruited a new member from my church who said she wanted to join the local League, but there wasn't one in Oconee County. I assured her that close to half our Clemson League members live in Oconee County and we serve three counties, including Oconee. We all need to reflect on the unintended barriers we create. Meeting times or places may be a problem for those who work or older members who don't like to go out at night. Reaching across lines of



age and class and race and politics to build better government is something each of us can and should be trying to do.

Right at the top of our agenda is launching the working groups on redistricting, gender and race equity, education, and natural resources. Each working group will be a network of members of local Leagues led by two facilitators appointed by the state board. We hope these working groups will be a source of support and direction in educational programs and local advocacy and another way of sharing ideas across Leagues.

As we dive into our year's work, I wish a productive and effective 2019-20 League year to each and all of you!

Holley Ulbrich, Co-President, LWVSC

Let Us Know What You Think!

Would you prefer to receive this publication, the SC Voter,

1. only by mail (as now),
2. only as an attachment to an email, or
3. both ways?

1. Use this link: <http://bit.ly/scvoter1> (typed into your browser, and you need a Google account) OR
2. Call **803-636-0431** and leave your name and local League and indicate which of the three options above you prefer OR
3. Email copresident.lwvsc@gmail.com and leave your name and local League and indicate which of the three options above you prefer OR

4. Return the pre-paid response portion of the **postcard** that is being sent to all LWVSC members, marking your preference.

We are gathering this information as part of a study we are conducting of the SC Voter. If you take no action, we will assume you are happy receiving the SC Voter through the mail as you do now.

Thank you for your participation!

Legislative Priority

EDUCATION

Although the General Assembly is adjourned until January, the state Senate and House of Representatives trudge on with revisions of last session's public school reform legislation.

The 2019 session was proclaimed the year of education reform, as the House and Senate introduced companion bills, entitled the "South Carolina Career Opportunity and Access For All Act" (H. 3759 and S. 419). Backed by House Speaker Jay Lucas (R-Darlington) and Senate Education Committee Chairman Greg Hembree (R-Horry), the 84-page bill was thought to win easy passage until legislators encountered a myriad of questions by education groups and fierce resistance from teachers.

Since the bills' provisions were not revealed until their simultaneous introductions, education associations scrambled to analyze the 53 section bill and report its impact to their members.

Teachers complained that the legislation addressed none of their concerns, including underfunding of schools, excessive mandatory student testing, and lack of significant pay raises in the face of a growing teacher shortage. They also questioned why no educators were included in drafting the legislation.

Magnifying teacher complaints was the start up a new Facebook group, *SCforEd*, which quickly attracted thousands of followers. This public pressure forced a House Education subcommittee to hold a public hearing in Columbia, attracting hundreds of teachers, parents, and school officials from around the state. During the 5 hour hearing, educators criticized lack of pay, classroom conditions, instructional time taken for test preparation, and large class sizes.

Despite the hearing turnout, H. 3759 still passed just six weeks after its introduction. Only four dissenting votes were cast by House members, who questioned the consolidation of small school districts and pushed for reduced class size.



Although pressured by the House to approve the omnibus reform bill, the Senate Education Committee began reexamining parts of the legislation that had raised the most criticism from education groups.

Among the Senate amendments were eliminating Social Studies testing in grades 3-8 (the House version already eliminated the U.S. History end-of-course exam), and consolidation of districts with fewer than 1,500 students, along with establishing a district consolidation incentive fund to cover merger costs. (The House bill called for merging districts with fewer than 1,000 students and did not include incentive funding.)

Although House leadership and Gov. Henry McMaster pressed the Senate to pass the reform bill before adjournment, the *SCforEd* group worked to stop the bill. Amassing an estimated crowd of 10,000 supporters, *SCforEd* teachers marched to the Statehouse, urging the Legislature not to enact school reform until more input is given.

Although senators were criticized for not approving school reform by session's end, the state budget increased beginning teacher salaries from \$32,000 to \$35,000 and appropriated a 4 percent pay raise for educators.

