

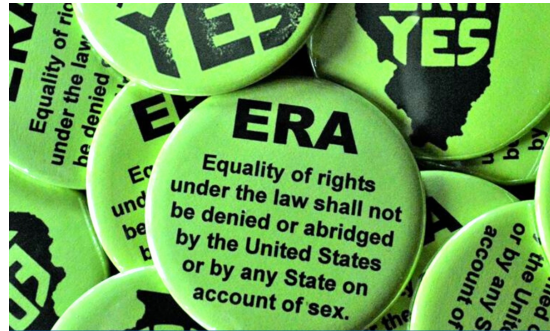
News You Can Use

DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT

March 2023

What better way to start Women's History month than with the US Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on [affirming ratification](#) of the Equal Rights Amendment! If you haven't had a chance, take a look at the hearing – it's powerful.

You will be grateful to be represented by our own Senator Durbin and Lt. Governor Julianna Stratton. Senators Lisa Murkowski and Ben Cardin powerfully demonstrated that bipartisanship is alive and well. And college student Thursday Williams spoke truth to power so eloquently that you can't help but feel hope for our future. This is women's history in the making!



Congress must recognize ratification and enshrine equality in our US Constitution.

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'
OF ILLINOIS

[Watch the hearing](#) (Senator Durbin gavel in at 00:16:40)

Here at home you can be the difference by rallying support for [House Joint Resolution 20](#) (HJR0020). This bill in the Illinois General Assembly affirms the ERA and calls for publication of our 28th Amendment. Please [contact your legislators!](#) Tell them you think the ERA belongs in our constitution – ask them to support HJR0020 and sign on as a co-sponsor.

In closing, I urge you to use your power this election season. Vote. Then hold people accountable – your friends, family and neighbors. Ask them if they have voted, or when they plan to vote. Participating in democracy is our right and privilege.

Allyson

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

President

League of Women Voters of Illinois

Fifty eight years ago this week, peaceful protesters on the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma, Alabama were attacked by state troopers. The day, known as Bloody Sunday, led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 the following August. This defining moment in our nation's history is commemorated every year with a reenactment of that peaceful march - as we voice our commitment to a nationally protected right to vote. Our democracy's survival demands that elections are free, fair, and accessible to all.

**The threshold
of democracy
and liberty
is local.**

VOTE

The right to vote – the right to vote and have your vote counted, is the threshold of democracy and liberty. With it, anything is possible. Without it – without that right, nothing is possible. And this fundamental right remains under assault.

*President Joe Biden
March 5, 2023
Edmund Pettus Bridge*

Local Elections Mean Voting POWER

Community Impact

Civic engagement is at the heart of local elections. Here is where those running for office are often, quite literally, the neighbors of those who will cast ballots for/against them; where the children of candidates go to school with the children of voters; and where the daily lives of both candidates and voters will be similarly affected by the election outcome.

Local elections affect the local infrastructure in ways that impact voters every single day – garbage pick-up, stop signs, water quality, street repairs, job development, fire departments, school boards, police funding – these are the purview of local governments.

Voters are more likely to speak with their local mayor, president, park district or school board member, than they are to meet the US President or their US Senator or Representative. And yet, voter turnout for local elections is usually low. Community members who do not vote are giving power to those who do vote.

It's About the Numbers

Not only do voters have a greater likelihood of knowing their candidates in a local election, voters may actually have a greater impact at the ballot box in a local election. Why? Because instead of being one voter among hundreds of thousands, they are often one among hundreds. The numbers mean that even if everyone in the community votes, each vote weighs more than in a US presidential election.

Unfortunately, everyone does not usually vote. In fact, historical trends show local election voter turnout rates of 30% or less. A mere handful of votes can often mean the difference between winning or losing a local election.

All of this means that in a local election, there is a great opportunity for people who cast ballots to make sure their next officials reflect their viewpoints.

After the election

It's still about the numbers. In local government, there are fewer constituents per official, which usually means that local officials are more responsive to public needs and opinions. People who engage with their local officials – by sending emails, making phone calls, letting them know what they want – are very likely to be heard.

Use your voice

Community engagement is ultimately an expression of democracy. Every day actions are votes for the kind of community you want to live in.



Chicago Mayoral debate

Thursday, March 16, 7:00 pm

Mayoral runoff candidates Brandon Johnson and Paul Vallas will face each other in the ABC 7 studios in front of a live audience on March 16, in a debate using LWV of Illinois guidelines.

Continuing a decades-long relationship, the LWV of Illinois and LWV of Chicago are partnering with ABC7 and Univision for the 2023 Chicago mayoral debate. The League collaborates with ABC7 in crafting candidate invitations, establishing ground rules, creating candidate questions, and assisting in the studio with timing.

