

Speakers Bureau: Guide to Best Practices and Guidelines for Redistricting Focused Speakers Bureaus

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Dear League Leaders,

LWVUS is proud to share our guide on *How to Build Effective Speakers Bureaus for Redistricting*. In 2019, LWV launched the People Powered Fair Maps Campaign (PPFM) in response to the U.S. Supreme Court's Decision in the *Rucho vs. Common Cause* case. While the case decided that partisan gerrymandering went beyond the reach of the courts, the League decided to invest in creating meaningful change in the redistricting process by launching this campaign. The People Powered Fair Maps™, is a multi-state campaign dedicated to fighting for fair maps across the country through legislative change, better transparency and criteria, citizen led ballot initiatives, and organizing through civic engagement. The goal of PPFM is to create maps across the country that reflect their communities and to curb partisan and racial gerrymandering.

Across the country, our League leaders are organizing their communities and becoming experts on redistricting. As we wrap up the Census and prepare for the 2021 legislative sessions and map drawing processes, it will be important to build relationships with community organizations, develop ways to educate people around redistricting related topics, and elevate PPFM as a national campaign. A tool that can help you achieve these goals, is an established speakers bureau on Redistricting. Speakers bureaus are a great way to raise public awareness about issues, recruiting new members and volunteers, establishing press and media contacts, fundraising, and creating visibility in your organization.

This packet will provide you with the framework to create your own speakers bureau on Redistricting or incorporate redistricting related content into your already existing speakers bureau. This document contains best practices, public speaking tips, redistricting topic ideas, and a how to on delivering a Redistricting 101 Presentation.

How to use this packet:

- Incorporate redistricting topics into your pre-existing speakers bureaus
- Use public speaking best practices to train your League speakers
- Follow the Table of Contents in order if you're starting off! We have intentionally organized the materials in this order so that first time Speakers Bureau creators can seamlessly follow along
- Customization is key. You can tailor and change information and tips given in this packet to your own goals or state and local specifications. The sky is the limit! Be creative.

Speakers bureau next steps:

- **Talk to your State/Local President about the idea of a speakers bureau.** Work with the leadership in your state or local League to create a plan to create a redistricting speakers bureau.
- **Identify your key topics and messaging.** Everyone's situation will be different. Maybe you have an independent commission and want to talk about how commissioners are chosen to serve on the commission, how to monitor it, or how to make mapping suggestions. Perhaps, there is some important redistricting legislation this year for which the League will be advocating. Or, you live in an area where people need to be better organized and aware about redistricting and gerrymandering. Knowing your messaging goals and your audience will help you recruit the right people and reach the right individuals.

- **Recruit and advertise!** Use our tips on recruiting to tap into the talent in your League on redistricting. This can also be an opportunity to bring in new members.
- **Build a training schedule:** It's now time to build the content and expertise. Create a training schedule that works for you to ensure the speakers are comfortable and knowledgeable about the material.
- **Promote your speakers bureau to your target audience:** A speakers bureau is all about the presentations. With a staffed and trained team, it's time to get them out there—either virtually or in person when it is safe. It's important to do outreach to organizations and community leaders to offer them the opportunity to book a presentation. Start to brainstorm who you want to engage with and then use the templates provided to make that contact!
- **Book! Book! Book!:** When scheduling presentations it is important to stay organized. It is helpful to have a centralized document, or calendar, tracking all your presentation requests and who is the lead.

This packet is designed to be your one-stop-shop for all things speakers bureau. It can help you build a program from the ground up or aid in expanding preexisting bureaus. We wanted to make a special note and thank the Arizona, DC, Michigan, Kentucky, and California Leagues who were consulted when formulating this packet. Their collective expertise helped to inform and guide us in creating this packet. It is our hope that all states can learn from these resources to launch their own successful speakers bureau. We here at LWVUS are always on hand to provide that extra level of support in this process, do not hesitate to reach out to Priya Pandey (kpandey@lww.org) or Dylan Vargas (dvargas@lww.org) for help. Let's build these speakers bureaus together!

