

News You Can Use

DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT

April 2023

For the LWV of Illinois, it is almost surreal to look ahead and NOT see an election on the horizon. From the primary General Election on June 28, 2022 to the Consolidated Elections on April 4, 2023, there have been four elections in the span of less than a year.

So. All of us filled out our ballots, exercised our rights, made our voices heard. Some of us feel elections were won, others feel they were lost. But now that elections are over, and legislators are in office, we MUST continue to speak up. Our democracy demands it.

Our legislators represent *us*, which means it is up to *us* to let them know what we want. Just as we expressed our opinions at the ballot box, now we need to express our opinions in emails, phone calls, and conversations with those who represent us. It's simple, they are only able to represent the people they hear from.

April 24 is LWV of Illinois Lobby Day, and this year our goal is for every person in the state to participate. Lobby Day is a time to go beyond the ballot box, and make sure you are represented.

Please, check out our [Lobby Day Center](#). Find the issue you care about and make a plan to take action! If you have five minutes, you can make an impact. If you have more time, dig in, learn more, engage and activate others. Use your email and social media platforms. Use your voice.

Civic engagement is the ultimate form of democracy. Our messages to our elected officials are another way to vote for the kind of community we want to live in.

What message will you send? Start with five minutes on April 24.

Allyson



Your voice, your issues, your schedule

Join the LWV of Illinois online on Monday, April 24 to lobby for issues you believe in. Whether you have five minutes or two hours, you can take part! Find everything you need to take action on the LWV of Illinois [Lobby Day website](#):

- Bill numbers & information
- Call scripts
- Social media graphics and posts

Use your power to make a difference

Help make April 24 a statewide day of action. Activate others in your networks to use their time in a way that matters. **More voices, more volume, more impact!**

Your legislators represent you—let them know what you want

Click on the icons below for Lobby Day information and use your voice on April 24!



Voting is the heartbeat of democracy. Help make sure that Illinois continues to protect that heartbeat by speaking up to allow ranked choice voting, protect voting rights for citizens in prison, encourage voter pre-registration for 16 year olds, and end gerrymandering in districts with prisons. Elections must be free, fair and accessible.



No one should be coerced, shamed, or misinformed when seeking healthcare. Ask lawmakers to further protect abortion rights in Illinois by holding anti-abortion fake clinics accountable for fraudulent and deceptive practices. Abortion is healthcare.

April is Earth Month! Make a commitment to take action that matters for the Illinois environment. Join in on April 24 and ask your legislators to eliminate foam containers from the restaurant industry. Then take a stand for



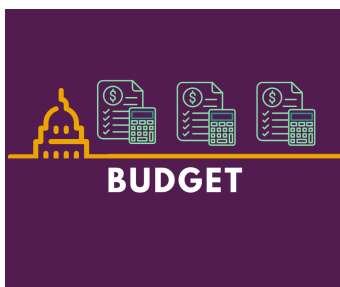
environmental justice by lobbying for safety regulations for both carbon capture and power plant demolition.



Support Illinois' future with laws to ensure equitable access to education for all students. Three bills need your support. Take a stand against book banning in public schools and libraries, support racism-free schools, and promote clean air protections in all schools.



The rights of every citizen should be protected. Pursue justice for those who have completed or are completing their sentences. Ask your legislators to support three bills involving the rights of citizens returning to their communities, juvenile detainees, and citizens serving parole.



It is time to set the state budget for 2023–24. Where are your tax dollars going? Ask your legislators to support measures in budget negotiations that promote fair housing, child tax credits, and equitable access to quality education no matter where you live in Illinois.



Listen to experts!

The LWV of Illinois Issues Briefing is our annual look at current issues through an Illinois lens. **Recordings from the February 2023 event are now available** on the [LWV of Illinois website](#). Learn from community, state, and national experts about the following topics:

- Threats to our elections
- Racism in schools
- Carbon capture and sequestration
- Juvenile justice

- Fair housing
- Gun violence prevention
- Reproductive rights
- How to get a grassroots bill passed



Consolidated Elections 2023: League education in action

Once again, the LWV of Illinois' [Illinois Voter Guide](#) knocked it out of the park for Consolidated Elections. Voters could access nonpartisan candidate information for every school board race, as well as the municipal races for all communities with populations greater than 10,000.

The Illinois Voter Guide covered a total of 6,686 candidates, including those in 134 city mayoral or village president elections. Voters found information in the Illinois Voter Guide on 3,784 school board candidates and 2,768 city council or village board candidates.

Local Leagues stepped up to give voters a chance to see candidates in action, holding live or zoom candidate forums in 114 contested elections, covering 560 candidates. This included the Chicago mayoral debate, conducted with ABC7 and Univision. Recordings were made available on the LWV of Illinois website and in the Illinois Voter Guide.

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.

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

[DONATE NOW](#)

Your dollars go directly to LWV of Illinois' work to educate, advocate and activate—empowering people to use their voices in our democracy.

Join us on the path toward an equitable future. Support the League.

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



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