



# NEWS you can use

Democracy is not a spectator sport

## January 2024

64 new Illinois laws went into effect on January 1, 2024. A particularly important new piece of Illinois election law is SB2123, which LWVIL expects will increase voter turnout! The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. That begins with voting.

The new law allows an individual to pre-register to vote on or after they turn 16. Their voter registration will then stay on file with their local election authority until they turn 18 years old. In short, an individual may register to vote at 16, but they will not receive a ballot until they reach voting age.

The new law also extends the sunset date for the Access to Voting for Persons with Disabilities Advisory Task Force and establishes two new task forces exploring ranked choice voting and the security of remote vote by mail. LWVIL is excited to have Barb Laimins of LWV Wheaton appointed to serve on the Illinois Ranked Choice Voting Task Force.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Simon". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name and email address.

Becky Simon, president

[bsimon@lwvil.org](mailto:bsimon@lwvil.org)



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24

# ISSUES BRIEFING

## Get Briefed on February 24

Join the League of Women Voters of Illinois for our annual look at current issues on **Saturday, February 24!** We'll cover a range of topics, from government corruption to gun violence prevention. Learn from legislators and nonpartisan experts—be informed and prepared so you can advocate for change in your community and state.

This is a hybrid event—join us in person for idea-sharing, networking, and camaraderie (this year we'll gather at Northern Illinois University in Naperville!), or, if you can't make it, tune in from the comfort of home. Tickets are \$10 to attend online or \$20 to attend in person.

[Learn more and register to attend](#)



## Illinois Primary Election Approaches

The 2024 election season is officially upon us. First up this year in Illinois is the [Primary Election](#) on Tuesday, March 19.

### What's on the ballot?

- **Federal:** U.S. President, all U.S. House of Representatives members
- **State:** Some Illinois State Senators and all Illinois State Representatives
- **Judicial:** Illinois Supreme Court, Appellate Court, Circuit Court and Subcircuit Court judges
- **Local:** Some counties will hold elections for their county boards, clerks and water districts
- **Delegates:** Delegates to the national party convention for nominating the party's presidential candidate will be elected in the Primary

**Get ready to vote!**

Use [IllinoisVoterGuide.org](https://IllinoisVoterGuide.org) to register to vote, check on your registration status, sign up to vote by mail, or apply to be a poll worker.



## RIOBY Matters, Too!

It's 2024, and we've made it through another turbulent year. With 2023 firmly behind us, thoughts and energy are shifting to the 2024 General Election. Regardless of your political ideology, the stakes for Americans are high, and keeping a watchful eye on Primary results as we head toward November is prudent.

But it is equally prudent to keep a watchful eye on what is happening RIOBY—Right In Our Backyards!

Reflecting on LWVIL's advocacy initiatives for 2023, we are struck by the number of important matters our state and local Leagues worked on and continue to monitor:

- The city of Evanston passed regulations authorizing use of ranked choice voting in their local elections.
- At least two cities (Danville and Quincy) passed or entertained passing so-called “sanctuary city for the unborn” regulations aimed at restricting legal reproductive rights in Illinois.
- According to American Library Association data, between January and August of 2023 alone, some 22 different attempts were made to ban books in Illinois, including 98 different titles.
- At the 2023 annual meeting of the Illinois Association of School Boards in November, the group voted to support a resolution to fund school resource officers (SROs).
- Thousands of migrants legally seeking asylum arrived in cities across Illinois.

Whether you favor or oppose these policies, as with all actions, the devil is in the details. And that's the point. While it is our mission to make sure that Illinois citizens have access to the polls and stay engaged in the politics of democracy, we ought not abandon our attention on what's happening RIOBY.

Do you know what your local governmental agencies have planned? Stay vigilant. Stay active. The League is here to help. Email us at [issues@lwvil.org](mailto:issues@lwvil.org) with questions or to get involved.



## League in Action

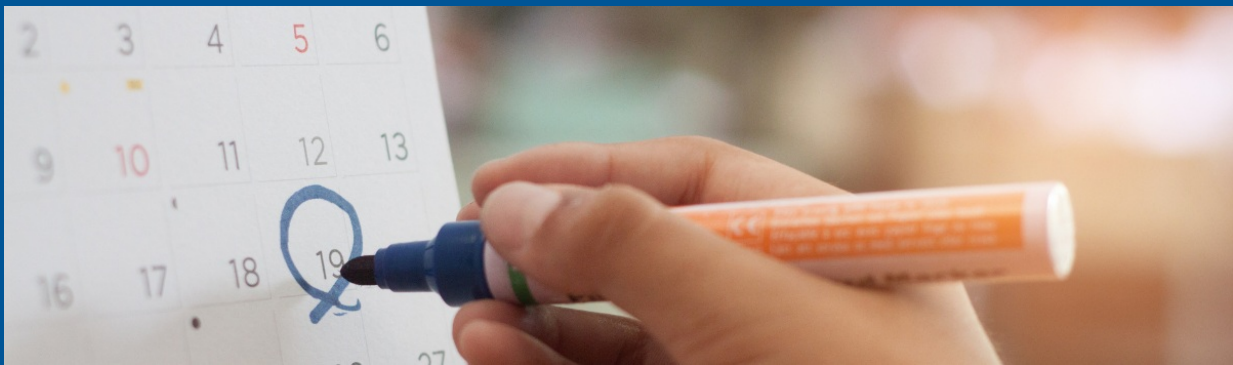
Representing 3600 members across the state, the League teams up with other organizations so that all of our voices are louder. Here's what LWVIL worked on in the final months of 2023:

- Signed onto a letter sponsored by the Economic Security Project supporting a \$300 million Illinois Child Tax Credit.
- Supported LWV Adams County in successfully arguing that the Quincy City Council should vote "NO" to Quincy becoming a so-called Sanctuary City for the Unborn, a status designed to restrict access to reproductive care.
- Issued a witness slip in support of SB0690, which secured the authority of townships to levy taxes for implementation of the 708 Mental Health Boards that were passed by referendum in the last election.
- Assisted LWV Upper Mississippi River Region with an Action Alert seeking the help of local Leagues with contacting selected US House representatives in their areas to promote conservation programs included in the US Farm Bill.
- Signed on to a statement of principles as prepared by the Court Transparency Coalition regarding access to information and transparency in the criminal justice system. Currently, the Illinois judicial branch is not covered under FOIA statutes, so the statement asks the General Assembly to reconsider that position.
- Signed on our support of SB2633 by adding our name to a list of endorsers to a fact sheet prepared by The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence. SB2633 would clarify and strengthen Illinois law by removing firearms from the abuser when a victim of domestic abuse has been granted an order of protection.
- Signed on to a letter to Governor Pritzker requesting additional funding for housing and other supports for the homeless in the FY2025 budget.

## Calling All Amateur Detectives

Help us identify the mystery person in this photo from July, 1997! Reply to this email if you think you've cracked the case.

Left to right: former Congressman Abner Mikva, journalist Laura Washington, Senator Russ Feingold, ???, LWVUS President Becky Coin, LWVIL President Jan Flapan, Senator John McCain.



## Get Informed at League Events

Leagues across the state regularly hold free educational events that are open to the public. Learn more about the issues you care about—[sign up to attend an upcoming event!](#)

**DONATE NOW**

LWV of Illinois is looking for your support for our [Campaign to Safeguard Democracy](#). Our goal is to raise funds for our get-out-the-vote efforts, statewide online voter guide, candidate forums, and campaigns to fight misinformation and disinformation.

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



**Join the League!**

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