During off-session months, school reform work continues. A Senate Education

subcommittee is holding meetings to amend S. 419. (See videos of these meetings at www.scstatehouse.gov.) Also, Lucas and House Education Committee Chair Rep. Rita Allison (R-Lyman) are holding a series of regional meetings with school districts' teachers of the year to discuss education problems and needs.

Of critical importance is Lucas' establishment of a committee to lay the groundwork for a new school funding formula. Enacted in 1979, the current funding formula has been amended multiple times and is neither fiscally sound nor adequately addressing today's school funding needs.

LWVSC Co-president Dr. Holley Ulbrich will be an important voice for the League as the General Assembly considers a new public school funding formula. As a Clemson University Professor Emerita of Economics, she is an expert in school financing, having written numerous academic articles examining public school funding.

Ulbrich has two excellent articles on the LWVSC website. Entitled *South Carolina's Education Funding Puzzle*, Part 1 is *The Education Finance Act Piece*; part 2, *Two Cents for Education: The Sales Tax and Schools*. Both are excellent layperson's guides to this complicated subject. The link is http://www.lwvsc.org/taxation_education_financing.html

Sally Huguley, LWVSC Director, Education

LWVSC HISTORY: IN HER SHOES

As state LWV president (2005-2007), I resolved that the history ending in 1977 should continue even if it were up to me to write it. The original *Proud Heritage* is incorporated into this final history from 1920 to 2020, a centennial document entitled *In Her Shoes*. Obviously, the narrative will continue through 2020. Photos will be included – black and white from *Proud Heritage* and color from the years 1978-2020. The current edition will be reviewed by an editorial committee selected by our state League leadership and publication decisions will be made by them as well.

When the 19th Amendment was passed opening the voting experience for women, the state had a strong network of suffragists who transferred their allegiance to the formation of a League of Women Voters of S.C. in 1920. One of my favorite “sheroes” was Eulalie Chafee Salley, whose flamboyant story is featured, as the “mother” of the S.C. Equal Suffrage League and then the S.C. League of Women Voters. Titled *In Her Shoes*, this book discloses many figures and facts in our fascinating story.

The organization of this history is by topics rather than by presidential term as was its predecessor, *Proud Heritage* by Mary L. Bryan, 1977. Seven chapters characterize this decision with headings beginning in Chapter 1’s Suffrage Movement; Chapter 2 Creating the League, national and state recognition, the state’s Phase 1 and 2, first President Harriet Simons in Phase 1 then remembering a Phase 2 League leader at state and local levels, Ethel Sturgis. Subtopics in Chapter 3 Natural Resources are Healthcare, Housing, Employment, Welfare and Childcare, Education, Transportation, and Trade and Aid, Corrections, ending with the honoring of a League leader and state legislator Harriet Keyserling. Chapter 4’s ERA is a history of the Equal Rights Amendment reviewing its Early History, life after its passage then Decline, Reproductive Health, Influencing Public Policy, and commendation of Keller

Baumgardner Barron. Chapter 5’s Natural Resources concern is with Environmental Quality, Air, Water, In-state Waterways/Coastal Tidelands, Land Use, Energy/Hazardous Waste, Solid Waste with Dr. Mary Kelly being recognized. Chapter 6’s State Government introduction is followed by the S.C. Constitutional Revision, Judicial Reform, Women: Jury Service/Judicial Selection, Taxes, Restructuring State Government, General Assembly, Reapportionment, and Home Rule while celebrating Sarah Leverette. Chapter 7

Voter Service concerns include Individual Liberties, Voter Service History, Voting Rights, Voting Systems, Campaign Finance, Other Individual Liberties such as Civil Rights, Eminent Domain, and Freedom of Information and a closing tribute to Barbara Moxon. Two appendices include Sarah Leverette’s essay “Principles, Policies, and Procedures” and Appendix B that explains the helpful League Lingo. Footnotes are another reader resource throughout the text.

