



NEWS you can use

Democracy is not a spectator sport

May 2024

This month marks 50 years of men as full and equal members of the League of Women Voters. Yes, men marched beside women in the fight for women's suffrage, and many even worked to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, but, until May 1974, men were only allowed to be affiliate members of League, and in some cases they were even charged higher dues for this privilege!

The League's mission of empowering voters and defending democracy needs all the help we can get—so encourage all your friends, regardless of gender, to [join the League](#) today and join us in our mission.

PROCLAMATION

Celebrating the League of Women Voters 50th Anniversary Granting Men Full Membership May 7, 2024

WHEREAS, the League of Women Voters of Illinois is a nonpartisan political organization whose mission is to encourage informed and active participation in government, to increase understanding of major policy issues, and to influence public policy through education and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, men worked as allies alongside women in the movement for women's suffrage, leading up to the founding of the League of Women Voters, and ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920; and

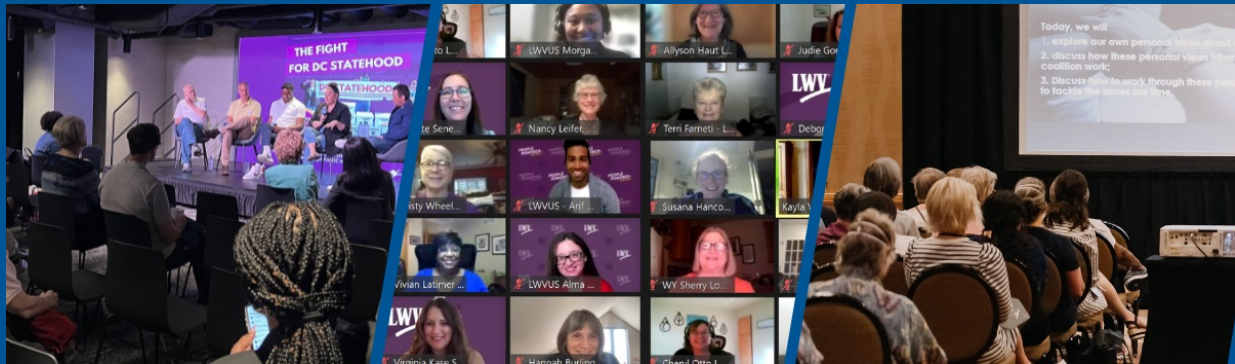
WHEREAS, men jointly participated with women in the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution since its inception in 1923; and

WHEREAS, at the 35th Biennial Convention of the League of Women Voters, held in San Francisco, CA, members voted to open full membership in the organization to men, League President, Lucy Wilson Benson stated, "Exclusion of men perpetuates a form of discrimination I believe it's time to end. There's an element of hypocrisy in our fighting for the Equal Rights Amendment when we continue to deny equal member rights to men."

NOW THEREFORE, I, Becky Simon, President of the League of Women Voters of Illinois, honor and congratulate the men who have joined the League of Women Voters over the last 50 years as equal partners in making our communities stronger by defending democracy and empowering voters, and further wish them continued success as we work together for years to come.



Becky Simon, president
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Catch Upcoming League Events

Sense of Media: A Framework and Intro to Media Literacy

Wednesday, May 22,
6:30 pm, Virtual

How can we recognize misinformation and disinformation in the media? The need for these skills have never been more urgent.

Join us to discuss the struggle to distinguish fact from fiction with Dr. Michael Spikes, an expert in media literacy education.

[Register to attend](#)

How to Talk to People Who Disagree With You Politically

Wednesday, June 19,
7:00 pm, Virtual

Dr. Gina M. Masullo joins us to discuss research-backed approaches for navigating digital spaces—and offline spaces—with people who disagree with you politically.

Their talk will provide tangible takeaways for you to apply in your own life to be more open to other viewpoints without compromising your values.

[Register to attend](#)

Did you miss these events last month?



The Importance of Wetlands: Environment & Public Health

Wetlands are one of Illinois' greatest natural assets—we must take action to protect them! [Watch our webinar](#) to learn about how you can support the Wetlands Protection Act.



Protecting Democracy in the Age of Social Media and AI

How can we protect democracy from the spread of misinformation and disinformation? We were joined by Diane Chang to discuss the effect of social media and AI on elections. [Watch the recording.](#)

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!](#)



Lobby Day in Springfield

On May 1, dozens of our members traveled to Springfield from all across the state to talk with their legislators and advocate in support of bills that promote economic and educational equity and protection of the environment.

Instituting a state Child Tax Credit, ensuring the state meets its commitment to fully fund Evidence Based Funding for K-12 schools, and securing protections for our state's wetlands were among the League's 2024 legislative objectives.

