



2019 Legislative Priorities and Guidance Report

Advocacy + Litigation Department

As of August 21, 2019

Overview

In early November 2019, LWVUS launched inaugural legislative priorities guidance and a survey to state and local Leagues inquiring into their legislative priorities and offering guidance around priorities to align under the *Making Democracy Work* campaign. The survey congratulated League leaders on surviving the 2018 election season and outlined several legislative opportunities for states to engage and align their legislative agendas with the national League.

The document also outlined reforms associated with Election Administration, Voter Protection, Redistricting and Census, Money in Politics, and Constitutional Conventions. The guidance was also accompanied by a survey for League leaders to share which legislative priorities their state would engage for the upcoming 2019 legislative session.

Participating States

By January 2019, thirty-nine (39) state Leagues weighed in and twenty-one (21) local Leagues shared LWVUS around what their legislative priorities would be and specifically shared the depth of engagement around the *Making Democracy Work* campaign. Below is a summary of those results as we gear up for repeating this guidance and survey for 2020.














Takeaway: All but 11 states reported in to national around their intended work for the 2019 legislative session. Of the twenty-one local Leagues that reported in, nearly half were from the outstanding state Leagues which implicitly provided intel around those state's potential legislative priorities.



State's Priorities by Topic

Based upon the states reporting in, nearly two-thirds of states across the country did work in the legislative space around Election Administration and Redistricting and Census (73.9%) as top priorities representing seventeen states for each. The third priority for states was Voter Protection (60.9%) with at least fourteen of the states reporting in. Nearly all states' work also tied for fourth covering Money in Politics, Climate Change, and Gun Safety issues (47%) followed by Reproductive Choice and Healthcare (28%). Just under 20 percent of states focused on National Popular Vote, the Equal Rights Amendment and Immigration Reform.

Value		Percent	Responses
Election Administration Reforms		73.9%	17
Voter Protection		60.9%	14
Redistricting and Census		73.9%	17
Money in Politics		43.5%	10
Environmental Defense/ Climate Change		43.5%	10
Reproductive Choice		30.4%	7
Gun Safety Issues		43.5%	10
Immigration Reform		8.7%	2
Equal Rights Amendment		17.4%	4
National Popular Vote		17.4%	4
Health Care		30.4%	7

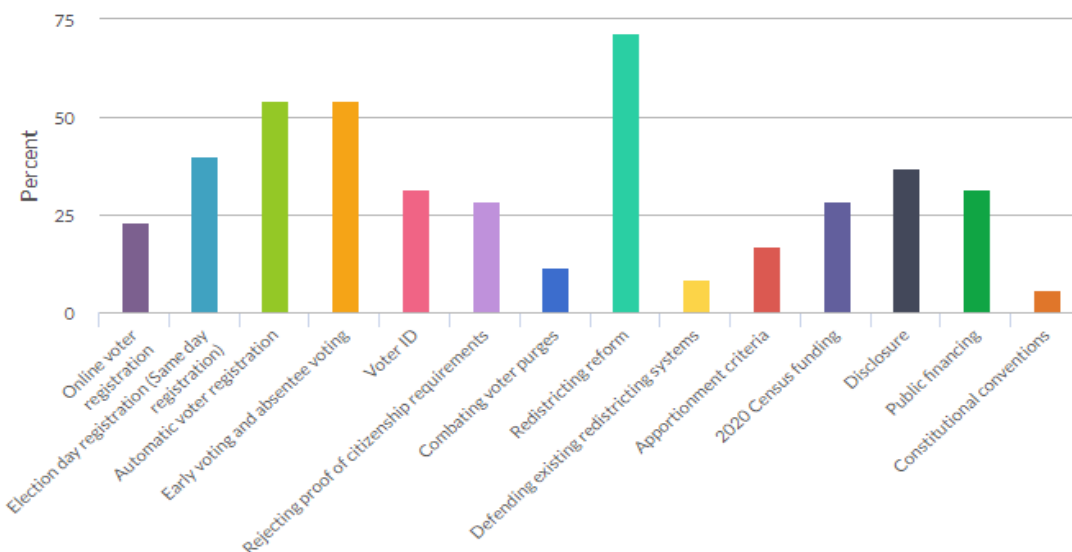
Takeaway: Nationally Leagues core legislative work is Election Administration, Redistricting and Census, and Voter Protection, all work that is a priority under the *Making Democracy Work* campaign.



What Issues States Planned to Work On in Upcoming Legislative Session

When asked which issue areas under MDW campaign, states reported working on 14 issues primarily:

7. LWVUS has suggested some issue areas under the Making Democracy Work® Campaign. Please tell us if you will be working on any of the following: (check all that apply)



Redistricting reform was the top issue areas states planned to work on for 2019 legislative cycles and surpassed all other issues easily by 20 percent. Following redistricting reform were automatic voter registration (AVR) and early voting and absentee voting with just over 50 percent of states planning to work in these issue areas. Same day registration (SDR) was not far behind with more than 42 percent of states planning to work on this issue during this legislative cycle. Notably, states also noted their plans to work in other issue areas including Voter ID, rejecting proof of citizenship claims, closing disclosure loopholes, resolving public financing issues and securing 2020 census funding.

Takeaway: Nationally Leagues core legislative issue areas center upon pro voter reforms; voter protection; and Money in Politics, which are all key issue areas under the *Making Democracy Work* campaign.

Summary

The survey results represent seventy-eight percent (78%) of the country and shows that all 39 states (including D.C.) are doing at least 3 activities under the *Making Democracy Work* campaign. In many states, they are doing significant work under the campaign as well as advocating around regionally specific issues (i.e. climate change). This survey was the first of its kind that LWVUS sent to states to learn and get a birds-eye view of the advocacy and litigation work state’s were doing and to gauge level of engagement around the MDW campaign. This report shows clear alignment across the country



around our core work of voting rights, improving elections, campaign finance and redistricting, but also presents an opportunity to encourage increased activism under national campaigns. For FY20, the advocacy and litigation team will share this report with state and local League leaders, provide guidance for the upcoming legislative cycle, and again monitor engagement across the country.