



Unit Meetings – September 2022
“Back to League”

What is the League of Women Voters (LWV)?

- A **nonpartisan**, grassroots **political** organization open to **everyone**, age 16 and over, that:
- **Encourages informed and active participation in government,**
- **Works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and**
- **Influences public policy through education and advocacy.**

League History

Started by Activists



Women Marching for Suffrage in New York City Circa 1917

League History

- Grew out of the **suffrage movement**
- The league was formally organized in **1920**, six months before the 19th amendment to the Constitution was ratified
- Founder, **Carrie Chapman Catt**, was a leader in the women's suffrage movement
- League celebrated its **102nd birthday** in 2022
- Activists wanted women (and others) to be informed when they vote

League Organization

- **LWVUS**

- National Board
- Only League entity that can advocate at Congress
- 501(c)4 and 501(c)3 (Education Fund)
- Franchises local Leagues
- Local Leagues pay dues to LWVUS (called Per Member Payment (PMP))

- **LWVWA**

- State Board
- Only League entity that can advocate at State Legislature
- Lobby Team
- Statewide affinity groups and supportive committees
- 501(c)4 and 501(c)3 (Education Fund)
- Local Leagues pay dues to LWVWA (called Per Member Payment (PMP))

- **Local Leagues (LWVTPC)**

- Independent organizations
- Local Board
- Unit Meetings
- Advocates at local level but can use LWVUS and LWVWA positions
- 501(c)4 and 501(c)3 (Education Fund) [only one other 501(c)3 in WA State]

LWVTPC Funding

- **Operating Fund – 501(c)4**
 - Dues
 - Donations
- **Education Fund – 501(c)3**
 - Donations
 - Grants
 - Endowments: Endowment Funds allow only the capital gains to be used; the principal remains intact in the Endowment

What the League Does:

Protects Democracy & Educates and Engages Voters

- Voter Registration
- Get-out-the-Vote
- Candidate and Issue Forums
- Nonpartisan voter information: Vote411.org
- Election Observer Program
- Government Observer Program

What the League Does:

Studies Issues of Significance & Takes Action

- **Action only based on adopted Positions**
- **Positions come from a member-based process:**
 - **Membership-proposed Study**
 - **Member Discussion & Input**
 - **Consensus taken from Input**
 - **Adoption of Position by Board**
 - **Ratification of Position by Members**

League Decision-making

Starts with Members

Local Program Planning – LWVTPC in December

- Proposed local studies & action go to local League Annual Meeting
- Proposed LWVWA and LWVUS studies and action go to those respective Boards

National & State Boards recommend to Conventions for membership approval

Non-recommended items can also be brought up at Convention for membership consideration.

Conventions:

Membership Decision-making

- **Local League Annual Meetings** – every year
- **LWVWA Conventions** – odd-numbered years
- **LWVUS Conventions** – even-numbered years
- **Delegates** appointed by Board from among volunteers
- LWVWA & LWVUS hold **Council** in alternate years

What is Consensus?

Consensus is mutual agreement of League members arrived at through discussion.

- During discussion, the issue is examined from all sides and every member has an opportunity to express their viewpoint.
- Consensus questions, created by the study committee and approved by the Board, provide structure.
- Members discuss pros and cons on each question until it becomes apparent that consensus has or has not been reached. A committee analyzes the consensus responses, looks for areas of member understanding and agreement and, using this information, creates our position statement.

What the League Doesn't Do

As a nonpartisan organization, the League does not support - or oppose - any political party or candidate.

- Positions taken after study and consensus are not intended to align with or advance any political party or platform.
- Personal opinions of members may be different from League positions, and the distinction should be made clear.