Thank You,

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Best Practices for Recruitment

The first step in creating your speakers bureau is to recruit members to be speakers. There can be many barriers to your recruitment efforts such as awareness of the program, apprehension towards public speaking, or how to engage members. However, to aid your efforts to build out your bureaus here are some recommended practices.

- 1. Website, email, newsletter OH! MY!:** One of the best ways to recruit for a speakers bureau is simply to reach members where they are. This means posting or including your recruitment messaging in all forms of League communication. Create an announcement of your search on the League's website. Send out an email blast to League members or even your mailing list. If the League publishes a weekly, bimonthly, or monthly newsletter, make sure it includes language promoting the speakers bureau. Don't be afraid to utilize these methods repeatedly.
- 2. Host presentations open to League members:** This strategy is a great way to encourage involvement with the bureau and serves an educational purpose. By setting up League centric presentations, you can show off what work the speakers bureau does and remove any mystery around it. Having someone from the bureau host this event could also work to break down any barriers between membership and the program. These presentations also serve a secondary purpose to educate members on important issues or League positions.
- 3. Request member input:** Not only can you send out direct requests to membership to join the speakers bureau, another strategy is to source topics for speakers bureau presentations from League membership. By asking members what they think should be part of the program, you are bringing them into the process already. It will be a much easier ask to join, if members feel like they have a connection or voice in the program.
- 4. Individual outreach:** If you already have a specific member in mind when creating the bureau, do not be afraid to reach out to these people directly. Nothing can be more impactful than a personal plea. These can be simply some of the most active members, members who have certain expertise or experience, just a friend who you know would be a good fit.
- 5. Always be recruiting:** Recruitment doesn't stop, its ongoing. Even when you start booking presentations or have a core group of speakers that doesn't mean to step back from recruitment. Always be making an effort to grow the bureau; the more speakers, the more presentations, the more effective a program and impact you have.

Best Practices for Training

After successfully recruiting members to serve on your speaker's bureau, it is important to spend time training them in the most efficient way possible. Your speakers may already be coming in with a certain level of expertise and comfort in public speaking, and now you can work with them to build out their strengths and identify opportunities to develop further. Here are some tips to help you train your speakers and set them up for success:

1) Identify your experts. The most effective training is one that focuses in on people's strengths and also identifies opportunities for growth. To make your training efficient, see where you already have expertise in your field. What topics are people knowledgeable about? What do people have an interest in learning? Then look at what potential exists to develop new skills.

2) Practice! Practice! Practice. Give your speakers time to run through their presentations with other League members, or on their own. It is important to set aside time to get comfortable with the presentation, address hiccups that may come up, familiarize yourself with any technology you will be using, and work to anticipate questions that will come up during the presentation. Confidence in speaking is built through practice.

3) Build redistricting knowledge. A redistricting focused speakers bureau will cover a variety of topics on redistricting ranging from very specific ones to broader overviews. No matter which one you'll be speaking on, you should have a strong understanding of redistricting in general to help supplement your talking points, and to answer questions better. Encourage your speakers to read books on redistricting, follow the latest news for updates, and find creative ways to keep them engaged to develop them as subject matter experts.

4) Materials and tools. A presentation can go from good to great with the use of materials such as visual aids, breakout room activities, handouts, and other takeaways. Work with your speakers to develop interactive activities that you can incorporate into your presentation.

5) Going beyond speeches: A good speakers bureau offers a variety of presentation types. In addition to longer speeches, presentations, facilitated debates and discussions, and creative monologues are great things to offer and train people on.

6) Set expectations and goals. Make sure speakers understand the purpose of their presentation. Your approach may change based on whether you're trying to convince people to support legislation/ballot initiatives, educate them on a topic for the first time, or build a relationship with an organization.

