

AUGUST 17, 2022

Working on Federal Voting Rights in States

Presented by: LWVUS, LWVMT, LWVAL, LWVKY

Agenda

House Keeping/Community Norms/ Intro to the Grant

Reflected on Events Hosted

Kentucky Video

Role of Federal Government/Leading by Example

Lessoned Learned

Questions

Housekeeping

- If you are not speaking, please mute yourself to minimize sound issues.
- Make sure you identify yourself (name, your Local League, & pronouns) when asking questions
- **We will be monitoring the chat box.** If you have any questions or thoughts throughout the call, please feel free to drop them in the chat box.

Community Norms



Bring your full self and limit distractions



Use the chat box to add thoughts, experiences, and/or questions



What is learned here, leaves here



No one knows everything, together we know a lot



Don't yuck my yum

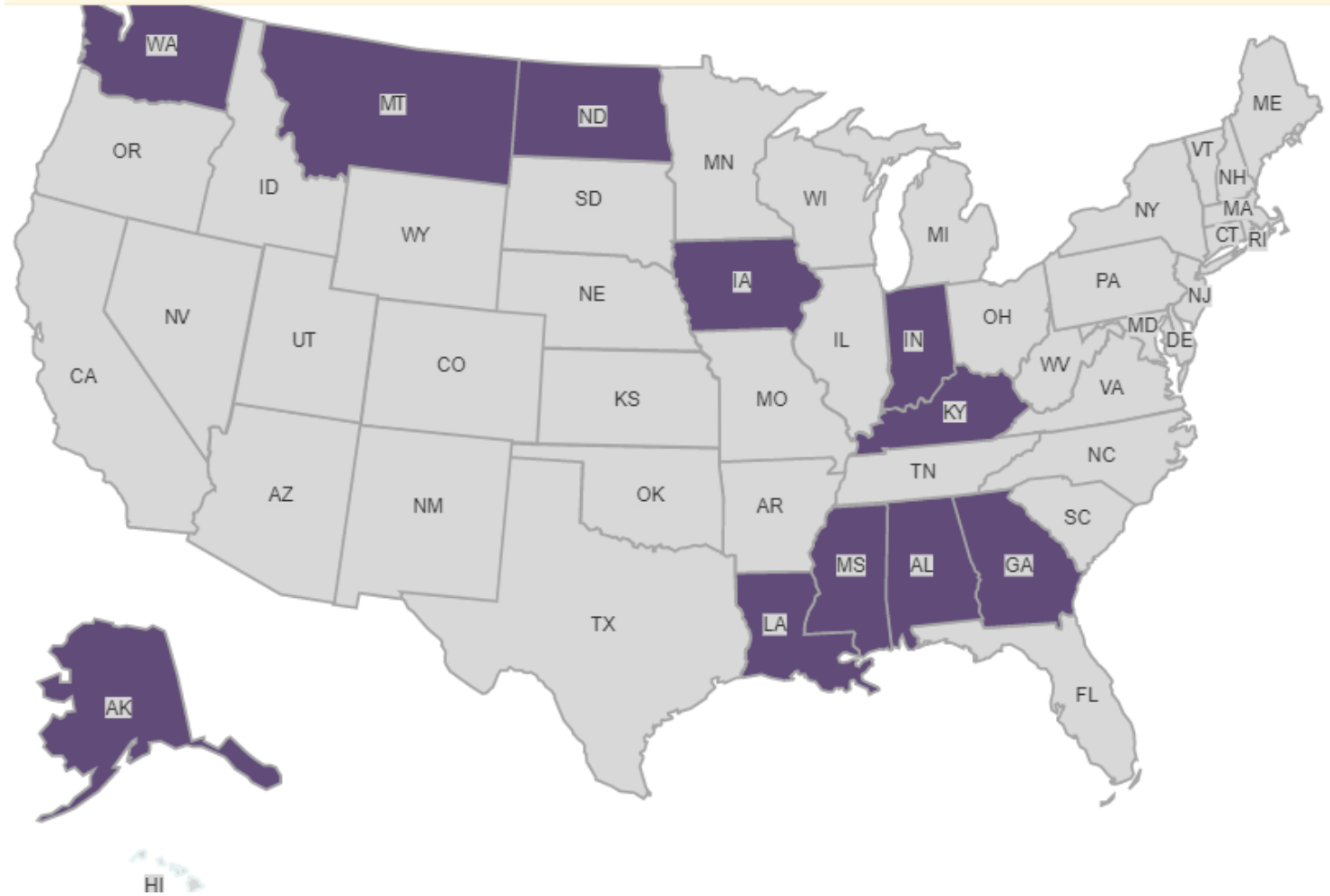


Oops, ouch, and educate



Assume best intentions

Pro-Democracy Grant States



Fast Facts

Total States Engaged	11
Total Funds Distributed	\$100,000
Length of Grant	1 Year
Estimated Reach of Campaign	244,889 people
# of Volunteers Recruited	1,162
# of Volunteer Hours	5,483
# of Events Hosted	168
# of Event Attendees	7,532

Events in Collaboration w/ Brennan Center



Freedom to Vote Act

The Freedom to Vote Act

America's Next Great Civil Rights Bill

**A deep dive with Elizabeth Hira,
Brennan Center for Justice**

Tuesday, November 9 at 6:30 p.m.
<https://bit.ly/Freedom2Vote>

Sponsored by:



In Collaboration with:

- Ames Branch - NAACP
- Black Women 4 Healthy Living
- Children and Families First
- Des Moines Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
- Epsilon Theta Sigma Alumnae Chapter - Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.
- Iota Zeta Omega Chapter - Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.
- League of Women Voters Metro Des Moines Branch
- Nu Mu Theta Chapter - Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.
- Tawasi Federated Women's Club - NACWC



About the Presenter:
Elizabeth Hira [He-nih] "Elizabeth Hira is a Spitzer Fellow and Policy Counsel with the Brennan Center, focusing on large-scale democracy reform that centers equity. Elizabeth worked most recently as a lawyer in the U.S. Congress—first for Senator Kamala Harris developing federal policy on gender equity and civil rights, and later serving on the Committee on House Administration to develop the first version of H.R. 1 for the 116th Congress. Elizabeth has worked globally and domestically on equity for women, children, and underserved communities. She holds a BA from Stanford University and earned her JD at Georgetown Law.



