



The League of Women Voters of New York State
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207
Phone: 518-465-4162 Fax: 518-465-0812
www.lwvny.org E-Mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

State Board Updates: February 2015

Local League To Do's (email: lwvny@lwvny.org or call 518-465-4162)

- Send any proposed revisions to the State League Bylaws to the state office **by March 1, 2015.**
- Student/parent forms for the Students Inside Albany Conference are due in the state office **by March 1, 2015.**
- Register for State Convention **by April 8.**
- Submit an application for an award at Convention **by April 15.**
- Return completed form on Constitutional Convention Update to state office **by May 30, 2015.**
- State League Convention is **June 6-7** in Albany.

President's Report/Issues & Advocacy: Sally Robinson, robintwins@gmail.com

Thanks to the over 40 people who braved the winter weather to join us in NYC for the state League's annual Advocacy Training Day. The attendees heard about the process used to reach our positions and how local Leagues can take action. They also heard from many of our Issue Specialists regarding the expected action in the legislature this session in their issue. The presentations and handouts are available on the state website at: <http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy.html>. Please contact the state League if you have questions or would like to take action on these issues.

The State League provided testimony in February before the Joint Fiscal Committees of the NYS Senate and Assembly on two parts of the proposed Executive Budget. Early in February, Marian Bott, Financing Education Specialist, presented testimony on the Elementary and Secondary Education budget. This past week, Barbara Bartoletti, LWVNY Legislative Director, presented testimony covering election law reform, ethics reform and campaign finance reform as part of the Public Protection part of the Executive Budget. Both testimonies are attached and also posted on the state website.

Legislative Packets

The state League will be mailing to each local League two legislative packets this year. The first one is attached to this SBU and includes the issues of ethics, campaign finance reform and the education investment tax credit. These are issues that the Governor has connected to passage of the budget so we would like you to lobby your legislators on these issues **BEFORE** the end of March. We have provided talking points in a handout that you can leave with the legislator after meeting with him/her.

Later in March, we will send out the usual Legislative Packet with information on the key issues (some of which might be the same) we would like you to lobby your legislators **AFTER** the budget is passed (typically in April or May). Again, we will provide you with talking points on a couple of key issues with handouts to leave with your legislators. We encourage you to set up a meeting now in the legislator's district office in April or May.

We ask you all to complete the response form so the state office knows what your legislator told you. This helps us in lobbying the same legislators in Albany. Thanks.

Constitutional Convention Position Update

At the state League convention two years ago, the delegates voted to update our current position on Constitutional Convention with an emphasis on the method of delegate selection. The materials for the update are attached to this email and will also be sent to all local League Presidents separately.

This is an update with a limited scope and we are not changing any of the substantive aspects of the current position. Therefore we are asking local Leagues to approve the updated position instead of responding to questions and then the state Board developing the updated position.

The memo giving the background and explaining the updated position is only a couple pages long and should be very easy to understand. If you have any questions, you can call the state office, email Laura, or email me at robintwins@gmail.com. While we recommend that you discuss the update in a general membership meeting attached to a board meeting, your board can use other methods to get input from your local League members on the update, including soliciting their input by email. **Return the completed form to the state office by May 30, 2015.**

State League Bylaws

At Convention, the delegates must consider any proposed amendments to the state League Bylaws. The current bylaws are attached. Please review the bylaws with your board and/or membership to determine if your League has any suggested revisions. Any proposed amendments must be received by the state office **by March 1, 2015.**

From the State League Office: Laura Ladd Bierman, laura@lwvny.org

State Convention: June 5-7, 2015 in Albany

The Registration Kit for the League's State Convention to be held at the Desmond Hotel in Albany from June 5-7, has been mailed to all local Leagues. The Kit is also attached here and posted on the state website. Encourage all members, and especially your board members, to join us for this educational event. It is a great time to meet other League leaders, learn what other local Leagues are doing, and also help direct the state League's agenda and leadership for the next two years. Each local League is allotted a number of delegates based on their membership, but we always have extra spots so if you have more people who want to attend than the number of delegates your local League is allotted, call the state office and we'll find more delegate spots for you. Registration is due **on April 8th.**

Don't forget to submit your local League or members for an award! Think of all the great activities and events you coordinate – and get recognized for that great work. Submissions are due **on April 15, 2015.** The forms are attached.

Legislative Agenda Booklet

The new Legislative Agenda booklet was sent to all local Leagues. This booklet provides more information on the issues the state League expects to monitor and lobby this legislative session. Additional copies are available at a cost of \$20 per 100, plus tax and shipping. Use these booklets when speaking with elected officials or as a membership tool at events. It's a great introduction to the League's positions.

Legislative Reference Guide

The 2015 Legislative Reference Guide is now available for purchase from the state League. This book provides key information on each NYS Senator and NYS Assemblymember, including contact info in the district and Albany offices, committee assignments, and staff name. It is incredibly useful for lobbying your legislators. The

cost is \$10 which includes tax and shipping; call Katrina or send a check to make an order. You can also order online from the state website.

