

POST-BUDGET LEGISLATIVE PACKET 2025

TO: Local League Presidents/Action Chairs
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Overview: This packet highlights key standalone bills of interest based on feedback from the January legislative priorities survey. We believe that these issues are crucial for the 2025 legislative session and we urge you to lobby your legislators on these matters. The packet is meant to assist with your lobbying visits with your state Senators and Assembly Members. It includes educational materials to assist with your lobbying efforts, which should be scheduled between late April and early June.

Core Mission: We are at heart a pro-democracy organization and it is critical that we work to maintain the strong foundation of our democracy here in New York. Our focus remains on defending voting rights and democracy. A robust democracy allows us to address other critical issues. Links to our priority areas and related bills are included.

Action Alerts: If any bill progresses before the session ends in June, we will issue action alerts via social media and email. While you can mention any advocacy issue from the League's 2025 Legislative Agenda, please prioritize the topics in this packet. The last section on page 6 referencing additional issue areas provides links on other advocacy areas that may be of interest to some local Leagues.

Availability: This packet is available on the state League homepage: [www.lwvny.org](<http://www.lwvny.org>).

I. **ERIC (Electronic Registration Information Center) ([S1356A Skoufis/A3649B Taylor](#))**

ERIC is a multistate voter list maintenance organization. This bill is a critical method for combatting mis and disinformation across the state. It would also take some of the stress off local boards of elections. The League supports the implementation of a bill (S1356A/A3649B) to allow New York to join a multistate organization such as the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC). New York State currently has a centralized state voter database, but it does not track voters as they move out of state, and it has been very difficult to keep up to date. **This legislation has passed the Senate and has passed out of the Elections Committee in the Assembly. It now needs to get to the floor for a vote.**

Talking Points:

- The Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization created by and comprised of state election officials from around the United States
- ERIC is the most effective tool available to help election officials maintain more accurate voter rolls.
- ERIC also helps states reach out to potentially eligible but not yet registered individuals with information on how best to register to vote.
- A database such as ERIC would improve the accuracy
- of New York's voter rolls, increase access to voter registration, reduce election costs, and would increase efficiency.

Additional Resources:

- [Let New York Vote memo of support for ERIC](#)
- [LNYV ERIC One Pager](#)
- [How does ERIC work?](#)

II. Democracy During Detention (S440 Myrie/A2121 Walker)

This bill would codify the right to vote and guarantee fair, timely access to voter registration and at least one secure method of balloting for all detained citizens who have not been disenfranchised. The Democracy During Detention Act improves election oversight, uniformity, quality control and intergovernmental cooperation to better protect eligible citizens' fundamental rights. **This legislation is in the elections committee in both the Senate and Assembly.**

Talking Points:

- Many citizens detained in jails have the *right* to vote (e.g., those detained pretrial or convicted of misdemeanors), yet their *access* to the ballot is severely limited.
- A 2023 LWNYS survey of county sheriffs' offices revealed that one-third of New York counties either have *no* jail voter access program in place or could not provide details of such a program despite persistent inquiry.
- Without proactive coordination between elections and corrections officials to facilitate voter access, "many counties place the burden on detained individuals" to sort out eligibility and overcome registration barriers and mail delays. But unlike the general public, detained individuals face barriers that can prove insurmountable. Voter access can be hindered by limited access to stamps or internet-based resources like online registration, ballot request and tracking tools, and ballot-casting barriers like compromised privacy, jail-mail delays or limited language assistance.
- The disproportionate impact of voter suppressive policies on low-income voters and citizens of color that are too frequently seen outside of correctional facilities persist just as widely within correctional facilities. In 2021, 78% of New York's pretrial population was Black or Latinx.

How does the bill work?

- The bill improves access to voting for detained eligible citizens wherever they are held, while preserving flexibility for officials in populous and less populous areas to deploy a program tailored to their communities.
- Large corrections facilities in New York's most populous counties will be included automatically in the existing absentee ballot collection program that currently directs bipartisan teams of election officials to conduct in-person visits to large congregate facilities like nursing homes or hospitals, to distribute and collect voting materials.
- If enacted, local election boards serving at least 100,000 registered voters will coordinate a similar program with administrators of populous correctional facilities to provide both timely registration and voting, eliminating many barriers that can unjustly block legitimate political participation.
- Instead of the in-person absentee program, bipartisan county election officials may deploy a polling place at populous correctional facilities during the final weekend before election day, so eligible confined citizens and facility staff can conveniently vote. These programs

will be governed by cooperation agreements that provide for orderly and secure registration, balloting, language assistance, and delivery and retrieval of voting materials.

