



The League of Women Voters of New York State  
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## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

### State Board Updates: May 2017

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

- Register for **LWVNYS State Convention, June 9-11, 2017, in Liverpool, NY** (read more details below) by May 18<sup>th</sup> – **we will still accept registrations**, but the hotel rooms may not be available after the May 18<sup>th</sup> deadline.
- Mark your calendar for **Saturday, Nov 4<sup>th</sup>, to be in Albany!** We are hosting an opening reception at the NYS Museum to kick-off their special exhibit on women's suffrage history. Be sure to join us – it'll be a great celebration! More details shortly.
- Complete and return your Local League Officer and Board list to the state office **by June 30.**
- Order the Voter Guide Part I **NOW** – it is available (order form attached)

#### **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dates**

November 6, 2017	100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Woman Suffrage in New York State
November 19, 2019	100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the League of Women Voters of New York State
February 14, 2020	100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National League of Women Voters
August 26, 2020	100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the official certification of the ratification of the 19 <sup>th</sup> amendment by the US Secretary of State

A new packet of resources for local Leagues to organize programs and events on women's suffrage history has been mailed to every local League – and a new page has been created on the state website with links to all the info, as well as a calendar to see what events are scheduled, and a blog on significant events and locations in women's history in NYS. Check it out at: <http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/womens-suffrage/index.html>.

#### **President's Report: Dare Thompson, [darethompson@gmail.com](mailto:darethompson@gmail.com)**

We're getting ready for Convention – are you? We're hoping to see many of you in a few weeks in Liverpool to discuss issues, meet old friends and help plan for the next two years. Register NOW to attend any or all of the Convention!

The state League has been busy planning for our Convention and the Students Inside Albany Conference (next week), but we have also been incredibly active at the Capitol on a number of issues. Read Jennifer's update later in this email – it's impressive and exciting!

## **League's State Convention Is Coming!**

### **WE WILL STILL ACCEPT REGISTRATIONS**

The 57<sup>th</sup> State League Convention is scheduled for June 10-11, 2017, at the Holiday Inn Express in Liverpool, NY (just off the Thruway near Syracuse). The Registration Kit is now available on the state website (<http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/concon/2017/Registration-Kit-2017.pdf>) and has been attached. If you are unsure as to how many delegates your local League is entitled, please call the state office. Encourage all members to attend, even if as Visitors or for free to the workshops!

### **Pre Convention Kit**

The Pre Convention Kit is available and posted on the state website. Members who have registered for Convention will review a paper copy in the mail. This document has all the important information to be discussed at the Convention's plenary session: Nominations for State Officers and Board, Proposed 2017-18 Budget, Proposed Bylaw Amendments, and Proposed Program (including a proposed update to an existing position and a proposed concurrence). Attendees are URGED to bring this Kit with them to Convention. This Kit also describes the many workshops and information session that will be available – come join to learn what other local Leagues are doing! All members should review the Kit from the website and discuss their concerns or support with their delegates attending convention.

### **Field Trip!**

To celebrate women achieving the right to vote in 1917 in NYS, the state League is organizing a field trip from Liverpool to Seneca Falls on Friday, June 9 (day before Convention actually begins). This is will a separate charge and everyone is welcome (not just convention attendees); tours of the Elizabeth Cady Stanton home, Women's Hall of Fame and the Women's Rights National History Park (and Wesleyan Chapel), as well as dinner at an historic restaurant in Seneca Falls, will be included. You will need to be in Liverpool by noon on Friday to join this trip. The Registration Form for this tour is also posted on the website (<http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/concon/2017/Suffrage-Tour-Registration-Form.pdf>) and attached to this email.

### **Volunteers are Needed!**

Volunteers are needed to help at the state Convention. You should all send as many voting delegates as you are entitled, but if you have others that want to attend only part of Convention, encourage them to become volunteers. Here are some reasons why:

- Delegates can volunteer during non-plenary hours.
- Visitors can volunteer during plenary and observe plenary at no charge.
- Volunteering is a great way to meet and network with fellow Leaguers.

Contact Joan Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator, at 315-488-4339 or by email at [jaj62@twcny.rr.com](mailto:jaj62@twcny.rr.com).

Anyone can attend the workshops on Saturday, June 10, in the morning, and, if they register as a Visitor, may observe the plenary sessions. Volunteers will be allowed to attend plenary also, as space permits.

## **State Office, Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director, [Laura@lwvny.org](mailto:Laura@lwvny.org)**

### **Local League Updates**

Attached please find the annual form to complete to update your officers and board with the state office. It is very important that you complete and return this form **by June 30** – this is the list we use to send out information, alerts, etc, to the local Leagues. Don't miss receiving our emails! Please also provide the name of the person in your local League who is researching your own local League history and helping to celebrate the centennial of women's suffrage and of the League of Women Voters in NYS.

### **Voter Guide Part I – Taking Orders Now**

Part I of the League's Voter Guide is now available and posted on the state website. Please complete the attached order form to ensure that your League receives this Guides. They are especially helpful at voter registration drives throughout the summer. Order yours now! As in the past, local Leagues who are participating in the organ donor registration project can obtain 300 Guides for free – and reduced cost for additional Guides.