Sheila Mulcahy Haney

Centennial Planning: We’re on Our Way!

2020 is going to be a momentous year for the League of Women Voters. It includes commemorating the 100th anniversary of two notable events: the ratification (in August 1920) of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution, which prohibited gender-based limitations on the right to vote and the formation (in February 1920) of the League of Women Voters.

Keller Barron, a longtime League leader and fierce warrior for the Equal Rights Amendment and much more, convened a statewide Centennial planning meeting in July. Representatives of 10 local Leagues attended the meeting and shared ideas about Centennial planning. Some Leagues are planning a series of events while others are focused on single large events. The Beaufort League is planning a February bash called “Jazz & the Roaring Twenties.” The Sumter League is gathering and sharing stories of senior current and former members.

Some local Leagues are partnering with other organizations with a view to building networks and expanding our reach. For instance, Leagues in

Columbia, Greenville and Spartanburg are working with local historical societies and museums. Another common partner is local libraries; the Hilton Head League has connected to their local library to partner about a suffrage display.

As Leagues across the state do our planning for 2020, we are mindful that the Centennial includes cause for reflection as well as celebration. As Virginia Kase, the CEO of LWVUS put it, we should celebrate the Centennial “with recognition that women’s suffrage was not perfect.”

Here in South Carolina, for instance, suffrage for African-American women and men was drastically restricted until the 1960s, and threats and hurdles to suffrage remain real and ongoing. So, as we celebrate the Centennial of the win for suffrage in the 19th Amendment, we will also think of the continuing, vital mission of the League to win the suffrage battles that remain.

*Lawson Wetli, President,
LWV of Greenville County*

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2020 AT THE STATE HOUSE

The highest 2020 State House priorities of the League of Women Voters are reform to ensure transparency and accountability in the redistricting process and requirements for disclosures related to “dark money” in campaign finance. As we move into the 2021 release of new census data, our redistricting is entirely in the hands of legislators operating largely out of public view, using criteria designed to protect themselves and their parties. Dark money in campaign finance is a priority area, as South Carolina is one of the two states in our nation that require essentially no disclosures. Both issues are crucial to South Carolina’s work on the League’s focus on issues that serve the League’s mission of Making Democracy Work.

In redistricting reform we support H.3054 (sponsors Clary, Elliott, Cogswell, Norrell, Wooten, Thigpen, Rose, Bernstein and Henderson-Myers) in the House and its parallel Senate bill, S.230 (sponsors Fanning and McLeod). We will participate in the important national efforts of the League in this area which are discussed elsewhere in this issue. In dark money reform, we support especially H.3045 (sponsors Norrell, Clary, Funderburk, and Rose) and H.4203 (sponsors Clary, Norrell, Funderburk, and Rose).

However, we already have begun the session prematurely on September 10, in opposition to H.3020, the so-called “fetal

heartbeat” bill. This bill, which has passed the House, would prohibit abortions after the development of a detectable embryonic or fetal “heartbeat” (actually a signal prior to development of the heart that is detectable before most women know they are pregnant) and would criminalize pregnant people and doctors.

The League has long been active in fighting threats to women’s reproductive choice as a member of the primary SC coalition addressing these issues, the South Carolina Coalition for Healthy Families (SCCHF) which is administered through the Women’s Rights and Empowerment Network (WREN). We very much appreciate the leadership that WREN and Planned Parenthood provide in this area and work closely with them in responding to both threats and opportunities. With H.3020, we face a definite threat, as some South Carolina legislators attempt to use this legislation to join those states attacking *Roe v. Wade* in the federal courts.

In an unprecedented move to bypass the normal legislative process, this bill is being pushed through Senate subcommittee and



committee by its advocates before the 2020 session begins in order to make filibuster more difficult. Senate subcommittee hearings, scheduled for September 10 for public testimony and October 8 for member deliberation, will be history before SC Voter is published. However, the fight against this extremely unfortunate bill will continue into the session. We know that a substantial majority of South Carolinians are on our side. We hope that League members will help by letting their senators know that we cannot accept this unconstitutional attack on the rights of the women of South Carolina to reach their own informed decisions and access the care needed to act upon those decisions.