Organ Donation Grant

The League is pleased to announce an innovative partnership with the New York Alliance for Donation (NYAD). NYAD's mission is to increase organ, eye and tissue donation in New York State through collaborative advocacy, education, promotion, and research. Their goal is to ensure a transplant for every New Yorker in need.

In 2009, NYS became the first state to include an organ and tissue donor enrollment section on voter registration forms. Since inception, over 160,000 individuals have joined the New York State Donate Life Organ and Tissue Donor Registry via voter registration forms. Prior to implementation, 95% of individuals who joined the donor registry did so through the state's DMV offices. Though the majority of registrants still enroll through the DMV, in 2013, over 15% of all Registry enrollments were made via voter registration forms, significantly decreasing the percentage of enrollments made at DMV offices as seen in prior years.

This partnership seeks to extend pilot work conducted by NYAD in the New York City area in spring and summer of 2013. The pilot work consisted of a series of voter registration drives that sought to solicit organ and tissue donor registrations through voter registration forms. 56 campaigns took place at various locations in New York City. The majority of drives were located at high transit areas, such as transportation hubs (Penn Station, subways) and on college campuses. The idea was to 'get the vote out' and in so doing to get individuals to also consider registering to become organ and tissue donors. These campaign drives were staffed by volunteers and organ and tissue donation community staff members. 4,979 individuals registered to vote through these 56 drives, and the drives netted 2,290 new organ and tissue donor registrants. In other words, 46% of all individuals who registered as voters during these drives also registered as organ and tissue donors.

The project will rely on interpersonal communication campaigns to promote organ and tissue donation registration at voter registration drives through the voter registration form. NYAD and our local Leagues will coordinate a number of drives in highly populated and public areas. Our local Leagues will also be trained to encourage more people to register for organ and tissue donations during the League's voter registration drives. Prior to the implementation, NYAD and LWVNY will work together to provide reciprocal education on organ and tissue donation and voter registration to those responsible for conducting these drives. The hope is that we can increase both voter registrations and organ and tissue donor registrations together!

Local Leagues can benefit by agreeing to participate in this program. There are stipends that will be given to local Leagues (approximately \$100-200), training will be provided for free, Voter Guides will be available for free and reduced cost, other brochures and public relations materials will be available, and money will be available for fees for tables at special events where local Leagues may wish to conduct voter registration drives. More information will be emailed to local Leagues in the next few weeks with details – but think about how you could join this effort which will allow you to reduce costs and raise some income for your local League's voter services activities!

Vote 411

It's hard to believe that it's time again, but Vote 411 is now active! Some local Leagues are using it for school board elections (May) so they have already begun the process. Once again, the state League will pay the license for Vote 411, but requires each local League to pay \$25. If you haven't already told us, email Victoria at Victoria@lwny.org and tell her that your local League will be using Vote 411 and who the contact will be. We are also willing to provide training if you have a member who is willing to work with the program!

Youth Programs: Judie Gorenstein, judieL728@aol.com

The forms to be completed by the student (and parents) selected to attend the 2015 Students Inside Albany Conference are due in the state office **by March 1**. There is a lot of work to do after we have the info on the selected students, especially in coordinating their shadow experiences in the legislature, so it is imperative that we have the completed forms by March 1. Also, remember that the **local League is responsible for coordinating and paying for the transportation of the student to and from Albany**; please discuss this with your student and make the appropriate plans. Suggested trains are included in the forms so that the students can travel together. If you don't have the student forms by March 1, please contact Katrina and tell her when we will receive them. **We do have a waiting list and will give your spot to someone on the waiting list if you don't get the forms in early next week or contact Katrina (518-465-4162).**

LWVUS Information

Timeline for Money in Politics Review and Update and Constitutional Amendment Study

At the January Board meeting, the LWVUS Board approved [an overall timeline for the Money in Politics Review and Update](#) and the Constitutional Amendment Study. All consensus reports from local and state Leagues will be due on February 1, 2016. Be sure to check the [Money and Politics Review page](#) and the [Constitutional Amendment Study page](#) for regularly updated information and materials.

PMP Increasing

Just a reminder that at the LWVUS Convention in June 2014, the delegates approved an increase in the LWVUS PMP for the 2015-16 fiscal year of \$1. Starting on July 1, 2015, the PMP for individuals and first household members will be \$32, second household and student members will be \$16, and honorary members are still free. Be sure to include this increase when preparing your budget for next year.

Opportunity to Attend League Event at United Nations in March 2015

The fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 9 to 20 March 2015. Members of the League of Women Voters are invited to attend a side event hosted by the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations and co-sponsored by the LWVUS, International Federation of Business & Professional Women, Pan Pacific Southeast Asia Women's Association and UN Women. Speakers include members of Parliament from Germany, Turkey, Azerbaijan, the Director of the Policy Division of UN Women and moderated by a former US diplomat. LWVUS will have 20 delegates attending CSW59 and can accommodate additional attendance at the side event. Please contact Rosalee Keech unobserver@lww.org if interested.