

Leaders Guide to L WVUS Program Planning 2022-2024

Timeline for 2022-2024 L WVUS Program Planning

October 2021	Program Planning Materials sent to Leagues
March 1, 2022	Deadline for submission of online report forms
March 2022	L WVUS Board develops Proposed Program reflecting input from Leagues
June 2022	Convention Delegates adopt 2022-2024 L WVUS Program after debate and discussion

What is League Program?

Program planning is the grassroots process of recommending and selecting governmental issues for study and agreement in reaching a position. During January and February 2022, local and state Leagues will conduct program planning and make program recommendations in a general membership meeting or a board meeting. Leagues are also asked to share information on how their work will impact the Campaign for Making Democracy Work[®] as well as identify L WVUS positions that they intend to use in education and lobbying. This is a hallmark of the League of Women Voters grassroots' role in study and action.

League program is the education and advocacy platform that we adopt to move our mission forward. Every two years in the months leading up to convention, Leagues around the country meet to review L WVUS program and propose issues for study or action. The League Principles and positions on public policy issues in Article XII of the L WVUS Bylaws outline the process.

Sec. 1. Principles. The Principles are concepts of government supported by the League and are the authorization for adoption of national, state and local program. They may be amended by the convention in the same way as program is adopted under Section 2 of this Article.

Sec. 2. Program. The program shall consist of action to implement the Principles and those governmental issues chosen by the convention for concerted study or concurrence and action.

During the Program Planning process, Leagues should incorporate an emphasis on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) into our work. A DEI lens is a way of

examining the process as to how it is perceived by a variety of communities, voices, and perspectives, and what, if any, barriers may exist that prevent it from being equitable or inclusive of everyone. A key part of applying a DEI lens is ensuring that all members feel informed and included in program planning.

Recommended Program: The Campaign for Making Democracy Work®

The LWWUS Board recommends that Program 2022-2024 continue the Campaign for Making Democracy Work® with Leagues throughout the country working on:

- **Voting Rights**
- **Improving Elections**
- **Money in Politics**
- **Redistricting**

At Convention 2020, delegates voted to support a program that would fully utilize core League positions around Voting Rights and Election Reform. The campaign for Making Democracy Work® – includes ensuring a free, fair, and accessible electoral system for all eligible voters. Leagues at every level continue to work to protect and advance voting rights and election reform at this critical time for our democracy, as well as fight efforts in Washington, D.C. and state legislatures to suppress voters.

At the same time, the League of Women Voters continues our transformational journey to strengthen the organization while also engaging new and future activists around the League's core issues. As we look to achieve our transformational goals around relevance, impact, focus and culture, we also look to the priority issues that are at the heart of the League's mission.

Accomplishments of the Campaign for Making Democracy Work®

As part of the Campaign for Making Democracy Work, the League has continued to focus on a major campaign to protect and enforce voting rights,

Since July 2020, LWFVUS lobbied the White House and Congress, sending 22 action emails to our network of grassroots activists on voter suppression tactics as well as supporting legislation like the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. These also include action alerts on DC Statehood, Healthcare Reform and the Equal Rights Amendment.

These efforts resulted in 226,118 letters to Congress, and over 14,398 contacts with the Executive Branch of government. Through our outreach we were able to engage over 95,193 new activists.

In the 117th Congress, the LWFVUS continued its major lobbying campaign in support of the *For the People Act* and the *Freedom to Vote Act* as well as the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act*. The LWFVUS, grassroots and LWFVUS Lobby Corps contacted their representatives and senators in support of legislation. LWFVUS President Dr. Deborah Turner and LWFVUS CEO Virginia Kase Solomon joined by Leagues across the country participated in days of action at the White House and on Capitol Hill to showcase the need for passage of legislation to strengthen voting rights now.

The *Freedom to Vote Act* and the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* will:
Set standards for voting across the country; Address the historical barriers to voting;

Provide oversight on voting rights violations;

Hold states and bad actors accountable; and

Create a democracy that is representative of all Americans.

In August 2021, the LWFVUS submitted a statement to the US House Judiciary Committee hearing on the Oversight of the Voting Rights Act: Potential Legislative Reforms. The hearing documents will be used to send a report to the US Senate on the continued need for the *Voting Rights Act*.

The *For the People Act* passed the House of Representatives and is not successfully achieve the 60-vote threshold to move forward in all three votes in the Senate. At the time of the writing of this report, the Freedom to Vote Act is

scheduled for its first procedural vote, but will need to overcome the filibuster in order to pass out of the Senate and head to the House.

In voting rights litigation, state Leagues and LWFVUS continue to play a leadership role by mounting judicial challenges to state laws designed to make it harder for people to vote. LWFVUS and state Leagues actively opposed voter photo ID laws, advocated against barriers to the voter registration process, worked to prevent last-minute Election Day obstacles, and helped millions of voters get the information and any required documentation they need to vote.

In September 2019, the League officially launched our People Powered Fair Maps™ initiative, uniting the Leagues of all 50 states and the District of Columbia together for a coordinated national organizing and education effort to end partisan gerrymandering through ballot initiatives, legislative and constitutional fixes, and work to create district maps that are fair and reflective of the communities they serve.

The LWFVUS has also supported full funding for the census. The League was an official partner with the U.S. Census Bureau and worked with partners to get the best count available in as many underrepresented communities as possible.