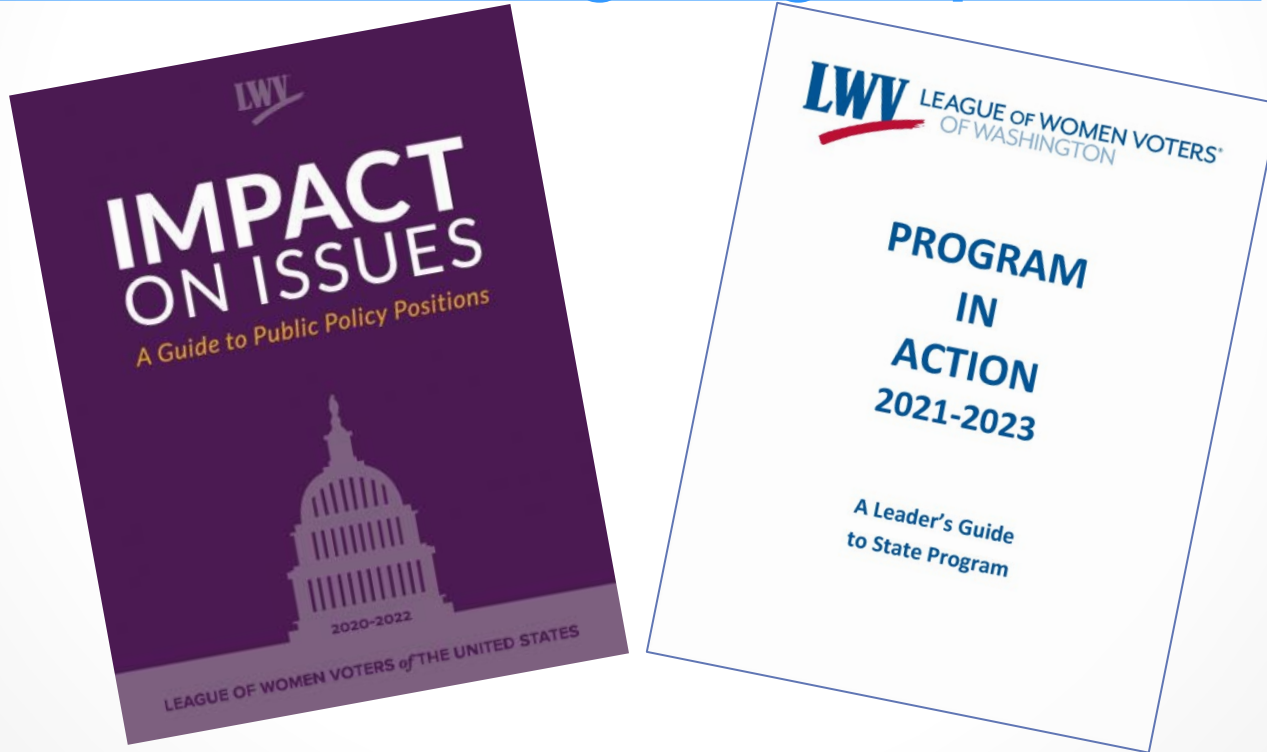
Nonpartisanship vs Positions

- **League Advocacy relates to Democracy:**
citizen engagement in government
- League is nonpartisan; League does not support or oppose any candidates or political parties
- Positions are based on study, consensus and adoption and are not partisan. Studies are rigorously conducted and reviewed to be fact-based, non-biased and nonpartisan
- League Advocacy uses positions

Find League Positions

- **LWVUS & LWVWA:**

<https://www.lwvwa.org/league-positions>



- **LWVTPC:** <https://lwvtpc.org>; Issues & Advocacy

They Represent You!

An Annual Directory of our Elected Officials

- Annual directory of elected officials who represent us at the local, county, state and national levels
 - *They Represent You (TRY)* makes it quick to find the right person
 - It contains phone numbers, emails and street addresses
- Includes maps of County Council districts, U.S. Congressional districts and State Legislative districts
- Describes how to successfully advocate for change, pick a candidate, write a letter to the editor and register to vote

Our Latest Study:

Media & Democracy

- Investigating the state of local news
- Focusing on the availability of news that Pierce County residents need to participate effectively in democracy.
- Completion of written report and League consensus process is projected for May 2023.
- Rosemary Powers, Chair

LWVTPC Action

- **Affordable Housing & Homelessness**
- **Comprehensive Plan Update Engagement**
- **Climate Change Information & Education**
- **Hilltop Library**

Staying Connected:

Local Units & The Voter



LWVTPC has 4 Units

- Gig Harbor – Key Peninsula
- East Pierce – Puyallup
- Tacoma
- Virtual

Units meet monthly, September through May
Except December

All-Member Meetings:

