



NEWS you can use

Democracy is not a spectator sport

March 2024

The League of Women Voters of the United States's President Sania Irwin issued the following statement after Monday's Supreme Court decision. The unanimous ruling struck down the Colorado Supreme Court's decision that former President Trump is ineligible to appear on the Presidential Primary ballot.

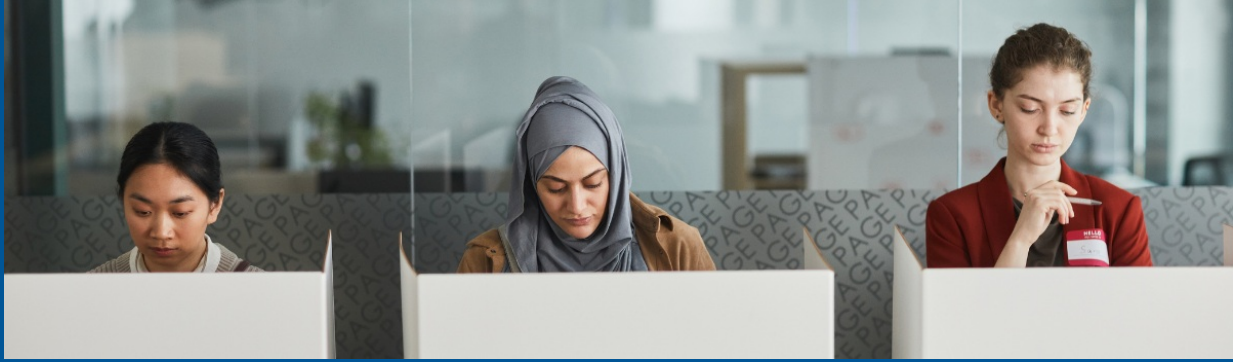
"Today's Supreme Court decision reverses the Colorado Supreme Court's decision to remove former president Donald Trump from the 2024 ballot as unconstitutional. This decision provides guidance to all states grappling with this issue. The court explicitly rules that state courts do not have the authority under Section 3 of the Fourteenth Amendment to disqualify federal candidates from office and that the power to do so rests with Congress.

"The Supreme Court needed to move swiftly to ensure that voters have the clarity they deserve to vote with confidence in the upcoming presidential primary season.

"As a nonpartisan organization, the League of Women Voters is committed to ensuring that voters have the information they need to successfully participate in every election.

"The League of Women Voters remains committed to empowering voters and ensuring more people are fully represented in our democracy."

Becky Simon, president
bsimon@lwvil.org



Tonight! How Illinois Strives to Ensure a Secure Election Process

Join us tonight, March 6, at 7:00 pm for a special pre-election webinar featuring Matt Dietrich, public information officer for the Illinois State Board of Elections (ISBE).

Presented by LWVIL's newly-formed [Misinformation and Disinformation Task Force](#), the event precedes the March 19 Primary Election and is the first of several League webinars where noted authorities will speak on relevant topics leading up to the U.S. Presidential Election on Tuesday, November 5.

[Register to attend](#)



Illinois Primary Election

Illinois' 2024 [Primary Election](#) will be held on Tuesday, March 19. Get ready to vote!

You can now view your 2024 Primary Election ballot and learn about the candidates at [IllinoisVoterGuide.org](#), our one-stop shop for nonpartisan voting information. You can also meet with and learn more about the candidates at League [candidate forums](#).

Vote when it's convenient for you. Early voting is open— [check with your local election authority](#) for locations. You can also [sign up to vote by mail](#).

Online voter registration closed March 3, but voters can still register in person at polling places through Election Day.



A Healthy Democracy Requires Faith in Government

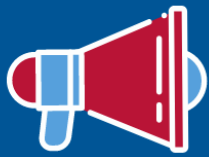
This month, we issued a [press release](#) that strongly encouraged Democrats and Republicans in the state legislature to come together on a bill that would strengthen the authority of an independent Legislative Inspector General. Such a law would increase accountability of legislators to their constituents and be a deterrent to the potential for unethical behavior.

If the League is to truly empower voters, it must work to ensure that voters have faith in their government, and this includes an expectation that our representatives are working on behalf of the interests of the people rather than their own personal interests. It means that voters can have confidence that their representatives are spending tax dollars judiciously without being tempted to divert tax dollars for personal gain. Importantly, it means that voters keep voting because they know the people they elect are working for them.

The League believes that transparency, accountability, and independent oversight of our elected officials is critical to a functioning democracy. As we know too well in Illinois, a few bad apples can spoil faith in the whole system of government. We know that Illinois can do better, and we believe that the current legislative proposals are a good first step.

We support the following basic elements in a full statute addressing an independent Legislative Inspector General:

- An independent reporting structure: The LIG should not report directly or solely to the legislature or other political figures that may be the subject of a potential investigation.
- Protection of the budget: A funding floor protects an LIG from possible reprisals for pursuing unpopular investigations.
- Protection of the LIG: The LIG can only be removed for cause.
- Cooperation agreement: A stipulation that agencies or officials comply with requests, submit documents when asked and don't interfere with investigations. The ability to issue and enforce subpoenas and publish findings are critically important.
- Public Check and Balance: Placing members of the public on the Legislative Ethics Commission, which currently is composed only of legislators, would make the process more transparent and accountable to the public.



ACTION ALERT

Illinois' spring legislative session is [kicking in to high gear](#)! We encourage you to call or email your state legislators in support of the following bills:

Protect Illinois Wetlands (SB3669 / HB5386)

Creates a state program that protects critically important wetlands.

Reduce Single-Use Plastic (HB2376 and HB4448 / SB2211)

Bans foam foodware and plastic carryout bags from Illinois.

Protect Domestic Violence Survivors (HB4469)

Also known as Karina's Bill. Authorizes judges to issue search warrants with orders of protection to remove guns from the hands of abusers.

Collect Candidate Email Addresses (HB4153)

Amends the Election Code to add a line for candidates seeking office to submit an email address where they can be reached when they file their paperwork to run for any office—making it far easier for media and community groups to contact candidates and find out what they aim to do if elected.

Protect Pregnant People in Prison (SB3600 / HB5431)

Bans the use of restraints for pregnant or postpartum people in jail or prison in Illinois under most conditions.

Prevent Discriminatory Housing Practices (SB3680 / HB5314)

Prohibits so-called “crime-free housing and nuisance property” ordinances (CFNOs), which can unfairly lead to the eviction of survivors of domestic violence and people with disabilities. These tenants may call for emergency services or the police out of need or external threat—not because they are bad tenants.

Accuracy in Offense Titles (HB 4500 / SB 2864)

Changes the misleading titles of Unlawful Use of a Weapon (to Unlawful Possession) and Armed Habitual Criminal (to Persistent Unlawful Possession) because the current language unfairly misstates the severity of the crime and impacts people's ability to secure housing and employment.

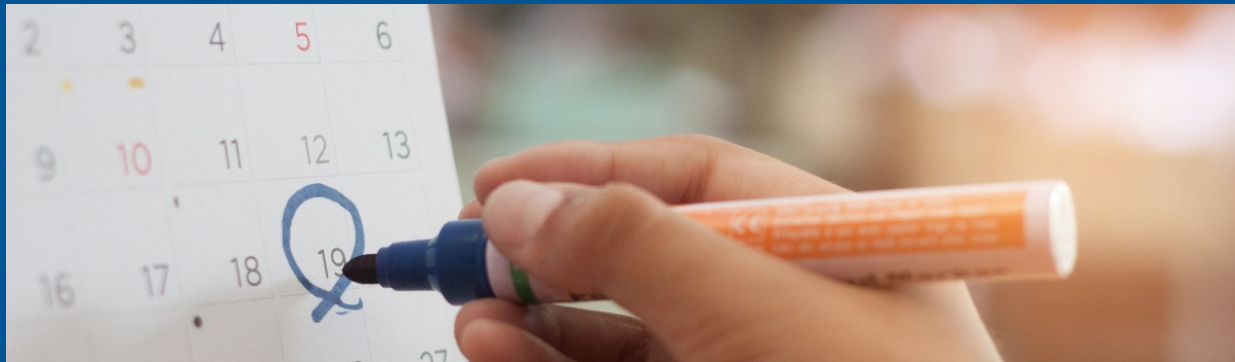
Fund a Child Tax Credit

Request funding for a \$300 per child Child Tax Credit (CTC), an immediate, meaningful way to directly support the families of half of Illinois' kids.

[Find your legislators' contact info](#)

Representing over 3800 members across the state, the League teams up with other organizations so that all of our voices are amplified. In addition to endorsing the bills listed above, here's what else we spoke out on in February:

- Endorsed legislation to phase-out the sale of new, mercury-containing fluorescent lamps in Illinois to decrease pollutants and promote energy efficiency.
- Endorsed a position allowing public access (via FOIA) to the judiciary, joining 44 other states who already have similar laws.
- Joined other members of the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition to express its concern about the slow pace of and delays in establishing rules for the Equitable Energy Upgrade Program (EEUP) stakeholder workshop series.



Get Informed at League Events

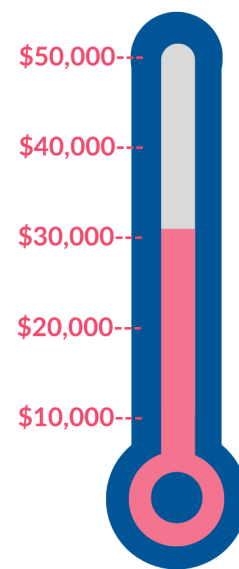
Leagues across the state regularly hold free educational events that are open to the public. Learn more about the issues you care about—[sign up to attend an upcoming event!](#)

Support Our Get Out the Vote Efforts in 2024

The goal of LWVIL's [Campaign to Safeguard Democracy](#) is to raise \$50,000 for our GOTV efforts, statewide online voter guide, candidate forums, and campaigns to fight misinformation and disinformation.

We're 62% of the way there! Thank you to the generous donors who have given over \$31,000 so far.
[See participation by League.](#)

DONATE NOW



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



[Join the League!](#)

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