

# Leaders Guide to L WVUS Program Planning 2020-2022

## Timeline for 2020-2022 L WVUS Program Planning

December 2019	Program Planning Materials sent to Leagues
March 10, 2020	Deadline for submission of online report forms
April 2020	L WVUS Board develops Proposed Program that reflects input from Leagues
June 2020	Convention delegates adopt 2020-2022 L WVUS Program after debate and discussion

## What is League Program?

League program is the education and advocacy platform that we adopt to move our mission forward. League Principles and positions on public policy issues are included in Article XII of the L WVUS Bylaws.

### [Art. XII, Sec. 1 and 2 of the L WVUS Bylaws defines program as follows:](#)

Sec. 1. Principles. The Principles are concepts of government supported by the League and are the authorization for adoption of national, state and local program. They may be amended by the convention in the same way as program is adopted under Section 2 of this Article.

Sec. 2. Program. The program shall consist of action to implement the Principles and those governmental issues chosen by the convention for concerted study or concurrence and action.

During January and February 2020, local and state Leagues will conduct program planning and make program recommendations in a general membership meeting or a board meeting. Leagues are also asked to share information on how their work will impact the Campaign for Making Democracy Work<sup>®</sup> as well as identify L WVUS positions that they intend to use in education and lobbying.

This year, we are asking state and local Leagues to provide input on the pilot concurrence process. In June 2019, L WVUS authorized a pilot concurrence on electoral systems. The purpose of the pilot was to give Leagues additional time to review and consider this position during their program planning.

## **Recommended Program: The Campaign for Making Democracy Work®**

**The LWFVUS Board recommends that Program 2020-2022 continue the campaign for Making Democracy Work® with Leagues throughout the country working on:**

- **Redistricting**
- **Voting Rights**
- **Improving Elections**
- **Campaign Finance/Money in Politics**

At Convention 2018, delegates voted to support a program that would fully utilize core League positions in the area of Voting Rights and Election Reform. The campaign for Making Democracy Work® – includes ensuring a free, fair, and accessible electoral system for all eligible voters. Leagues at every level continue to work to protect and advance voting rights and election reform as well as fight efforts in Washington, D.C. and state legislatures to suppress voters.

At the same time, the League of Women Voters continues our transformational journey to strengthen the organization while also engaging new and future activists around the League's core issues. As we look to achieve our transformational goals around relevance, impact, focus and culture, we also look to the priority issues that are at the heart of the League's mission.

## **Accomplishments of the 2018-2020 Campaign for Making Democracy Work®**

Since Convention 2018, LWFVUS sent 29 action emails to our network of grassroots activists on voter suppression tactics as well as supporting legislation like the *For the People Act* and the *Voting Rights Advancement Act*. These also include action alerts on immigration reform and gun policy.

These efforts resulted in 130,794 letters to Congress, 71,060 petition signatures, and over 12,000 contacts with the legislative branch of government. Through our outreach we were able to engage over 86,000 new activists.

In the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, the LWFVUS mounted a major lobbying campaign in support of the *For the People Act*. The LWFVUS worked to help shape the bill's language,

while the grassroots and LWFVUS Lobby Corps contacted their Representatives and Senators in support of the legislation, and state Leagues testified in district hearings.

The *For the People Act* addresses all four prongs of the campaign for Making Democracy Work<sup>®</sup> Voting Rights, Redistricting Improving Elections, and Money in Politics, It will:

1. Break down barriers that prevent Americans from registering to vote. The Act requires states to allow same-day registration, establishes an opt-out system of automatic registration, and includes the establishment of an online voter registration for all eligible voters.
2. Restore the Voting Rights Act (VRA) and strengthen our elections by cutting back the obstructive laws that have kept eligible voters from exercising their right at the ballot box.
3. Establish independent, citizen redistricting commissions at the state level to draw congressional districts allowing voters to pick their politicians not the other way around.
4. Empower small donor donations by creating a public financing system to match smaller contributions to presidential and congressional candidates. It will also close disclosure loopholes that allow outside groups to flood elections with millions of dollars of secret money.

The *For the People Act* passed the House of Representatives and awaits action in the Senate.

LWFVUS CEO Virginia Kase testified in October 2019 before the House Administration Committee's Subcommittee on Elections on the need to strengthen voting rights and election administration.

In voting rights litigation, state Leagues and LWFVUS continue to play a leadership role by mounting judicial challenges to state laws designed to make it harder for people to vote. LWFVUS and state Leagues are actively opposing voter photo ID laws, advocating against barriers to the voter registration process, working to prevent last-minute Election Day obstacles, and helping millions of voters get the information and any required documentation they need to vote.

LWFVUS continues to lobby against Congressional attempts to underfund or terminate the Election Assistance Commission (EAC). The EAC does invaluable

work to improve our nation's election systems by providing federal support to state and local election officials. The EAC assists states with election technology and management, and voting access and election security needs

State Leagues and LWFVUS have played a major role in challenging partisan gerrymandering in the states during the biennium. Many state Leagues worked closely with LWFVUS by contesting district maps in the courts. Following the devastating decisions of *League of Women Voters of North Carolina v. Rucho* and *Lamone v. Benisek*, the League of Women Voters of the U.S. realized a new front to join in the fight to defend our democracy.

