



November 28, 2024

Lauren Stocker
Deputy Associate Director, Performance and Personnel Management,
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St NW
Washington, DC 20503

Re: Request for Feedback on Draft Materials for Broadening Public Participation and Community Engagement with the Federal Government

Dear Deputy Associate Director Stocker:

On behalf of the League of Women Voters of the United States (the League), we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Office of Management and Budget's draft memorandum and toolkit outline. Public participation and transparency are key priorities for the League, and we appreciate OMB's work to draft these documents to improve public participation with federal agencies.

The League is a 104-year-old nonpartisan nonprofit committed to ensuring that everyone is represented in our democracy. We are a grassroots group comprised of over one million members and supporters in all fifty states and the District of Columbia across over 700 local and state Leagues. The League focuses on advocacy, education, litigation, and organizing to achieve our mission to empower voters and defend democracy. We base our work on our policy positions developed out of multi-year studies and derived through consensus by League membership, to ensure our advocacy reflects best practices and a nationwide perspective.

The League has worked for the public's right to know and for broad public participation in government as a necessary component of decision-making at all levels of government since its founding. League Principles require that "government bodies protect the public's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible." The League believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government.

The League supports the recurring themes of accessibility, transparency, and inclusivity in the toolkit and the memo. The League believes that officials should make a special effort to develop readily understandable procedures for public involvement and to ensure that the public has adequate information to participate effectively. Public records should be readily accessible at all governmental levels. Additionally, adequate funding is needed to ensure opportunities for public education and effective public participation in all aspects of the decision-making process.



Hearings should be held in easily accessible locations, at convenient times, and, when possible, in the area concerned. The hearing procedures and other opportunities for public comment should actively encourage citizen participation in decision-making. Mechanisms for citizen appeal must be guaranteed, including access to the courts and due process rights for the affected public and private parties must be assured.

The League of Women Voters of the United States appreciates the opportunity to comment on OMB's draft materials for broadening public participation and community engagement with the federal government. For questions, please feel free to reach out to our staff via Kristen Kern, federal policy and advocacy manager, at kkern@lwv.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Jones Capparell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jessica Jones Capparell
Director, Government Affairs
League of Women Voters of the US