Montana “Stand-In” at local Senator’s Offices

Where:

- Both Senators have local offices in all four League cities: Billings, Bozeman, Helena, and Missoula
- Worked with partner organization in fifth city that had both Senators' offices to add one more location: Great Falls

What did we do:

- Hand-deliver Letter from local and state League to each Senator office supporting For the People Act
- Had all participants also write postcards (“Honk and Wave”

Outcomes:

- Had 67 volunteers show up across 5 locations
- Met with Regional Staff Director for one Senator outside of office and got photos

Montana “Stand-In” at local Senator’s Offices

What Could Have Gone Better:

Offices were closed because of Covid. We should have let them know we were coming beforehand; only connected to Regional Director by coincidence

Sent out press release very close to the day, to avoid potential for “the other side” to show up and create a bad situation- result was no press coverage

Some offices were on second floor in the back of buildings – hard to tie our presence on the street with Senator

Some offices didn’t have mail slots to leave letter and postcards – so we wrote up description of what we did and sent it with letter and postcards via certified mail to Senator’s office

Montana "Stand-In" at Senators Offices

Helena Office



Helena Office



Missoula Office



Missoula Co-Presidents w/ Regional Director



Kentucky MLK Day Event



Rally FOR VOTING RIGHTS

"VOTING IS PEOPLE POWER"

WHEN: January 15 - Dr. Martin Luther King's Birthday

WHERE: Shake Rag Historic District
301 State Street | Bowling Green, KY

TIME: 12:00 Noon

SPEAKER: Professor Joshua A. Douglas

Professor Joshua A. Douglas is the Ashland-Spears, Inc. Distinguished Research Professor of Law at the University of Kentucky where he teaches and researches election law and voting rights. He is the author of *Vote for US: How to Take Back our Elections and Change the Future of Voting*, a popular press book that provides hope and inspiration for a positive path forward on voting rights.

Come hear the facts about the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the Freedom to Vote Act!

VOTING IS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT!

EVENT SPONSORS:





ACTION HOUR for DEMOCRACY:

Fight for the Freedom to Vote &
John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Acts

Virtual Event | Monday, 12/6 | 6 pm PT



Description

Early December event attempting to pressure the Senate to postpone their December recess until they passed key federal democracy legislation.

This event was organized and billed as a virtual "Action Hour for Democracy" rather than another virtual rally. Rather than a series of speeches, the focus was on coaching people through taking action during the event.

ACTION HOUR for DEMOCRACY:

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Outcomes

- Attendees: 187 registrations total, with 118 people who attended at least part of the event
- Dozens of letters to the editor written
- More than 300 messages sent to our elected officials and other influential figures.
- More than 90% of attendees pledged to keep speaking up for voting rights, as well as recruit others to do the same.

ACTION HOUR for DEMOCRACY:

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Lessons Learned

- Scheduling "Action Time" increases advocacy
- Explicit instruction on how to take action is useful and appreciated
- The "teacher" needs to be dynamic
- Have one or two high profile speakers to increase attendance
- Partner with local Leagues to increase outreach/attendance

Wednesday Nights of Action

“

- We will meet and take action every Wednesday until Voting Rights Legislation is passed!

“

We will use Wednesday Nights of Action to productively build our action alert skills so that the Montana League is nimble and ready for the future!

- **Montana League Member**

LWV Kentucky VRAA Video

MITCH MCCONNELL



(502) 582-6304

RAND PAUL



(270) 782-8303

▶ ▶ | 🔊 0:56 / 1:00

PAID FOR BY A GRANT FROM THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES

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Role of Federal Government: Leading by Example

The situation on the ground

- Many state governments do not support equality and democratic principals
- State-level LWV advocacy is focused on fighting for basic voting rights, opposing deliberate violations of federal law, or pushing recalcitrant governments to provide transparency and accountability.
- The problems can seem overwhelming on the ground
- Voters often don't understand of the responsibilities of elected leaders and the government in elections and voting.
- There are many examples where politics, power, and money ensure problems are not fixed equitably.

Role of the Federal Government/ Leading By Example – Attempts to Fix At the State Level

- Including Local Leagues and members in state Advocacy plans
- Standing together with organizational and individual allies to identify problems and call for change
- Educating voters to understand the issues and the critical importance of voting and fair elections
- Learning from the network of state LWV leaders who are often facing similar challenges
- Engaging with elected leaders at the state level

Role of the Federal Government/ Leading By Example – How we are going to finally secure full voting rights and fair elections

- The state level voter suppression and gerrymandering across the country makes it obvious that the only meaningful solution is for a federal law to protect voting rights, public education, and racial equity.
- State LWVs can connect the dots with the issues and how the federal laws could make life better in their states
- We are stronger together, with active support from local, state and national Leagues working with local, state and national partners to push for national legislation



Lessons Learned





Questions