LEGISLATIVE HOT TOPICS 2023
Speaking with one voice

Local Leagues
- regional issues are addressed in a consistent matter by neighboring Leagues
- Only president (or designee) is permitted to speak for the League in an official capacity members take action on League topics as individuals

LWVNYS
- responsible for a consistent state message
- Local Leagues must ask permission of state League to advocate on state issues to ensure consistent message by local and state League

LWVUS
- responsible for determining strategies and action policies that ensure that the League’s message on national issues is consistent throughout the country
NYS Executive and Legislative Calendar

**Early January**
Governor presents State of State and Legislative session begins

Starting in January:
Committee meetings and Legislative Sessions start but slower until budget passes

**January**

**Jan.—Feb.**
Legislature holds 13 joint (Assembly and Senate) budget hearings

**Late January**
Mid-late January: Governor presents proposed state budget

**Late Feb**
Governor issues 30-day amendments to budget

Each house releases its one-house budget

**Early March**
Governor, Speaker, Senate Majority Leader negotiated budget behind closed doors

**Late March**
Budget deadline and beginning of new fiscal year

**Late April**
Most stand-alone bills (unrelated to budget) considered in committees and on floors during session

**1 Apr.**

**8 June**
Last day of session
How the State League takes action

• Sends Memos of Support or Opposition
• Writes letters to legislators or legislative leaders
• Writes letters to Governor
• Lobbies legislators at the Capitol
• Issues Press Releases or holds Press Conference
• Issues an Action Alert for members to call legislators or Governor
• Asks members to call, write or email
State Action Timeline

- League program process → Legislative Agenda
- Legislative priorities → Pre-budget lobby packet
- Post-budget lobby packet → Advocacy Day
What can you do?

• Take action on local issues – reminder that only your President can speak on behalf of your league
• Join a state committee
• Participate in identifying priorities for your League
• Senate: https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation
• Assembly: https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?sh=advanced
Legislative Priorities Survey

- Collected every January/February
- Each League has own process for deciding on priorities
  - Meeting, survey, etc.
- League leader will submit survey to NYS League with top 3 priorities by Feb. 1st
Issue Specialists and Committee Chairs

- Environment- Beth Radow
- Election Law- Kate Doran
- Campaign Finance- Sally Robinson
- Court Simplification- Laura Bierman
- Education- Marian Bott
- Equality of Opportunity and MAID- Barb Thomas
- Criminal Justice- Vivione Marshall and Richard Rifkin
- Rural Caucus- Kathy Stein
- Healthcare- Judy Esterquest
Environment

Beth Radow- enradow@gmail.com
Environmental Hot Topics

- Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act
- Hazardous waste
- Extended Producer Responsibility and Bigger Better Bottle
- Ban on single use plastics and creation of alternatives
- Support for regenerative agriculture, local farms and community gardens, reduction of food waste
Election Law

Kate Doran and Erica Smitka- katedoran@gmail.com, erica@lwvny.org
Election and Democracy Hot Topics

- 10- day voter registration implementation
- John R. Lewis New York Voting Rights Act Database
- Board of Elections- Training, staffing/professionalism, resources
- OVR/AVR implementation
- Youth voting and jail-based voting
- Update on no-excuse absentee and same day voter registration
Campaign Finance

Sally Robinson- sally.s.robinson@gmail.com
Court Simplification

Laura Bierman- laura@lwvn.org
Education

Marian Bott- sydneymab@aol.com
Equality of Opportunity and Medical Aid in Dying

Barb Thomas- bkoeppticust@gmail.com
New York Equal Rights Amendment

• NY ERA protected classes:
  • race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, creed, religion, or sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, reproductive healthcare and autonomy.

• Voters to vote on it in 2024

League Action Feb 14
Fair Pay for Home Care

• Home Health Aides are in short supply
• Majority are women &/or people of color (and have a history of discrimination)
• Our position supports comparable pay for work requiring a comparable level of skill.
• We have a position in support of a living wage.
• Last year many of the bills called for $22/hr
• Our Health care position calls for home care.
Medical Aid in Dying

- Modelled on the Oregon Law
- Safe guards
- No evidence of Abuse of the law
- Assembly Sponsor: Amy Paulin
- Senate Sponsor: Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Barb Thomas- bkoeppticust@gmail.com
Criminal Justice

Vivione Marshall and Richard Rifkin- vivione@lwvnyc.org, richardrifkin54@gmail.com
Rural Issues

Kathy Stein- kstein1@twcny.rr.com
Healthcare

Judy Esterquest- esterquest@gmail.com
Healthcare Hot Topics

Pre-Budget Priorities

- **Medicaid funding levels** — equal or expanded
  - First 1000 or 2000 days (uninterrupted care post-natal to age 3)
  - SBHC — School-Based Health Clinics
  - Other vulnerable, underserved populations & facilities
- **Fair Pay for Home Care** — 150% of minimum wage
- **Safety Net Hospitals** — ensure return to fiscal health

Legislative Priorities

- **New York Health Act** — affordable, equitable HC for all
- **Staffing Ratios** — safer for patients, safer for providers
- **MAID** — Medical Aid in Dying
- **Telemedicine & Shield Laws**
- **Health Equity Assessment** — ensure community review before closing maternity wards, local health facilities
- **Preventive Health Issues** — vaccine confidentiality, safe consumption
Intersectional Priorities

• Equality of Opportunity & MAID
  • MAID, ERA, Shield Laws for Telemedicine, Living Wage, Maternal/Infant Health

• Rural Caucus
  • Digital Equity, Safety Net Hospitals, EMS, Childcare, Health Equity Assessment, Maternal/Infant Health

• Education & Finance
  • School-Based Health Clinics (SBHC), Universal Free Breakfast & Lunch, Mental health

• Criminal Justice
  • Healthcare in Prisons/Jails, Re-Entry access to HC, Elder Parole

• Environment
  • Hazardous Waste, Plastic Pollution
How YOU can get involved

• Zoom meetings — about 8 per year, 60 min
  • 30 “regulars” from 20 local Leagues
  • Learn, share, encourage, mobilize

• Prep for meetings — what interests you?
  • Find news articles, white papers
  • Track bills, committee work, DOH actions
  • Plan local League/regional actions

• Build relationships with HC allies
  • LWV: with intersectional networks
  • Not LWV: nonpartisan, credible, with lobbying depth (paid or volunteer)
  • Partner on advocacy & lobbying

• Email: Esterquest@gmail.com
Questions?