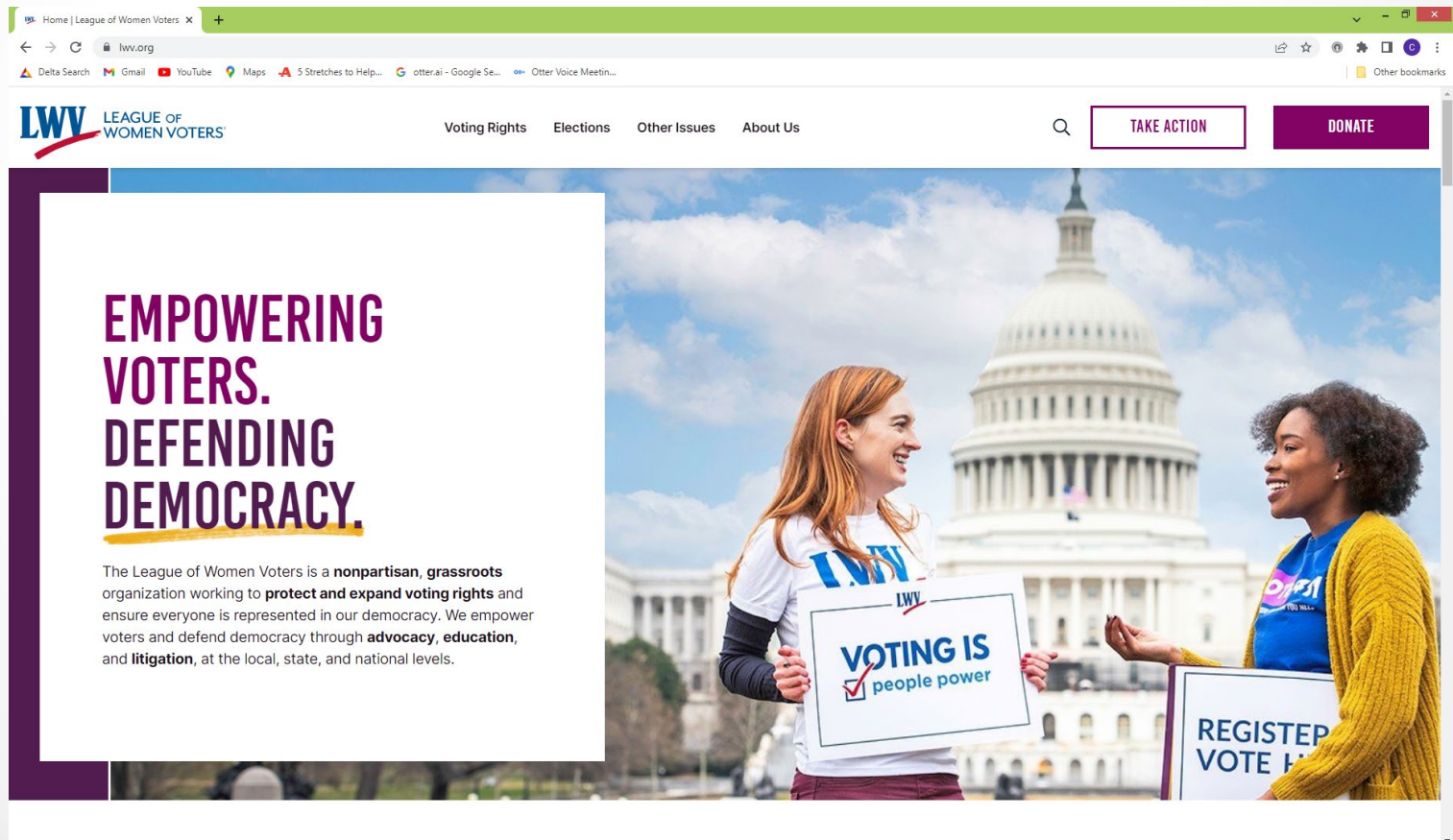
December & June

December – Program Planning (start the member-initiated process of determining what League will do in the following program year)

June – Annual Meeting (election of officers, adoption of Operating budget, approval of program plans)

102 years old, but not too old to change!

League's new image





League of Women Voters of Tacoma-Pierce County

Take Action

Member Login



Empowering
Voters.
Defending
Democracy

Register to vote, find your
polling place, ballot info,
and more at VOTE411.org

VISIT [VOTE411.ORG](https://VOTE411.org)

Learn about upcoming
forums and other LWV
events

CALENDAR



Democracy & Community

<https://lwvtpc.org>

New LWVUS Initiatives

- **New branding**

(examples)



- **Assertive new positions & actions**

- Strong response in support of abortion rights after Supreme Court decision
- New position on Criminal Justice, which supports a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent and fosters public trust (and more)
- New position on health care
- Support for direct election of the US President
- Digital equity
- Equal Rights Amendment prioritized
- DC statehood
- Urging Congress to attend to missing Indigenous women

So, the more things change, the more they stay the same



The League still promotes democracy, voting rights, citizen engagement and information for voters

Get Involved!

- **Observer Corps**
Lydia Zepeda
zepelow@gmail.com
- **Media & Democracy Study**
Rosemary Powers
rpowers@eou.edu
- **Comp Plan Action**
Lydia Zepeda
zepelow@gmail.com
- **Communications**
Theresa Power-Drutis
tpdrutis@nctacoma.org
- **Election Observers**
Nan Peele
nanpeele.1944@gmail.com
- **New Leaders Needed**
Get out the Vote
Fundraising
Unit Leaders

Promote League and its activities to others

Thank You!

Q&A

Discussion