

# Member Bulletin



## A Note From the President, September 2021

Where are the marches, the rallies, where is the outrage?

Are we really prepared to allow people to limit a fundamental freedom, our freedom to vote?

Without the freedom to vote, we are rendered voiceless. For those specific issues that each of us care deeply about, for which we march and raise signs, rally friends, over which we lose sleep - for each and every one of those issues we are in danger of losing our voice.

Without the freedom to vote we are powerless in our passion. We are unable to make change. We are silenced.

Across the country, state governments are passing laws that limit and deny the freedom to vote. We need national standards to protect all voters, so that no matter where we live we all have the same freedom to vote. We all have a voice.

We must be outraged. We must be insistent. Leaguers know the power of grassroots activation. Let's use it right now. Today. Each one of us.

The US Senate is working hard to pass the Freedom to Vote Act, the latest version of voter rights protection. We start fresh. We call and we activate.

Please call our senators and tell them three things:

1. it is imperative that the Freedom to Vote Act pass
2. it is imperative that we achieve filibuster reform
3. thank you for your work to represent us

Senator Dick Durbin  
202-224-2152 DC office  
312-353-4952 Chicago office

Senator Tammy Duckworth  
202-224-3854 DC office  
312-886-3506 Chicago office

Please call ten friends, ask them to do the same thing.  
Spread the energy, the urgency, the outrage. Do not let anyone take away your voice.



[Allyson E. Haut, Ph.D.](#)

President

League of Women Voters of Illinois



VOTING  
RIGHTS  
FOR THE  
PEOPLE

## Freedom to Vote Act

The League of Women voters strongly supports the new Freedom to Vote Act (FTVA) that was introduced in the Senate last week.

By streamlining the voting provisions and scaling back some of the campaign finance provisions of the For the People Act, legislators have presented a compromise in an attempt to garner the 60 votes needed to bypass the filibuster and move forward.

Given the current makeup of the Senate, the bill is expected to move forward on the following path: In the next few days there will be a procedural vote to allow discussion of the bill. This vote is expected to fail and discussion will be halted. At that point, the Senate will need to move on to other legislation in order to avoid impending budgetary deadlines. The FTVA will be temporarily set aside. When it is taken up again, the Senate may need to consider filibuster reform in order to pass the bill.

**Voting rights legislation must remain on the Senate's radar** . The League will continue to advocate for filibuster reform as a path forward. National voting rights must remain a legislative priority.

## Take Action!

Every senator in *every state* must be contacted and urged to protect our freedom to vote and reform the filibuster. Tell Senators [Durbin](#) and [Duckworth](#) that process must not stand in the way of progress. Then contact at least ten friends and ask them to contact *their* senators, no matter where they live.

The Freedom to Vote Act is historic in scope, introducing voting rights and anti-corruption measures unlike anything passed in more than 50 years. It carries over and strengthens many of the provisions the League supported in the For the People Act. The bill sets national standards for voting rights, bans partisan gerrymandering of congressional districts, and offers first steps toward a more equitable campaign finance system with a small donor matching system.



The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the FTVA work together. Both are necessary to protect against discriminatory voting laws that have recently been enacted, restricting ballot access in at least 18 states. Establishing national standards will override more restrictive state laws and make it easier to legally challenge voter rights violations.

Some key provisions of the FTVA that would improve Illinois elections include:

- Requiring paper ballots to counteract hacking and ensure an accurate recount for federal elections
- Providing for bipartisan redistricting
- Requiring campaign finance disclosures to show the influence of dark money on elections

The [Brennan Center for Justice breaks down](#) the Freedom to Vote Act and the League's Jessica Jones Capparell [details the bill's provisions](#). Inform yourself and be a resource for others.



## National Voter Registration Day: Did You Know? Tuesday, September 28

- This national civic holiday was first observed in 2012
- More than 4.5 million voters have been registered on NVRD in the past 8 years
- 1.5 million voters were registered in 2020 alone
- Thousands of organizations mobilize more than 20,000 volunteers for this single-day effort
- 2020 Census data shows that as many as 1 in 4 eligible Americans are not registered to vote
- Don't miss watching this NVRD recording: [Talking to Voters on NVRD](#), discussing new and innovative ways to get voters to register.