- At minimum, all such eligible citizens must be provided with effective voter registration and absentee ballot access, regardless of where they are confined, no later than twenty-one days prior to election day. As with the general population, return postage for absentee ballots is prepaid. The State Board of Elections will also issue non-partisan voter education materials for mandatory distribution throughout corrections facilities.

Additional Resources:

- [Let New York Vote Memo of Support](#)
- [League Memo of Support](#)
- [Voting in Jails League Study](#)

III. Same Day Voter Registration Constitutional Amendment (S5751 Gianaris/A2162 Carrol)

This bill would eliminate the requirement that registration, for purposes of voting, be completed at least ten days before election day and provides that legislation adequately safeguard against deception in the exercise of the right of suffrage.

This would allow for a law to be passed to enact same day voter registration in NYS. **This legislation is in the elections committee in the Assembly and on the floor calendar in the Senate.**

Talking Points:

- At least 23 states and D.C. currently have some form of same-day registration, which allows eligible voters to register and vote on the same day, either during early voting, on election day, or both.
- Studies that show that turnout in states with same-day registration is higher than turnout in states without it.
- Same-day registration allows more people to participate, as it gives would-be voters up until the very last moment to participate in an election. There are also plenty of reasons why someone might miss the voter registration deadline: they didn't know what the deadline was, they didn't become politically engaged until closer to the election, or they turned 18 or became naturalized after the deadline. Same-day registration would allow these new voters to participate.
- Same-day registration allows for more accurate and up-to-date voter rolls. If a voter shows up on election day and is told they're not on the rolls because of an administrative error, like what happened in Brooklyn in 2016 when thousands of eligible voters showed up to cast their ballots in the presidential primary only to find their names missing from the rolls, those voters wouldn't be allowed to re-register and vote unless New York had same-day registration.

Additional Resources:

- Memo of Support- Coming soon

IV. Additional Issue Areas

- **Environment**
- **Criminal Justice**
- **Healthcare**
- **Rural Issues**
- **Medical Aid in Dying**

Final Thoughts

Although we have presented you with several options for discussion with your legislator, you do not need to cover all included topics. This exchange of information benefits the state League in its efforts to develop strategies that promote our advocacy at the Capitol. Our influence in Albany depends on your contact with your state Senator and Assembly person(s). They know you elect them! If you haven't done so already, set up an appointment to see your state Assembly person(s) and Senator virtually. Meeting with a staff person is fine.

This Packet is available on the state League website under Our Work, www.lwvny.org. **Please fill out a Post-Lobby Report form online via [this link](#) after your meeting.** You should feel free to rely on the main points in this document for your visit, but more background information is available online on our website for your reference. See testimony, letters and memos submitted by the League during the legislative hearings on the executive budget at <https://lwvny.org/legislative-action/>. For any questions or concerns, please contact Erica at erica@lwvny.org

Tips for Lobbying

Lobbying While Remote

Preparation

1. **Making the appointment:** Similar to in-person meetings, the best method to schedule an appointment is to contact the legislator's district office and request to make an appointment with the scheduler. Many staff are now working remotely, so it is more likely you will have to schedule the meeting via email. In your email request include some possible meetings dates and the names of the members who will be attending. Be sure to mention which members are constituents of the Legislator and a general description of what you plan to discuss.

Some legislators prefer conference calls while others may make use of Zoom, Webex, or Google Meets. No matter the preferred meeting method, notify the scheduler of the number of participants in your group as well as their names, if possible. Send an e-mail confirming the appointment, mentioning the issues you will discuss. **If you cannot meet with the legislator, ask to meet with senior staff.**

Although meetings are remote, try to arrange for three to five League members to attend. If your League meets with several assembly members or senators, be sure to have a League member who is a constituent present. At least one person should be experienced in League. League members well versed on the issues to be lobbied should be included when possible. When more than one local League is involved, try to have representatives from as many of the constituent Leagues as possible.

2. **Assigning roles:** Even over Zoom or phone, each member of the lobby team should be assigned a specific role. The following are possible assignments:
 - Researching the legislator. Someone should be prepared to brief the other members of the lobby team on the legislator's relationship with the League and his/her voting record (if the legislator is a re-elected incumbent). What are his/her committee assignments and/or leadership positions in the Legislature? Is this legislator a member of the League?
 - Moderator/leader. This person should be certain that each League member introduces himself/herself. The leader must also watch the clock. Knowing ahead how much time the legislator has agreed to spend with you, the leader must allot an appropriate amount of time for each issue. It is the leader's responsibility to "pace" the visit and tactfully keep everyone (including the

legislator) on the subject. **Remember, opinions expressed should be those of the League, not of individuals.**

- Researching the issue or issues to be discussed. Look to the materials on this subject on the league website.
- Recording and reporting the legislator's response. The leader should not be the recorder.