LWVIL in Action

We've been busy during this legislative session! Here are some of the bills we spoke out on in March and April:

- The Lobbyist Registration Act (HB4591): Strengthens enforcement and requires more transparency and disclosure for the financial dealings of lobbyists

- **Karina’s Bill (HB4469)**: Protects victims of domestic abuse by removing guns from abusers once an order of protection is ordered
- **Safety Moratorium on Carbon Dioxide Pipelines Act (HB4835)**: Creates a moratorium on implementing new CO2 pipelines
- **Illinois Guaranteed Income Law (SB3462)**: Requires the Department of Human Services to establish and administer a “Guaranteed Income for Illinois Program” that provides a monthly cash benefit of \$1,000 to Illinois residents
- **Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Professional Support Grant Program Act (HB4665)**: Creates funding to support community behavioral health providers to hire and retain professional staff
- **The Community Safety through Stable Homes Act (HB5432/SB3680)**: Protects civil rights, demands due process and prevents homelessness by prohibiting local governments and public housing authorities from nuisance law evictions

[Check out the full list of bills we endorsed.](#)



Election News

Primary Election Voter Turnout Lowest in Over 50 Years

March’s Illinois presidential primary election saw the lowest primary turnout in at least 50 years, according to the Illinois State Board of Elections.

Overall state turnout was 19.07%. The low number may be, in part, because both the Democrat and Republican presidential candidates had already clinched their parties’ nominations.

The highest turnout was recorded in Chicago, which featured a close primary race for Cook County State’s Attorney, with 25.88% of registered voters casting ballots.

Illinois Primary Election Turnout, last 50 years:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Turnout</u>
2024	19%
2020	28%
2016	47%
2012	23%
2008	41%
2004	29%
2000	26%
1996	29%
1992	44%
1988	43%
1984	41%
1980	44%
1976	43%
1972	40%

LWVIL is Preparing for the 2024 General Election

LWVIL’s Voter Service mission is to educate voters and ensure that every eligible Illinoisan is able to register and cast their ballot. With the help of our local Leagues, LWVIL works to make this happen.

The nonpartisan [Illinois Voter Guide](#) is a one-stop tool for all voter needs. During each election period, IVG lists detailed candidate information, including our own LWV question and answer sections and candidate forum videos (where available). Between elections, voters can still use IVG to register to vote, confirm their registration status, and change their address. They can apply for a vote by mail ballot and learn how to become an election judge. Please take advantage of this resource and let your communities know it's available to them all year round!

Become An Election Judge for the November Election

Election judges (aka poll workers) are the backbone of our electoral process. We can't hold an election without them. Election judges arrive early to set up voting equipment, open and close the polls, issue the correct ballots to each voter and help voters with questions. Election judges are required to declare their party preference so there is a fair distribution of election judges from each party.

Early voting officials serve similar duties as election judges, but for the full duration of early voting.

Both election judges and early voting officials are needed for the November election. If you meet the eligibility requirements of being a U.S. citizen and a registered voter in your district, please consider serving. You will be trained and paid. Visit your local election authority—typically, your county clerk—for more information on signing up.



Report Online Disinformation

To address the troubling rise of misinformation and disinformation—and its impact on our elections—we formed our Mis/Disinformation Task Force in January 2024 with the goal of educating the general public on mis/disinformation. Check out web resources and register for upcoming webinars at lwvil.org/misdis-info.

Have you seen disinformation online? If so, [report it to us](#). You can also report most social media posts to the platforms themselves. Questions, or want to contribute to our efforts? Email misdisinfotaskforce@lwvil.org.

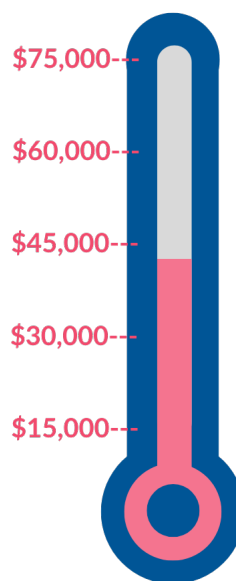
Support Our Get Out the Vote Efforts in 2024

The goal of LWVIL's [Campaign to Safeguard Democracy](#) is to raise \$75,000 for our statewide online voter guide, candidate forums, and efforts to fight

misinformation and disinformation.

We're 56% of the way there! Thank you to our growing list of generous donors who have given over \$42,000 so far.

[DONATE NOW](#)



OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS

Facebook Training

Thursday, May 30, Noon and 5:30 pm

Based on feedback from previous training, we are pleased to offer a session covering Facebook. We are tapping the knowledge of Denise Pikes from the Proviso Township MAS Unit and LWVIL's own Sophie Mucciaccio to guide us through establishing a page identity, where to find tools and resources for post content, and an overview of Meta Business Suite. Some working knowledge of Facebook is required.

This training is only open to League members.

[Register for the noon session.](#)

[Register for the 5:30 pm session.](#)

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

[Join the League!](#)



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