7) Create a feedback loop. Create a form or system to measure feedback and track follow up from your presentation. Ask attendees about their experience, what new information they learned, and what additional information they need in order to become an expert. Check in with your speakers as well and talk to them about their experience presenting. Use the

information gathered to develop your future trainings, adjust your presentation methods, and reach more people.

Public Speaking Tips

1) Have a clear beginning, middle, and end. Create an outline for your presentation that creates a seamless flow between the different parts of the topic. It will make it easier for you to present and easier for your audience to follow.

2) Communicate your purpose and goals. What are you trying to accomplish today? Why are you giving this speech to this group? Use that purpose to help guide what you say in your presentation.

3) Use accessible language. Try to avoid jargon and complicated terms when speaking. Use language that everyone can understand and distill information about policy issues and current events in accessible terms. This will also keep people more engaged if the presentation is easier to follow.

4) Be mindful of body language, eye contact, and space. Maintain good eye contact with your audience. Be aware of your body language. Make sure you have good posture and make good use of your hands while speaking. If you're on a virtual platform, use the different display modes to get the best view of your audience and to make your screen visible as well.

5) Be patient. Pace yourself when speaking. If you aren't sure what to say next, trust your gut and say what comes to mind. Don't be afraid to be upfront about needing to gather your thoughts or rethink something! If you don't know the answer, don't guess. You can always get back to someone with the right information in the future. Authenticity while speaking is a good best practice.

Redistricting Speakers Bureau Topics

The following are potential topics that you can incorporate into your speakers bureau

- **Redistricting 101 presentation**
 - Learn about the redistricting process from its history to present day application and how we must organize for fair maps in the future. This People Powered Fair Maps Campaign Presentation covers all the key components of redistricting. The presentation covers background information on redistricting, information about gerrymandering and fairness in redistricting, and includes custom slide options where you can enter in specifics about your state. There is a guide in this packet on how to use the slide deck.
- **Redistricting In (STATE)**
 - A presentation focused on redistricting processes and issues in your state. This is a great way to bring in more local partners and to educate the local community on redistricting and gerrymandering. You can use the custom portions from the PPFM 101 presentation slide deck to build out this part.
- **Talking about your community (What makes a community)**
 - Use this session to focus on talking about communities of interest. Identifying where these communities exist is an important part of the redistricting process and can help us better identify where our neighborhoods are, what groups share similar interests, and to promote unity.
- **Maps in (STATE): Understanding Redistricting and Gerrymandering through the years**
 - A great way to show the impact that gerrymandering and redistricting has had, is to compare maps over the years. In this workshop, present your current district map (congressional or state based on your interests and goals) and compare it to maps drawn in previous years. Additionally, you can also compare the map with new mapping proposals or maps that your League has worked to create. This workshop is an opportunity to have a dialogue on changes in your community and how maps can do a good or bad job at effectively capturing those changes.
- **Ballot initiatives on redistricting:**
 - If you are a state that has a citizen led ballot initiative process, and there are upcoming initiatives relating to redistricting, you can incorporate this as a topic. Organize a presentation around redistricting related ballot initiatives. Talk about what the ballot initiative does, what groups are supporting the initiative, the pros and cons of the ballot initiative. Additionally, give voters the tools to help evaluate ballot initiatives for the future as well. A sample presentation of this nature can be found [here](#). This is a slide deck from LWV Greater Tucson on how to facilitate nonpartisan conversations around ballot initiatives. You can incorporate this format for your own presentation if applicable.

Best Practices for Virtual Meetings

Leagues should anticipate starting these meetings in the age of COVID-19 and social distancing, so much of your speakers bureau work and presentations will be done virtually. Hosting virtual meetings inherently changes some important features of a presentation. Below we will lay out some of what we see as the best practices to take when approaching the new format of virtual meetings.