The commercial-free debate will stream live at 7:00pm on March 16 on [abc7chicago.com](https://www.abc7chicago.com), ABC7's digital stream, and will air on the station's digital channel 7.2. The debate will air on ABC7's main channel on Friday, March 17 at 10:35pm as well as Sunday, March 19 at 4pm. The debate will be translated and will air live on Univision's digital platforms and on Univision TV on a later date.



**MAYOR/
PRESIDENT**



**CITY COUNCIL/
BOARD**



SCHOOL BOARD

Candidate Forums

This spring, Local Leagues across the state are holding hundreds of forums for the consolidated elections, giving voters an opportunity to hear candidates' unscripted responses to community questions.

Find forum times and dates on the [LWV of Illinois](#) website. Forums are held on zoom, in person, live streamed, and usually recorded, making them widely accessible. Candidate forum recordings, when available, are posted on the [LWV of Illinois](#) website and in the [Illinois Voter Guide](#).

League forums are nonpartisan and equitable for all candidates. All forums are conducted using established guidelines and participating candidates sign an agreement regarding forum ground rules. Forum moderators are League-trained and reside outside the local district.

VOTE

IllinoisVoterGuide.org



The LWV of Illinois brings you the voter information you need, no matter where in the state you live! Go to the one-stop IllinoisVoterGuide.org to:

- check your registration
- learn how & where to vote
- find your polling place and drop box locations
- see your ballot
- learn about candidates—their bios, endorsements, and stances on issues (coming soon)
- Watch forum recordings for contested elections

**What
races
are
covered?**

IllinoisVoterGuide.org covers the following races in towns with populations of 10,000 or more:

- Mayor/President
- Clerk
- Treasurer
- City Council/Alderspersons

All School Board Elections are covered—statewide.

Check out the election calendar—early voting has begun!



Consolidated Election Day April 4

**Your vote is
your voice.
Use it!**

January 4

- First day to apply for a vote by mail ballot.

February 23

- First day to vote early at the office of the election authority.
- First day for the election authority to mail an official ballot to a registered voter within the United States.

March 8

- First day of grace period for in person registration and voting at an election authority and early voting sites; continues through election day.

March 10

- First day to vote early or by mail if a primary was held in your election jurisdiction.

March 19

- Last day for online voter registration. Grace period in person registration available at election authority and early voting sites.

March 20

- First day to vote early at permanent polling places. (Vote early at the office of the election authority starting February 23)

March 30

- Last day for election authority to receive vote by mail applications

April 4

- **Election Day!** Polls open from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm.



Illinois General Assembly is in session. Make sure your legislators know what you want. Contact them today.

The 103rd Illinois General Assembly's first session is underway and thousands of bills have been put forth in both the House and Senate.

Of those thousands, the LWV of Illinois will focus on bills that are aligned with our mission and positions. In particular, LWV of Illinois is working in coalition with other organizations in support of the following bills:

Education Funding

[SB2006/HB2792](#) increases the minimum funding level for Illinois' K-12 Evidence-Based Funding formula to \$550 Million annually. [See the fact sheet.](#)

Equal Rights Amendment

[HJR0020](#) – Affirms the Equal Rights Amendment, urges the Administration of President Biden to publish and certify ERA as the 28th Amendment and Congress to pass a joint resolution affirming the ERA as the 28th Amendment. Calls on other states to join in this action by passing the same or similar resolutions.

Housing Equity

[HB1569/SB0242](#) – requires sealing a court file for an eviction if the case is dismissed, the tenant wins, etc.

[HB2044/SB1737](#) – Build Illinois Homes Tax Credit Act, provides that owners of qualified low-income housing developments are eligible for credits against income taxes.

Juvenile Justice

[HB2128](#) – Ends the automatic transfer of juvenile offenders to an adult court if they turn 18 before their case has been heard in a juvenile court.

[HB2328](#) – Raises the age of pretrial detention to 14 years from 10 years.

[HB2347](#) – Raises the age of incarceration to 14 years from 13 years.

Schools

[SB90/HB2049](#) – Racism-Free Schools Act, introduced by Senator Laura Murphy and Representative Maurice West, to prevent and address racial harassment in schools. Representative West recently spoke about the bill during a [session on racism in schools](#) as part of the LWV of Illinois' annual Issues Briefing.

Voting Rights

[HB2446](#) – Allows 16 year olds to pre-register to vote and be automatically registered when they become eligible to vote. Illinois law provides that 17 year olds can vote in a primary election providing they will be 18 at the time of the corresponding general election.

[Contact your legislators now](#)

**Power democracy
statewide**

[Donate Now](#)

You can power democracy in Illinois.

Help the League of Women Voters of Illinois protect voting rights and expand access to the ballot,

Support our work. Your gift of any size matters.

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



[Donate](#)

[Join the League!](#)

[View as Webpage](#)

League of Women Voters of Illinois | 332 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 634, Chicago, IL 60604

[Unsubscribe communications@lwvil.org](mailto:communications@lwvil.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by info@lwvil.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!