### **Organ Donor Registration Project**

Don't forget to encourage the public to register as an organ donor when they register to vote. And, complete the tracking form online at <http://goo.gl/forms/26o1OCUQyd> or mail in the attached form to receive your stipend. Also, Aisha O'Mally, one of the researchers on the project would love to attend any of your voter registration drives to gather verbal comments from the public about organ donation; contact Aisha at [aishaoma@buffalo.edu](mailto:aishaoma@buffalo.edu) to let her know when you're having a drive.

Also, as of February 14, 2017, individuals sixteen and seventeen years of age are eligible to enroll in the New York State Donate Life Registry. In the event a sixteen or seventeen year old who has joined New York's donor registry may be considered for donation, the parents or legal guardians of that individual will give final consent for donation to take place. Upon reaching the age of eighteen, that individual's enrollment shall be regarded as consent to donation. Please make sure your members know of this new regulation at the voter registration drives.

### **Legislative Action, Jennifer Wilson, Director of Program and Policy,** **[jennifer@lwvny.org](mailto:jennifer@lwvny.org)**

May has been a busy month for the League. We have been ramping up our advocacy efforts and our hard work is finally paying off! This month the Assembly passed several of our priority bills: Single Payer, early voting, no-excuse absentee voting, single June primary, and legislation to include e-cigarettes under the Clean Indoor Air Act. We have been working hard on these issues and it's nice to see the Assembly responding to our efforts.

In the beginning of May, early voting was included on a Senate Elections Committee agenda. We organized a group of our members to attend the committee meeting and show that New Yorkers are serious about seeing this legislation passed this session. The sponsor of this legislation had petitioned to have this bill heard by the committee. Several other bills had all been petitioned to be heard in the committee including the Voter Empowerment Act. The committee voted down the other bills but did not vote down early voting. Instead the committee referred the bill to the Senate Local Government Committee.

Senate Local Government Committee is chaired by Senator Kathleen Marchione. We were very worried that Senator Marchione would kill this bill as she was the only Senator in the Election Committee to oppose the legislation. Our members made countless phone calls to the members of the Local Government Committee urging them to move the bill to the floor to be voted on by all Senators. Senator Marchione opted to move the bill to the Rules Committee and did not allow members of her committee to vote on the legislation. Although this was not what we had hoped for, we were very happy that the Senator did not kill the bill in her committee.

It will be difficult to convince the Rules Committee to take up this bill before session ends, but all hope is not lost. Now that the Assembly has passed this legislation we are calling on our members to contact their Senators and urge them to support early voting! We have sent out several action alerts and created shareable advocacy documents that can be accessed [here](#). We have a long road ahead of us but we are not alone in this fight. Stay tuned for information about a joint rally and lobbying effort that will take place in early June. More information will be released in the coming weeks.

In addition to these voting reforms, we have been pushing the Assembly to pass state contracting reforms that would give the Comptroller back his oversight authority in the awarding of state contracts. This push is a result of the recent federal and state incitements related to a major bid rigging scandal costing tax payers nearly \$800 million. The investigation of this scandal is on-going but it appears that a lack of oversight and transparency

allowed this contract rigging scheme to unfold. We have been working with several of our good government allies to lobby the Assembly to pass legislation that would prevent future bid-rigging scandals from taking place. The bill we are supporting will increase transparency and reporting of contract agreements. The bill has already passed in the Senate with bi-partisan support. We are urging members of the Assembly to co-sponsor this legislation and vote in favor of its passage. You can read more about the legislation and our efforts [here](#).

Health care has been at the forefront of our minds recently. This month we were all appalled when Congress voted to gut the Affordable Care Act and replace it with a health care policy that would put millions at risk of losing their health insurance. Health care is a basic human right and we want to make sure that all New Yorkers have equal access to affordable health insurance. The League has long been a supporter of single payer health care in New York State. A single payer health system would take health insurance out of the private sector and allow the state to use its own resources to provide health insurance. This system would significantly reduce administrative costs and would ensure that all citizens have equal access to quality health care. This month, the Assembly passed the New York Health Act which would implement a single payer health care system in New York. This is not the first time the bill has passed in the Assembly but each year the bill stalls in the Senate. Currently the Senate version of this legislation has 30 sponsors including members of the Independent Democratic Conference. We have created an advocacy toolkit that is available [here](#) which highlights which members we should be targeting in the Health Committee where the bill has stalled. The toolkit includes a contacts for Senators, a phone script, key talking points, and sample tweets.

The League has also been involved in working with our coalition partners to pass a bill that would prohibit employers from asking a potential employee's previous salary. This legislation is crucial in helping to close the wage gap. Earlier this month we participated in a press conference highlighting the importance of the bill and urging the legislature to pass the legislation before session ends. We are asking our members to reach out to the Assembly and Senate to urge them to pass this legislation. You can find more information on the bill and its impact [here](#).

May has certainly been a busy month but our work is far from complete. With only 4 weeks left of session we are getting close to the end. As we enter June we will need to do everything we can to see these issues move forward. Thank you to all of the members who have contacted their legislators to advocate for these bills!

Please be sure to follow the League on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) so that you can stay up to date on what is going on in the legislature.