*Lynn Teague,
LWVSC Vice President, Issues and Action*

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK.®

THE ONGOING WAR OVER WHO COUNTS

The one thing we know for sure about the upcoming decennial census is that there will not be a question about the respondent's citizenship status in 2020. We also know that the Census Bureau had predicted that including the question would have suppressed responses from Latinx residents. Advocates for the question have denied that that was the point of the question but have argued that information gained would have been worth that cost. Opponents have argued that the question was indeed intended to suppress Latinx responses, thus weakening the voting power of residents of more heavily Latinx districts and favoring whiter, more conservative districts.

But there is strong evidence from documents uncovered last May and June of another motivation for the citizenship question: to change the nature of the populations used to draw Congressional district lines. Currently, Congressional districts are drawn so that district populations are nearly equal, where the population counted is "the whole number of persons in each State" (from the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which superseded original language that counted slaves as 3/5 of a person). In the 2016 case



from Texas, *Evenwel v. Abbott*, plaintiffs argued that using total population violated the Equal Protection Clause by reducing the voting power of voters in districts with low immigrant populations, compared to voters in districts with higher immigrant populations. The Supreme Court held that states may use total population to draw districts but did not rule out other options.

The argument made in documents belonging to recently deceased Republican "gerrymandering guru" Thomas Hofeller for the citizenship question is that it would lay the groundwork for a national change to using citizens of voting age as the population for drawing districts, instead of counting everyone. Hofeller argued that such a change would benefit "Republicans and non-Hispanic whites." He also proposed as a cover story that the question would provide data to aid enforcement of

the Voting Rights Act, the excuse provided by the government that was rejected by the Supreme Court in June.

Now comes Alabama and Rep. Mo Brooks (R-AL), suing the Commerce Department and the Census Bureau last year to block counting of undocumented immigrants for apportionment of Congressional representatives to the states, as well as for allocating federal funds. Alabama is projected to lose a seat when representatives are apportioned after the 2020 census. The plaintiffs argue that the wording "persons in each State" was not intended to refer to undocumented immigrants, that the phrase was "understood at both the Founding and in the Reconstruction era to be restricted to aliens who have been lawfully admitted to the body politic," and thus a "proper" interpretation of the laws governing the census and apportionment would mean counting only "the total of legally present resident population of the United States." A number of experts have offered contrary understandings of history and judicial precedent.

The district judge hearing the case has expressed concerns that the federal government may not wholeheartedly defend the suit, so has allowed Hispanic and civil rights groups to join the defense, along with 16 other states that stand to lose representatives under the Alabama plan, nine cities and counties, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He also denied the government's motion to dismiss the suit, however. We await the news from the September hearing.

Matt Saltzman,

LWVSC Director for Redistricting

Keep in touch between SC Voter Issues!

LWVSC regularly communicates news, announcements, policies, legislative developments, and more through email, Facebook, and our website.

Email: Watch for emails (about twice a month) from **LWV of South Carolina.**

If you do not receive these, please let us know (send to lwvsc.cml@gmail.com).

Facebook: Follow our page **League of Women Voters of South Carolina.**

There are daily posts about breaking developments and the page gets a lot of traffic. "Liking" and "sharing" posts helps spread the word.

Website:

Our website, lwvsc.org, is kept up to date; check it regularly.

Don't miss out on all the things LWVSC has going on!

SOUTH CAROLINA'S NEW ELECTION EQUIPMENT

South Carolina voters will begin voting on new equipment in fall 2019. The all-electronic ES&S iVotronics will be replaced by ES&S ExpressVote voting computers. These print a paper record; barcodes of voter choices are tabulated with an optical scanner.

The most important thing for voters to know is that the paper is not a receipt! This is the actual ballot; it must be scanned for the vote to count. After scanning, the paper falls into a bin underneath the scanner.