In September 2019, the League officially launched our People Powered Fair Maps™ initiative, uniting the Leagues of all 50 states and the District of Columbia together for a coordinated national organizing and education effort to end partisan gerrymandering through ballot initiatives, legislative and constitutional fixes and create district maps that are fair and reflective of the communities they serve.

The League also opposed addition of a citizenship question to the U.S. Census and LWFV NY was a plaintiff to the court challenge to the question while LWFVUS was amici in support of the plaintiff's claims, an action to ensure that all Leagues were represented in this important effort. The LWFVUS has also supported full funding for the census.

Finally, Leagues around the country have [played leadership roles](#) in their communities, legislatures and courts in all aspects of Making Democracy Work®. At the local, state, and federal level, our work on voter protection and mobilization, election reform, money in politics and redistricting is at the heart of the League's mission and its future.

## 2020 and Beyond

As the League of Women Voters marks its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary we celebrate the accomplishments of the past century. As we look to the future, our programmatic work is more important now than ever. Local and state Leagues and the LWFVUS have made progress in the campaign for Making Democracy Work® but our work is not finished. The League continues to be up to the challenge to advance these priorities.

## Report Form

The deadline for submitting online report forms is March 10, 2020. No offline report forms will be accepted. The report form is located [on the LWFUS League Management website in the Convention section](#). Be sure to have your League ID to fill out the form.

- 1. Do you support the proposed program focus, continuing the Campaign for Making Democracy Work®? (Yes/No).**
- 2. Would you like to recommend another program item, in addition to or instead of the Campaign for Making Democracy Work®? (Yes/No) *Please provide a statement (300 words or less) describing the scope of your proposal including a description of the issue area, its importance in advancing the League's mission as well as resources needed to carry out the proposal.***
- 3. Which areas of the 2018-2020 national program priorities (Voting Rights, Improving Elections, Money in Politics/Campaign Finance, Redistricting, Other) within the Campaign for Making Democracy Work® has your League worked on during the current biennium? *Please share details of your work in the comment section (300 words or less).***
- 4. Which LWFUS Positions does your League use to act at the state and local level? *Check all that apply. (Comment section 300 words)* For more detail on LWFUS positions, see Resources section.**

### LWFUS Positions

- Citizen's Right to Vote
- DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation
- Apportionment
- Redistricting
- Money in Politics (Formerly Campaign Finance)
- Selection of the President
- Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation
- Individual Liberties
- Constitutional Amendment Proposals

- Constitutional Conventions
- Public Policy on Reproductive Choices
- Congress
- The Presidency
- Privatization
- United Nations
- Trade
- Developing Countries
- Arms Control
- Military Policy and Defense Spending
- Natural Resources
- Resource Management
- Air Quality
- Solid Waste
- Nuclear Waste
- Climate Change
- Water Resources
- Nuclear Issues
- Public Participation
- Agriculture Policies
- Employment
- Fair Housing
- Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action
- Pay Equity
- Equal Rights for Women
- Same Gender Equality
- Education
- Federal Role in Public Education
- Fiscal Policy
- Funding of Entitlements
- Health Care
- Immigration
- Meeting Basic Human Needs
- Income Assistance
- Transportation
- Housing Supply
- Child Care
- Early Intervention for Children at Risk
- Violence Prevention
- Gun Control

- Urban Policy
- Death Penalty
- Sentencing Policy
- Human Trafficking

5. **Please provide anything else you would like to share on the Program Planning. Keep your response to 300 words or less.**

**The following portion of the report form is to provide your feedback on the pilot concurrence on Electoral Systems.**

6. **In June 2019, LWVUS authorized a pilot concurrence on electoral systems. The purpose of the pilot was to give Leagues additional time to review and consider this position during their program planning. Was the additional time for review helpful in reviewing and considering the proposed concurrence position on Electoral Systems? (Yes/No)**
7. **If you would like to offer comments about the pilot concurrence process or recommend suggestions for future pilots, please provide a statement in the comment section (300 words or less) describing potential improvements to the process, its importance in assisting your League adequate review and consideration time, as well as resources LWVUS could provide in the future.**

## Resources

[Impact on Issues 2018-2020](#): includes all current LWVUS positions and you can access it on the [League Management Site](#).

The Summary of Public Policy Positions that is part of Impact on Issues can be found on pages 7-9. That will have a general, broad listing of the areas in which we have positions and give a concise summary.

Database: If your League wants to promote a proposal to other Leagues for their consideration, you can obtain email addresses for state and local Leagues by contacting [progplan@lww.org](mailto:progplan@lww.org) . This list of contact information may be used to

communicate by email on program planning as well as on other convention related matters. Every League is entitled to receive one free copy in each biennium.

LWVUS website: Additional information on the campaign for **Making Democracy Work<sup>®</sup>** is available at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org).

Expanding Voter Access

<https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/expanding-voter-access>

Fighting Voter Suppression

<https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/fighting-voter-suppression>

Money in Politics

<https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/money-politics>

Redistricting

<https://www.lwv.org/voting-rights/redistricting>

Contact: Should you have questions about program planning and the process, you may email [progplan@lwv.org](mailto:progplan@lwv.org) .