

STATE VOTER

November-December 2023



President's Message

Nancy Rosenthal - nancyrosenthal9@gmail.com

The League needs YOU! If you're reading this, you might be thinking "she is preaching to the choir". That leads me to my next question, how does the League need you? Well, truth be told, we need your donation now, by year's end, to the Education Foundation. This next year, the election process guarantees to be a wild ride. With your donation now to the Education Foundation, we will continue to strengthen our democracy and ensure fair and open elections with election security.

I remember my first donation to the Education Foundation. Writing that check felt so good. I knew my money was going to an organization I could trust and had the mission I wanted to support and invest, Making Democracy Work and fair, transparent elections. Plus, I knew some of the staff and some of the leaders on the State Board doing the good work I so wanted to support with my tangible financial gift. I will never forget standing on a street corner in Berkeley, CA where I was on Thanksgiving holiday and getting a call from Laura Ladd Bierman, thanking me for my first gift to the League. I felt like a million dollars as she thanked me for my gift to the League's Education Foundation. I have been donating financially every year since.

I ask you now to step up and [donate to the Education Foundation](#) by the end of the year. Better yet, sign up to be a monthly donor to the Education Foundation. By doing so, you too can experience my same feeling of "doing good" and supporting an organization you are as passionate about as I am.

Member Survey (and Legislative Priorities)

The state League wants to hear from YOU! We're launching a short survey to gather valuable insights from our members - including your opinion on the legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative session. Completing this survey will only take a few minutes of your time, and your feedback will help us better understand the priorities and needs of our members.

The form will be open until January 1, 2024. [Click here](#) to access the survey and make your voice heard!

Upcoming Events

Regional Training Workshop Dates and Locations Set

In years when there is no state Convention, the state League organizes training workshops in four locations around the state during the month of March. All members are invited to attend the workshops so mark your calendars now! They are held on

Saturdays from 10:00-4:00 with lunch provided. Topics will include the 2024 Elections and GOTV, engaging college students in their communities, leadership and membership tips and tools, DEI around the state, evaluating our impact through data tracking, mis and disinformation in the 2024 election, and making your voice heard in advocacy. The following dates and locations for workshops have been set. Watch for registration information shortly.

- March 2 Rochester (The Perkins Mansion)
- March 9 Port Washington (Unitarian Universalist Congregation)
- March 16 Cortland (CNY Living History Center)
- March 23 Albany (The Blake)

Advocacy Events

- Jan 16, 2024 In-person Lobby Day (Albany) with Compassion and Choice to support Medical Aid in Dying
- May 7, 2024 League Advocacy Day (speakers and materials with in-person lobbying in Albany)

Legislative Hot Topics Event: February 3, 2024 at 10:00AM

Join the State League the League's state topic specialists for a virtual event about the 2024 legislative session. This program will take a look at how the New York State League adopts and takes action on issues and sets legislative priorities. We will also introduce the various state topic specialists, how members can get engaged in their work, and what the expected hot topics are for the 2024 legislative session. [Register for this program here](#)

Past Event

Briefing on NYS Small Donor Matching Campaign Finance System

After more than twelve years of advocacy by the Fair Elections for NY coalition, the New York State Public Campaign Finance Program is here! This historic program allows statewide and state office candidates to access public matching funds based on qualified small-dollar donations from constituents. It increases accountability to the community, maximizes transparency in fundraising, and shifts power back to everyday New Yorkers.

Fair Elections NY, the League of Women Voters of New York State, Public Citizen, and Declaration for American Democracy held a zoom briefing recently. [Click here to watch the recording.](#)



Voter Services

Kathy Meany, VP for Voter Services

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Presidential Primary in NYS: April 2, 2024

Early Voting: March 23 – 30, 2024

Date	Deadline Information
February 14	Last day to Change Party Enrollment for the Primaries in April and June. The voter registration form should be used to change your party enrollment from one party to another or to enroll for the first time in a party. An application to change one's party enrollment for the primary election in any year must be received by the board of elections no later than February 14th of that year . Changes received on or after February 15th until seven days after the June Primary will be set aside and opened seven days following the June Primary and entered in the voter's registration record.
March 23	Last day voter registration must be received by BOE's by MAIL or IN PERSON.
April 1	Last day to apply IN PERSON for an absentee ballot
April 2	Last day to postmark ballot and the postmarked ballot envelope must be received by the BOE by April 9, 2024.
April 2	Last day to deliver ballot IN-PERSON to the local Board of Elections or to any poll site in your county.

What is a Primary Election? Why vote in a Primary Election? Why Do Primaries Matter Now More Than Ever? [Read about all these questions here.](#)



Issues and Advocacy

Sally Robinson, VP for Issues and Advocacy
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Bills Requiring Governor Signature

Out of our priority bills from last session the following still need to be signed:

- Birds and Bees Protection Act (**S01856** Hoylman-Sigal/**A03226** Glick)
- School Based Health Centers (**S2339** Rivera/**A6029** Paulin)

Legislation we opposed that passed, but is not signed is below:

- Revisions to the New York State Public Campaign Finance Program (**S7564/A7760**)

Bills that have been signed by the Governor since our last update are listed below:

- Plain Language Ballot Initiative (**S1381** Comrie/**A1722** Zinerman). This bill was signed on November 17th.
- Clean Slate (**S211A** Myrie/ **A1029A** Cruz). This bill was signed on November 16, 2023. The State League was invited to this bill signing and a member from the LWWNYS Criminal Justice Reform Committee, Hazel Weiser, represented the State League at the event in Brooklyn.