- 1) **Familiarize yourself with the platform:** There are so many platforms available when it comes to virtual meetings including: Zoom, Teams, Skype, GoToWebinar, etc. One of the first things when preparing for a virtual presentation is to understand which platform the organization is utilizing.; if you have a preferred platform you are more than welcome to speak up and let the organization know. Every platform has different tools that you can use to enhance your presentations. It is important to make sure you are comfortable with using the platform before the presentation.
- 2) **Explain all the platform tools the audience can use:** Not everyone is aware of all the bells and whistles that many virtual platforms offer. If you plan to utilize any of these functions, at the start of your presentation it is important to make your audience aware of them and how to utilize them.
- 3) **Set participation expectations at the beginning:** Another key difference between in person and virtual presentations is how the audience can engage with the speaker and the presentation. To not take away attention from the speaker and the presentation, it's important to set the expectation that the audience should be muted throughout the presentation. Explain that if they want to ask a question or make a comment during the presentation, they are more than welcome to utilize the chat box. If they want to speak, let them know that there will be a time of questions; and build that time into your presentation. For those who want to speak, it's also necessary that as the presenter, you call on them and request they unmute themselves; no one should unmute without your permission.
- 4) **Track the chat box:** The chat box will be one of the only places the audience can express themselves. Because of this, the chat box can become chaotic or flooded with messages. While it might be hard to present and keep track of the chat box, one useful solution is to have someone who is charged with monitoring the chat box. Having a monitor for the chat box can ensure that nothing gets lost or backlogged. Another League member can be this person, or you can ask a member of the organization you are presenting for to help. The last thing you want is for the chat box to become unwieldy and the best way to prevent that is to have someone on top of it.
- 5) **Use platform tools or other strategies to engage the audience:** Virtual presentations at times can feel isolating. One of the best ways to prevent this is to build opportunities throughout your presentation where your audience can engage with you or others. Many platforms provide tools that you can utilize to encourage audience participation, such as break out rooms in Zoom or the use of polls for your audience. If you don't feel comfortable with using the tools or they have no place in your presentation, engaging the audience can be as simple as posing a question for them to answer or discuss, have

a survey they can take and share out, or a quiz to test their knowledge. Virtual presentations can often fall into the trap of sitting in on a lecture; to avoid this, make an effort to engage the audience and make them feel included.

- 6) **Recording:** One of the unique features of a virtual presentation is that they are easier to record. Recordings can be a great way to reach a wider audience. If some people can't attend the meetings, having it recorded allows them to benefit from it later. Although, if you are going to record your presentation make sure you announce that at the start of the presentation, so the audience is aware of that fact and people can opt out if they don't want to be part of a recorded event.

Speaker's Bureau Promotion

A speakers bureau is a great way to engage with and help inform communities and organizations on a wide range of issues. However, a successful speakers bureau must be proactive and promote themselves; nothing is gained from a bureau that does not advertise their services. Only by putting itself out there and actively engaging with communities and organizations will a speakers bureau be an effective force for change and education. A good first step when trying to promote a Speakers Bureau is to brainstorm who are prominent community leaders, politically engaged organizations, or organization that work closely in the community. Curating this list will help center who the bureau should outreach to and try organizing presentations with. In this section, LWVUS will provide templates for useful promotional materials that any speakers bureau can take advantage of the expand their reach.

Introductory Letter Template

[Organization/Leader Name]

[Address]



Dear Community Leader

The [Name of Local/State League] is proud to announce that we are offering to present on a range of issues as part of our speakers bureau program designed to further empower communities and their residents through voter education and civic involvement. We strive to ensure that all citizens, activists, and people are informed; nothing is more powerful than a well-informed populous. As your organization plans its future programs, please consider scheduling one or more of our presentations.

The League of Women Voters has a proud century-long tradition of nonpartisan civic organizing that encourages informed and active participation in government. To this end, [Name of Local/State League] serves the people across [range of influence]. We would be honored if you would consider using our expertise to reach out and help teach to your members.


