

Worksheet:

Setting Priorities and Assessing Your League's Advocacy Capacity

This worksheet is designed to guide you through assessing your League's advocacy capacity and help you identify and define your advocacy priorities.

Brainstorming Issues and Possible Priorities

First, use the numbered lines in the table below to make a list of policy issues that are affecting your community — all of the issues that could possibly make up your priorities list for the year. These can be a combination of issues under the campaign for Making Democracy Work[®] as well as issues outside of that umbrella, like social issues.

1. example: State Voting Rights Act	10.
2.	11.
3.	12.
4.	13.
5.	14.
6.	15.
7.	16.
8.	17.
9.	18.

Then, reflect on each item by asking the following questions from *Impact on Issues*:

- a. Does the League have a position that supports the proposed issue?
- b. Is there broad member understanding and agreement on this issue?
- c. Does the League have a unique role to play or a chance to take the lead on this issue?
- d. Are other organizations or a coalition already working on the issue?
- e. Is this issue a good use of the League's resources (time and money)?
- f. Is the timing right? Is action on this issue likely in the present time frame?

Record your notes on each of these questions in the table below, using a blank table for each policy issue. [Click here](#) for a blank form with these questions.

Name of policy issue to potentially prioritize:
a. Does the League have a position that supports the proposed issue?
b. Is there broad member understanding and agreement on this issue?
c. Does the League have a unique role to play or a chance to take the lead on this issue?
d. Are other organizations or a coalition already working on the issue?
e. Is this issue a good use of the League's resources (time and money)?
f. Is the timing right? Is action on this issue likely in the present time frame?

For issues that are not covered in *Impact on Issues* and are outside of the Campaign for Making Democracy Work®, we ask whether the policy issue: (1) is an unforeseen or unexpected crisis, and (2) requires an immediate response, or (3) poses a significant risk of harm to many.

Now, sort your priority list based on your answers to the prioritization questions (maybe your highest-priority policy issue has the most “yes” answers to the above questions, but that isn’t a requirement).

If issues are “tied” or many issues seem to be of an equal priority level, consider these additional questions:

- Do any of our listed policy issues have a DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) component?
Consider prioritizing policy issues that disproportionately impact historically marginalized communities whenever possible. See page 3 of Impact on Issues for a guide to “Applying Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Lens to Our Work.”
- Is this an issue that the League has specific expertise on? i.e. voting rights and elections
Consider leaning into the League’s legacy of work on voting rights work and issues under the campaign for Making Democracy Work®. This leverages the League’s credibility as a century seasoned organization in this space.
- Where can we make the most impact?
Consider prioritizing policy issues where your League can make the most impact.
- How much time will it require? How many hours a week/month would need to be dedicated to

After asking all of these questions, rewrite your policy issues in order of priority, with 1 being the highest priority.

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|----|-----|
| 1. | 10. |
| 2. | 11. |
| 3. | 12. |
| 4. | 13. |
| 5. | 14. |
| 6. | 15. |
| 7. | 16. |
| 8. | 17. |
| 9. | 18. |

Your League's Capacity

When setting your priorities, assessing your organization's capacity is critical. Now, let's estimate the capacity of your volunteer/League member network during your legislative session.

- How many hours per week can each volunteer dedicate to advocacy?
 - Add up the total number of weekly volunteer hours available.
- If your League has paid staff or interns: How many hours per week can paid staff/interns dedicate to advocacy?
 - Add up the total number of weekly leadership/staff hours available.
- Total = _____ hours available for League advocacy per week during the legislative session

Other considerations:

- Do your volunteers have the skill sets necessary to conduct all of the advocacy actions required by your priority list?
- Which individuals have the leadership skills to set up and lead lobbying meetings with legislators?

Time Required for Advocacy

Now, we need to estimate how much time per week it would take to engage on each policy issue you identified on your priority list. Consider how much time it takes to:

- Meet with legislators
- Meet with partners
- Read and analyze legislation
- Travel to the capitol
- Write a letter on a policy issue
- Write testimony and prepare for a hearing

Final List of Policy Priorities

Now that you have an estimate of how much time each policy issue would take, you can compare the number of hours of capacity provided by your volunteer base and pare down your priority list accordingly.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

What happens when we don't have enough capacity to take on all of our priority issues?

There always seems to be more work to be done than time to do it! Here are some strategies that can help you save time so that you can still take action on lower-priority issues:

- Participate in a sign-on letter led by a trusted partner
- Leverage LWVUS' tools for Leagues
 - [Quorum bill tracking](#)
 - [Trends from 2023 Legislative Sessions](#)
 - Make sure you are [signed up for League Update newsletter from LWVUS](#)
 - [League Management Site voting rights talking points](#)
 - [Calendar](#) (upcoming events, [webinars](#), office hours, field events/calls)
- For any questions regarding advocacy work, please contact advocacy@lww.org