COELIG Roundtable

Along with the other good government groups, the League was invited to participate in a roundtable discussion regarding the 2024 legislative agenda for the Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government (COELIG) in November in NYC. We made recommendations regarding sexual harassment, financial disclosure for candidates, and the legislative ethics commission. We felt the roundtable went well and that commissioners were generally receptive to ideas from the good government organizations. COELIG ultimately made a few small changes to their legislative agenda in response to this collaboration.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Regina Tillman, VP for DEI
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In the transition from the DEI Task Force of 2019-2023 to a 2024 Committee, we lost a few valuable members who had been on the Task Force since its inception. Some are League members who have accepted greater leadership roles in their local leagues. We miss them, and wish them the best, keeping in mind that the leadership they now assume in the field is one of the very best ways to extend *DEI knowledge and practices* throughout the League. In the meantime, we welcome the fresh perspectives of new members joining the state-wide committee on the following Committee Teams.

[Read the full report from the DEI Committee:](#)

- Changes to the DEI Committee from last year
- DEI Program Work by Committee
- How You can help

From Dr. Turner, President, LWVUS - CEO Resigns

"It is with both sadness and pride that I share with you today that our CEO, Virginia Kase Solomón, will be departing from the League of Women Voters in the new year. After five and a half years leading the national office, she has accepted a new opportunity which will be announced next week. Her last day with the League will be February 2, 2024."

Local League News

Mid-Hudson League

After all the important changes in New York State Election Law benefiting incarcerated citizens last year, members of the Mid-Hudson League took the reins and set out to educate people at the Ulster County Jail. Members Christine Hunter and Cindy Bell were joined by Ulster County Board of Elections Commissioner Ashley Torres (D) and Deputy Commissioner Keri Williams (R), as well as Ulster County Jail's Officer Lacey.

Officer Lacey led the group through the six jail units, announcing their presence at each and allowing them to speak with the incarcerated individuals and help them complete forms and answer questions. All in all, the group came away with 16 registrations and 31 absentee ballot applications. At the end of the visit, Ashley and Keri took the documents back to the BOE and got to work to make sure everyone got the appropriate ballot.

New York City

Pat Manning, a longtime member of the New York City League, was recently featured in the We ♥ NYC Do-ers campaign! We ♥ NYC is a public-private partnership created with the support of Governor Hochul and Mayor Adams to promote New York City and encourage volunteer action. Part of the We ♥ NYC campaign is recognizing New Yorkers who take action to help their neighbors and their city, and Pat is one of those exceptional people. You can watch the video by [clicking here](#). Congratulations, Pat!

Oneonta

The Oneonta League held two on-campus registration events this fall. LWVO members Stephanie Bauer, Janet Sutta, Nancy Mathisen, Sarah Paterson, and David Hutchison registered voters on the SUNY Oneonta campus on September 19, National Voter Registration Day. The League teamed up with students from Oneonta's Cooperstown Graduate Program in Museum studies for the first time! Students helped with registration and designed a sign that advertised the event. Volunteers registered eight voters, but also handed out "Make a Plan to Vote" sheets and other election materials.

Next door at the Hartwick College campus, member Zach McKinney and his students registered voters on National Voter Registration Day and throughout the month. All told, 118 voters were registered.

Utica-Rome

On a crisp fall day, members of the Utica-Rome League were treated to a guided walking tour of 5 historical sites in downtown Utica by former Utica University professor Jan J. DeAmicis. The Oneida County Freedom Trail Commission was organized as part of a response to the National Park Service initiative to identify and preserve sites concerning the Underground Railroad nationwide.

Cortland County

In addition to their usual Election Day GOTV efforts, the Cortland County League went out of its way to honor the people who make democracy happen: poll workers. League member Kim Cameron came up with the idea to distribute thank-you cards to poll workers the morning of Election Day. Workers were thrilled! In addition to the thank-you message, Kim included an invite to join the Cortland League their November Open House - a very informal event to inform people about what the League does.

Northeast Westchester, New Castle, and Rivertowns

The Northeast Westchester, New Castle, and Rivertowns Leagues teamed up to host a presentation on New York State's Medical Aid in Dying Act (A995a/S2445a). Speakers included Assemblymember Amy Paulin, who is one of the bill's sponsors and chair of the Assembly's Health Committee; and Doctor Maggie Carpenter, medical director at Hudson Valley Hospice and the Mid-Hudson Family Practice Residency in Kingston. An audience Q&A followed the presentation.

Albany County

Albany County League members Anne Erling, Christine Primomo, Paula Brewer and Cathy Dryden attended the November 20, 2023 NYS Department of Environmental Conservation hearing on Norlite's ash waste handling. Cathy presented testimony on behalf of LWVAC. [Read the complete testimony here.](#)

[Donate to LWNYS](#)

[Donate to LWNYS Education Foundation](#)

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