Enclosed is our speakers bureau brochure listing the various presentations available, to assist your program planning or to share with your organization's program chair. If you are interested in working with the League and hosting one of our presentations, you can request a speaker by filling out the included Speakers Request Form and send it back to us either via email or mail [include best forms of contact]. This form allows our speakers to properly prepare for your event and helps facilitate communication and avoid misunderstandings. Please request speakers at least 30 days in advance; any made less than 30 days out will be filled depending on availability.

Thank you for considering the Leagues' speakers and presentations. We strive to educate and inform. We look forward to hearing from you and hopefully working together.

Sincerely

[Organization/Person]

Speakers Bureau Brochure Template




About Us


Explain a bit about the history, structure, any important facts about the league

Contact Us
FOR MORE INFORMATION
To Request Presentation


Organization Name
 Address
 Phone #
 Email



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & VOTER EDUCATION



Request a Presentation by the League of Women Voters



Exterior Pages

List of Topics

- Ballot Propositions
- Voter Expansion/Suppression
- National Popular Vote
- State Specific



HOW TO STEAL AN ELECTION



Redistricting Topics

- Map drawing
- Talking about your community (What makes a community)
- Redistricting 101
- Types of Commissions
- Redistricting In (STATE)

POSITIONS OF LWVUS

REDISTRICTING
 Support redistricting processes and enforceable standards that promote fair and effective representation at all levels of government with maximum opportunity for public participation.

CITIZENS RIGHT TO KNOW
 Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate informed understanding and public participation in government decision-making.

MEETING BASIC HUMAN NEEDS
 Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families



Interior Pages

Speaker Request Form Template

Organization: _____

Organization's Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Person's Phone: _____ Email: _____

Speech(es) Requested: _____

Date(s) Requested for Speech(es): _____

Time Speech(es) Starts: _____ Time Allotted for Speech: _____

Location of Speech(es):

☐ In Person Address: _____

☐ Virtual software (Zoom, Teams, Skype, etc): _____

Expected Number of People: _____

Equipment at Site:

☐ Projector

☐ Computer

☐ Screen

☐ Podium

☐ Microphone

Meal/refreshments Provided? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, describe: _____

Need Bio of Speaker? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Notes: _____

Sample Press Release Announcing Speakers Bureau

LWV Launches Speakers Bureau

Our speakers bureau will strive to educate and encourage civic engagement

{Insert City/State of Launch} - Today, the League of Women Voters is proud to announce its new series of speakers bureau presentations. As a nonpartisan organization, the League has an important role as a driving force on civic and voter education. There is nothing more powerful than an informed populace. The League hopes that its new speakers bureau can help aid this mission.

The speakers bureau series boasts many qualified and informed speakers, who only wish to serve and aid their communities. Our speakers bureau is capable of hosting events and trainings with any organization or group that wishes to rely upon our speaker's expertise. We can provide presentations on a range of topics and issues such as [insert topics]. It is our hope that through our speakers bureau, we can encourage civic engagement and become an educational resource on crucial democracy and governance issues.

We want to speak directly with any organization who are civically or politically mindful; our speakers bureau can be a great tool for you in your work. Do not hesitate to reach out and coordinate with our League to set up a schedule to incorporate our speakers bureau in your program. We are ready and eager to introduce our speakers bureau into the community; and only hope that it serves as an irreplaceable tool for education.

How To Use PPFM 101 Presentation:

As part of the PPFM Campaign, Leagues are encouraged to create and present a “Redistricting 101,” a public education workshop in their states. LWVUS has created a presentation template that can be used to customize slides for your State, and additionally present relevant redistricting background information. For Leagues launching speakers’ bureaus around redistricting, a “Redistricting 101” presentation will be the cornerstone of your speaking work across your state and therefore we are happy to create and share this guide with you on how to use the presentation to help engage and educate communities in your state about redistricting processes and timelines.