## Voting in Jail

## Citizens in pre-trial detention have a right to vote in Illinois

Illinois Statute provides that:

- Each election authority shall collaborate with the county jail to facilitate voter registration and voting by mail for voters eligible to vote in the county who are confined or detained in the county jail.
- In a county with a population of less than 3,000,000, the sheriff may establish a temporary branch polling place at the county jail. Eligibility is limited to county residents who are in custody at the county jail and who have not been convicted of the offense for which they are in custody.

**Learn More! Tuesday, November 2, 10:00 am**

### Protecting Pretrial Detainees' Right to Vote

Join this Zoom discussion and learn how to work with your election authority and county sheriff to protect the right of citizens in pre-trial detention to register and vote.

We will hear from Chicago Votes, whose representatives have been registering voters and enabling vote by mail or in-person voting at Cook County jails since 2020. They will present their *Guide to Registering in Jails* and talk about their path to success in Cook County.

Registration required. The event link will be sent a day in advance.



### Illinois Clean Energy Bill Leads the Nation

By signing the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) into law this month, Governor Pritzker put Illinois on the map as a national leader in energy policy. This clean energy bill will transition Illinois to 100% clean energy by 2050, all while creating jobs in communities most affected by the climate crisis.

LWVIL is one of the many organizations that have worked hard for nearly three years to make this a reality. Key provisions allowing Illinois to reach 100% renewable energy by 2050 include the following:

#### Decarbonizing the electric power sector

- Fossil fuel plants have to meet zero emissions goals. Possible paths to zero emissions include shutting down plants or developing new carbon-capture technology. CEJA includes provisions for the study of carbon capture technology.
- All private coal and oil plants will close by 2030. Public plants must cut emissions by 45% by 2035. If they fail, they must close by 2038. If they succeed, they can run until 2045.
- All natural gas plants will close between 2030 and 2045. Those that impact environmental justice communities the most will close first. New plants and



those still being built will close last.

- Support for three of ComEd's carbon-neutral nuclear plants will be almost \$700 million, to be paid out over a five-year period.

### **Increasing renewable energy**

- Renewable energy levels of 40% by 2030 and 50% by 2040 are to be achieved by investing \$580 million annually in wind and solar power.
- The Future Energy Jobs Act solar incentive program will be opened immediately.
- The Solar for All program, serving low-income and environmental justice communities, is expanded from \$10 to \$50 million per year.

### **Implementing community support initiatives**

- Thirteen workforce and business development hubs to be created across the state.
- Forty million dollars to be invested annually in community transition support.
- Electric utilities are required to file plans to support the rapid deployment of electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.
- CEJA creates a workers' "bill of rights," extends Energy Efficiency programs, and establishes a new Illinois Green Bank.

[Read more about CEJA.](#)

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## **Observer Training**

**Wednesday, October 6, 7:00 pm**

The League's trained Observer Corps are a respected part of the community— they work to keep local governments accountable and community members informed. Attend this evening training session via Zoom. [Registration required.](#) The event link will be sent a day in advance.

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## **LWV Lake Michigan Region Annual Meeting and Conference**

**Friday–Saturday, October 15–16**

**Spring House Inn, Porter, IN**

**Attend in-person or via Zoom**

Let's talk Lake Michigan! As a LWVIL member, you're also a member of LWV Lake Michigan Region Inter League Organization (ILO). Learn more about the LMR ILO.

[Registration required.](#)

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## **LWVUS Workshop: Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement**

**October 21, 2:00 pm**

Join LWVUS, LWV California, and National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement to learn more about the latest research on law enforcement. Find out about available resources for Leagues looking to get started in this important area of community collaboration. [Registration required.](#)

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## Forum Training

**Tuesday, November 9, 10:00 am**

The League is considered the expert in presenting non-partisan, informative candidate forums. Learn the steps to planning a successful candidate forum (includes how-to tips for holding a virtual forum on zoom). [Registration required](#). The event link will be sent a day in advance.

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## Moderator Training

**Tuesday, November 16, 10:00 am**

Well-moderated candidate forums are a League hallmark thanks to well-trained moderators! Learn how to facilitate a fair, informative, respectful, and inclusive forum. [Registration required](#). The event link will be sent a day in advance.

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## Event Calendar

Connect with local Leagues across the state. Post and find virtual candidate forums and other educational events on the LWVIL website's [event calendar](#).

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Thank you for supporting our work to defend democracy and empower voters.



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