There are many issues with the process of running elections still being worked out with the new system. The iVotronics, for example, could “code” an absentee ballot so that the ballot could later be retrieved and discarded if the voter were successfully challenged or if the voter voted absentee but then died before the

election. The **new system** apparently has no mechanism for coding a ballot and thus identifying the ballot with the voter. Counties are being directed to save all the in-person absentee paper ballots in privacy envelopes until Election Day when they will open and scan them. For large counties, this presents a real problem. Greenville, Richland, and Charleston, for example, had more than 40,000 such ballots in 2016, and at one second per scan, even with two DS450 scanners at county headquarters, the scan alone will take more than six hours. Smaller counties will have fewer such ballots, but also only one DS450 and fewer resources to hire temporary workers to do the scans.

A second issue that will arise is whether counties actually get enough equipment to be able to run elections without long lines of waiting voters.

Since the State Election Commission panel chose a very expensive system, the Commission is exercising the “as near thereto as may be practicable” excusatory language of the statute to allocate less equipment than required in the main language of the statute.

Finally, the new system will apparently cost more for maintenance. Counties were told in June, at the time of the decision to buy, that maintenance costs would be no more than previous costs and perhaps even less; the counties are now being told that the costs might in fact almost double. Richland County paid about \$115,000 per year in maintenance. Based on the costs in the proposal submitted to the state, the yearly maintenance cost would be about \$212,000 per year.

Duncan Buell, LWVSC Voting Technology

Vote411.org is the answer for those local elections in November!

Local elections are, in many ways, the starting line for that challenging race we call “making democracy work.” Such elections tend to be small districts, nonpartisan, and cost less for the candidate to run. Candidates often know many of their constituents; the whole wild idea of running for office seems less overwhelming. So, these elections attract candidates who say to themselves, “Maybe I can do this! Maybe I can run for political office!” While that is admirable, the good news is that quite often a successful elected official goes on to run for a higher office – maybe mayor or county council chair and then maybe the state legislature and, who knows? Maybe even the U.S. Congress!

Now, as League members, we want to encourage candidates to run and we want to help their constituents get to know them! We used to run special sections in our newspapers and hold multi-candidate forums, but those modes of communication don’t work as well as they used to. Newspapers aren’t the ubiquitous messengers for our communities that they used to be (sadly) and while we applaud single member districts, they truly complicate our efforts to bring folks together to meet candidates. For instance, in Spartanburg, we could bring the three candidates

from the three City Council districts that are having elections together for a community meeting, but each person in the room would only be interested in one of the candidates. So, maybe it’s a meet and greet, but that is something each candidate might want to do separately in his or her district. So, what’s the answer?

I’ll offer my answer: **VOTE411.org**. We can publicize the ELECTION; I think we’d all be surprised by the number of elections that fly under the radar until after the votes are counted! And, we can publicize the election by sending voters to VOTE411.org. There, voters can education themselves to their hearts’ content! That is, if we have successfully contacted the candidates and persuaded them to post their information. To publicize VOTE411.org, we have our websites, our Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, paper handouts and anything else that we can think of! The good news is that the message is simple and consistent – Go to VOTE411.org to find out everything you want to know about candidates YOU will be voting for! Finally, if you have other good ideas about how to handle local elections, please let us know! We’ll share them with our readers!

Linda Powers Bilanchone, LWVSC Voter Co-Editor



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Established in 1951, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina is a nonpartisan, political organization that encourages citizens to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Any citizen of voting age, male or female, may become a League member. All members receive the National Voter, the SC Voter, and a newsletter from their local League.

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Comments _____

Contribution can be mailed to LWVSC, P.O. Box 8453, Columbia, SC 29202 or a donation can be made on line at www.lwvsc.org. You can donate with a one time or recurring gift. Every little bit helps support advocacy efforts at the SC Statehouse and grassroots efforts in our local communities.

Thank you for your support!