The Basics of The Presentation

The Redistricting 101 presentation covers in depth background on the history of redistricting, the redistricting process, gerrymandering and fairness factors, LWVUS national position on redistricting criteria, and information on how to organize and mobilize for fair maps. The presentation also has multiple open slides that you can customize with information specific to your state such as state redistricting process, legislative initiatives in your state, examples of gerrymandering, and how to get involved. You can of course, customize all the information in the slides to your liking.

The slides are also branded in the official PPFM colors and template. You can add your name and League title accordingly:



Additionally, here is a sample run of show you can use to present the slides in a formatted presentation:

Introduction	5 minutes
What is Redistricting	10 minutes
Census vs. Apportionment vs. Redistricting	10 minutes
Racism and Gerrymandering	5 minutes
How Redistricting Works in [State]	5 minutes
Fairness Factors	10 minutes
How Can You Get Involved	15 minutes

Customizable Slides

Throughout the presentation, there are opportunities for you to customize the slide to suit your needs. Here are some tips for each slide on how you can best show the relevant information when you present:

Slide 1: Introductory Slide.

You can customize the agenda here based off what topics you are covering. Be sure to fill in your state specific information as well.

Slide 13: Gerrymandering in [STATE]

Use this slide to give examples of gerrymandering taking place in your State/Local area. You can show pictures of gerrymandered maps, data that shows partisanship or incumbent protections, or tell a story about how an unfairly drawn map has impacted policies or communities in your area.

Slide 18: Redistricting Process in [STATE]

This slide is split up into sections for both congressional redistricting and legislative redistricting. If you only have one at large congressional district, you can repurpose the column to something else on the redistricting process. It is helpful here to list how many seats you have in each category, discussing the process of redistricting for both categories, and other state specific information that impacts redistricting (constitutional amendments, non-partisan demographers, shadow commissions etc.) Here's an example of what you can do for this slide:

Redistricting Processes

- Congressional
 - Deciding on X Congressional Seats
 - Conducted by: (Insert example)
 - Deadline:
- Legislative
 - Deciding on X State Legislative Seats in House
 - Deciding on X State Legislative Seats in Senate
 - Conducted by: (Insert Example)
 - Deadline:



Slide 23: Opportunities for Public Transparency and Input

Does your state have written open meeting laws? Will legislative sessions be livestreamed and recorded? What ways can people submit comments and testimony? When will redistricting hearings be scheduled? This is all useful information to include in this slide! Talk about ways people can be engaged in the redistricting process, and if transparency looks weak in your state, what changes can you all make?

Slides 30-33: How Can you Get involved?

With prefilled information from our LWVUS organizing team, you can also supplement some information on your own personal organizing tactics and ideas.

Slide 35: Legislation to Support in [STATE]

Use this slide to discuss legislation on redistricting in your state. Include bill numbers and official titles, as well as how people can contact their representatives to support it. If there are no legislative initiatives related to redistricting in your state, you can repurpose this slide to talk about ballot initiatives, the role of your legislature in redistricting, an independent commission, or any related redistricting knowledge. Here are some examples:

Legislation to Support in (STATE)

Legislative Activity we are watching:

- In the 2021 Legislative Session:
- HB 101 The Redistricting Act (Introduced 2/22/2021)
- SR 202 State Fair Maps Act
 - (Introduced in House on 1/23/21 passed on 2/15/2021, in Senate currently)
- HB 303 The Criteria and Transparency Act
 - (Upcoming hearing on 2/26/2021)



Slide 36: Next Steps and Action Items

Use this slide to communicate to audiences how they can plug in to your state efforts. People should walk away understanding what they can do to support the League's state redistricting strategy. So, use this slide to give people several options around how to get involved or what they can do. This can be anything from forwarding an action alert you want to get to legislators or the independent redistricting commission to sharing information on their social media.