As redistricting came under way following the release of data in August 2021, Leagues jumped into action to get information to voters and communities to participate in the redistricting process. With the COVID-19 pandemic still impacting the world, some Leagues worked to safely hold virtual redistricting shadow hearings, virtual testimony-writing “parties,” and worked to apply pressure in states where the redistricting governing body fell short of being as inclusive as possible in the redistricting process. Leagues have reported monthly on their progress and in Spring 2022, the LWFVUS will release an impact report outlining our success in this national effort.

In addition, the League continues to do litigation work relevant to the Making Democracy Work® campaign. The 2020 election led to the League’s busiest litigation year with 77 cases filed in 37 states all to increase voter access,

encourage greater voter participation leading to protecting more than 25 million voters. Between July and October 2021, the League has filed 5 cases challenging anti-voter laws around the country, 3 cases to further redistricting reform, 2 money in politics cases, and more than a dozen cases dealing with other critical issues relating to voter protection and access. Because of the tremendous growth of the litigation portfolio of Leagues across the country, LWVUS is launching the first ever legal center in winter of 2021, to make it easier for Leagues and the public to keep abreast of the work being done across the country.

Finally, Leagues around the country have played leadership roles in their communities, legislatures, and courts in all aspects of Making Democracy Work[®]. At the local, state, and federal level, our work on voter protection and mobilization, election reform, money in politics and redistricting is at the heart of the League's mission and its future.

2022 and Beyond

As we look to the future, our programmatic work is more important now than ever. Local and state Leagues and the LWVUS have made progress in the campaign for Making Democracy Work[®] but our work is not finished. The League continues to be up to the challenge to advance these priorities.

Additional information on the campaign for **Making Democracy Work[®]** is available at www.lwv.org.

Expanding Voter Access

<https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/expanding-voter-access>

Fighting Voter Suppression

<https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/fighting-voter-suppression>

Money in Politics

<https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/money-politics>

Redistricting

<https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/redistricting>

Report Form

The deadline for submitting online report forms is March 1, 2022. No offline report forms will be accepted. The report form is located on the LWWUS League Management website in the Convention section. Substantive questions include:

- 1. Do you support the proposed program focus, continuing the Campaign for Making Democracy Work[®] (which includes Voting Rights, Improving Elections, Redistricting and Money in Politics)? (Yes/No).**
- 2. Would you like to recommend another program item, in addition to or instead of the Campaign for Making Democracy Work[®]? (Yes/No) Please provide a statement (300 words or less) describing the scope of your recommendation, including a description of the issue area, its importance in advancing the League's mission as well as resources needed to carry out the recommendation.**
- 3. Which areas of the 2020-2022 national program priorities (Voting Rights, Improving Elections, Money in Politics, Redistricting) within the Campaign for Making Democracy Work[®] has your League worked on during the current biennium? Select all that apply.**
- 4. Which LWWUS Positions does your League use to act at the state and local level? Please check all that apply. (For more detail on LWWUS positions, see Resources section.)**

LWWUS Positions

- Citizen's Right to Vote
- DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation
- Apportionment
- Redistricting
- Money in Politics (Formerly Campaign Finance)
- Selection of the President
- Voter Representation/Electoral Systems
- Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation
- Constitutional Amendment Proposals
- Constitutional Conventions

- Individual Liberties
- Public Policy on Reproductive Choices
- Congress
- The Presidency
- Privatization
- United Nations
- Trade
- Developing Countries
- Arms Control
- Military Policy and Defense Spending
- Natural Resources
- Resource Management
- Transfer of Federal Public Lands
- Air Quality
- Solid Waste
- Nuclear Waste
- Climate Change
- Water Resources
- Nuclear Issues
- Public Participation
- Agriculture Policies
- Equality of Opportunity
- Employment
- Fair Housing
- Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action
- Pay Equity
- Equal Rights for Women
- Same Gender Equality
- Education
- Federal Role in Public Education
- Fiscal Policy
- Funding of Entitlements
- Health Care
- Immigration
- Meeting Basic Human Needs
- Income Assistance
- Transportation
- Housing Supply
- Child Care
- Early Intervention for Children at Risk

- Violence Prevention
- Gun Policy
- Urban Policy
- Death Penalty
- Sentencing Policy
- Human Trafficking

5. Please provide anything else you would like to share on Program Planning. Keep your response to 300 words or less.

Program Planning Resources

League Update

Make sure that you are subscribed to the League Update, a bimonthly report from LWVUS. Leading up to Convention 2022, there will be updated information on Program Planning and Convention. This is an essential tool for keeping up to date on Program Planning. You can sign up for the League Update by going to the League Management site where you will find most of the resources for your program planning meeting, including webinars.

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management>

Program in League Basics

This section of League Basics provides a description of League program and the program planning process.

<https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2018-07/league-basics.pdf>

Impact on Issues includes all current LWVUS positions and you can access it on the League Management site.

<https://www.lwv.org/impact-issues>

The Summary of Public Policy Positions that is part of Impact on Issues can be found on pages 11-16. This provides a general, broad listing of the areas in which we have positions and gives a concise summary.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

This section outlines the League's DEI Policy and provides ways to conduct program planning using a DEI Lens. This application guidance should be used as you ensure and increase member understanding of program.

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/dei-resources/dei-lens>

League of Women Voters of the United States Bylaws

LWVUS Bylaws Section 12. Program and Principles set out the bylaws that govern the program planning process.

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/bylaws/bylaws-and-certificate-incorporation>

Program Planning Contact : progplan@lwv.org:

Should you have questions about program planning that are not addressed in these resources, feel free to email progplan@lwv.org. These include questions on the program planning process, guidance for Leagues that want to promote an issue for consideration to other Leagues, Program Bylaws, Webinars and League positions.