3. **Follow Up:** In our remote world, follow up is more important than ever. Because members cannot physically leave behind documents related to the issues you discussed, a follow up email to the legislator and their staff will allow you to send a "thank you" along with documents related to the issues you discussed.

NOTE: If you anticipate printing any part of the interview in a League bulletin or newspaper, the recorder is obligated to get the legislator's permission and specific conditions under which you may print.

Lobbying in Person Preparation

1. **Making the appointment:** Contact the legislator's district office. Ask for an hour's time, but accept less if necessary, and do not overstay your welcome. Notify the legislator of the number in your group as well as their names, if possible. Send a letter or e-mail confirming the appointment, mentioning the issues you will discuss. Note: if you cannot meet with the legislator, ask to meet with senior staff.

Try to arrange for three to five League members to attend. If your League meets with several assembly members or senators, be sure to have a League member who is a constituent present. At least one person should be experienced in League. League members well versed on the issues to be lobbied should be included when possible. A new member can be included in this exciting action if accompanied by experienced League members. When more than one local League is involved, try to have representatives from as many of the constituent Leagues as possible.

2. **Assigning roles:** Each member of the lobby team should be assigned a specific role. The following are possible assignments:
 - Researching the legislator. Someone should be prepared to brief the other members of the lobby team on the legislator's relationship with the League and his/her voting record (if the legislator is a re-elected incumbent). What are his/her committee assignments and/or leadership positions in the

Legislature? Is this legislator a member of the League? If this legislator sponsored bills that League supported, you may want to take a moment to express League's appreciation.

- Moderator/leader. This person should be certain that each League member introduces himself/herself. The leader must also watch the clock. Knowing ahead how much time the legislator has agreed to spend with you, the leader must allot an appropriate amount of time for each issue. It is the leader's responsibility to "pace" the visit and tactfully keep everyone (including the legislator) on the subject. **Remember, opinions expressed should be those of the League, not of individuals.**
- Involve the entire team. Choose someone familiar with or willing to review the general subject area of the question.
- Recording and reporting the legislator's response. The leader should not be the recorder.

Bring copies of the state League's Legislative Agenda to leave with the legislator or staff to inform them of all the issues on which the League is currently active.

NOTE: If you anticipate printing any part of the interview in a League bulletin or newspaper the recorder is obligated to get the legislator's permission and specific conditions under which you may print.

Complete and return the lobby report forms to the state League immediately following the visit. This information is critical to the development of effective League action plans.

Write a follow-up thank you after the visit. This is not only a gesture of politeness, but it also allows you to underscore some points made during the visit, answer any questions you were not sure about, or send a League publication to which you may have referred during the course of the visit.

General Tips for a Successful Visit

- Keep the meeting friendly and focused. If there is disagreement on a particular issue, make clear the League position but avoid argument. How the legislator arrived at a particular position is sometimes revealing; it provides an opportunity for explanation (for better or worse!) but it also can give the League a clue for future approaches on the subject.
- Keep the lines of communication open. There will be other issues, and other days, for finding agreement and support.
- If you do not know the answer to a legislator's question, please tell him/her that you will get the answer and provide him/her with the information as soon as possible.



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518.465.4162 | www.lwvny.org | email: lwvny@lwvny.org

- Give the legislator a copy of our brochure, *2025 Legislative Agenda*.

If you have any questions about the visit, contact:

Erica Smitka, Executive Director

E-mail: erica@lwvny.org

Lobby Check List

Before Your Visit:

- ☐ Do you know **what your “ask”** is?
- ☐ Did you send copies of the **Legislative Packet materials** to the legislator or staff ahead of the meeting?
- ☐ Are you ready to **refute opposition** arguments?
- ☐ Do you have a couple of **questions** you want to ask?
- ☐ Is there an **upcoming event** where you can invite the lawmaker? Or are you sending a student from their area to the **Students Inside Albany Conference**?

After Your Visit:

- ☐ Did you send the legislator and/or their staff a **Thank You** note?
- ☐ Did you send the legislator and/or their staff a copy of **Legislative Packet materials**?
- ☐ Did you send **follow up on any questions** they had?
- ☐ Did you send your **Lobby Response Form** to the State League office?
- ☐ **Celebrate your success!**

Use this space for any additional notes: