

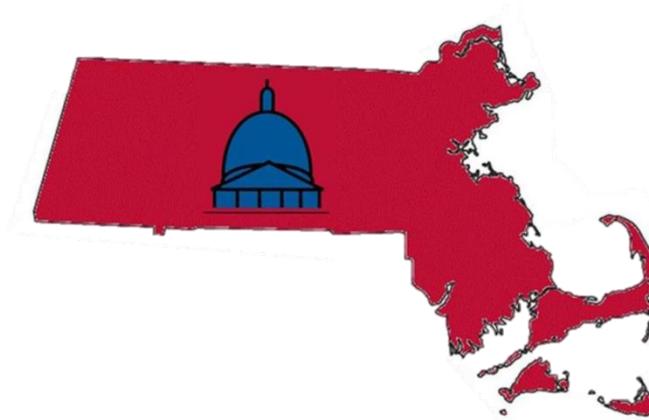


League of Women Voters®

Massachusetts

DAY ON THE HILL

Moving the Needle On League Priorities



**October 24, 2017
Massachusetts State House
Great Hall
9:30 a.m. – noon**

A Message from Our President

Dear League Members,

Welcome and thank you for attending Day on the Hill! So many of us are looking for ways to make a difference in the world. As we approach the midway point on our two-year legislative cycle, TODAY is the perfect time to check in with your legislators and let them know your priorities. Nothing makes a stronger impact on legislators than personal visits from constituents. You are proof that democracy is not a spectator sport.

We are delighted to have as our keynote speakers today two of the highest-ranking women in the state legislature—Representative Patricia Haddad, the Speaker Pro Tempore of the House, and Senator Cynthia Creem, the Assistant Majority Leader of the Senate.

And we are focusing on how to “move the needle” on legislation in four key areas that we identified as priorities at our April convention: Elections and Voting, Climate Change, Immigration, and Criminal Justice Reform. Our legislative specialists in those areas will outline the reasons we are working so hard on legislation in these areas, and then we hope you will share those reasons with the Senators and Representatives you visit today.

Be sure to leave a list of the legislation we are backing with the legislators you visit, and return the feedback form to us here before you leave so we have the information we need to move that needle.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the LWVMA Legislative Specialists who make up our Legislative Action Committee. Their hard work over the two-year legislative session makes the League's voice effective on Beacon Hill. They identify key legislation, track it over the entire session, testify at hearings, issue calls for action when action is important, and participate in coalitions. The League salutes them!

Enjoy your day on Beacon Hill and know that the effort you are making is important.

All my best,



Mary Ann Ashton
LWVMA President

"The League of Women Voters is the gold standard in advocacy. I tell my staff when they see the League's name among the supporters of something, pay attention."

--Nancy Pelosi, former Speaker, now minority leader, U.S. House of Representatives

Keynote Speakers



Representative Patricia Haddad is Speaker Pro Tempore of the House of Representatives and represents the Fifth Bristol district made up of Dighton, Somerset, Swansea and Taunton. A member of the House since 2000, she has served on a variety of committees including Human Services and Elderly Affairs, Health Care, Medicaid, Natural Resources and Agriculture, Rules, Ethics and Ways and Means. Haddad served two terms as Chairwoman of the Joint Committee on Education, and prior to her recent appointment, she was assistant majority whip. She was a health and physical education teacher in her native Somerset and served on the Recreation Commission and School Committee.



Senator Cynthia Creem is the Assistant Majority Leader in the Senate and represents the First Middlesex and Norfolk District, which includes Newton, Brookline and parts of Wellesley. A senator since 1999, Creem is currently Chair, Senate Committee on Bills in the Third Reading; Vice Chair, Joint Committee on Revenue; Vice Chair, Special Senate Committee on Cyber Security Readiness; and a member of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary, the Senate Committee on Ethics, and the Senate Committee on Steering and Policy. She was a member and President of the Newton Board of Aldermen and a member of the Governor's Council prior to becoming State Senator.

Schedule

9:30—10:00 Registration and coffee

10:00—10:15 Welcome and introductions

10:15—10:45 Priority Legislation Panel

- Elections and voting—Automatic Voter Registration—Nancy Brumback
 - Climate Change—Carbon Pricing—Launa Zimmaro
 - Immigration—Safe Communities—Karen Price
 - Criminal Justice Reform—Omnibus Bill—Colleen Kirby
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10:45—11:00 Salute to Carole Pelchat

11:00—11:45 Keynote Speakers: Representative Patricia Haddad and Senator Cynthia Creem; Q & A

11:45—12:00 Lobbying Tips

Legislative Action Committee

The Legislative Action Committee is made up of specialists in various areas who identify key legislation, recommend League support or opposition, track the bills through the legislative session, lobby legislators and committees, prepare and present written and oral testimony, and recommend and prepare action alerts when needed.

The League has positions in many areas of legislation, and could be more active in these areas if we had a specialist in that area. If you feel strongly about a topic not currently covered, please consider joining the LAC as a specialist. You can truly make a difference. We often hear the League “should do something” in these areas. We can’t without someone to do it. Maybe you?

Legislative Specialists encourage League members who are interested in closely following an area of legislation or a specific bill to contact them and be added to that specialist’s “team” for notifications of committee hearings and other activities related to specific legislation.

Nancy Brumback, Chair, LWVMA Director
Carole Pelchat, Legislative Director

Legislative Specialists

Affordable Housing --Clare Gordon
Agriculture--Louise Haldeman
Basic Human Needs--Clare Gordon
Casino Gambling--Louise Haldeman
Child Safety--Palma McLaughlin
Criminal Justice and Courts--Colleen Kirby
Education--Terry Yoffie
Elder Affairs--Pat Costello
Elections and Voting--Linda Freedman
Environment: Energy and Resource Conservation--Launa Zimmaro
Environment: Natural Resources—Loring Schwarz
Fiscal Policy--June Michaels
Good Governance--Carolyn Lee
Health Care—Janice Goodell
Immigration--Karen Price
Transportation—Lois Levin
Water Resources—Carolyn Lee
Women’s Issues—Jessica Sullivan

To reach any of the Legislative Specialists, email specialists@lwwma.org.

Priority Legislation 2017-2018: Automatic Voter Registration, Carbon Pricing, Safe Communities, and Criminal Justice Reform

Elections and Voting: Automatic Voter Registration, S373/H2091: To establish a system of automatic voter registration so citizens would be registered to vote when they deal with the Registry of Motor Vehicles or other specified state agencies unless they opt out.

- AVR has already been passed by 10 states and the District of Columbia.
- 680,000 eligible Massachusetts voters are not registered; AVR will change that.
- AVR will eliminate much of the human error that comes with paper forms, will more frequently update records when people move, and can eliminate duplicate records.
- Massachusetts would join the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), a national clearinghouse that collects state registration information to prevent registration and voting in more than one state.
- Voters can choose a political party or decline to be registered for any reason.
- The Town Clerks Association testified that it is “fine” with the bill if there is sufficient funding for implementation.

Climate Change: Carbon Pricing, S1821/H1726: To establish a carbon-fee-and-rebate system, with rebates focused on low- and moderate-income households to assure that a high percentage of these households come out ahead or even. Passing a carbon pricing bill would achieve these critical outcomes:

- Reduce climate-changing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Protect vulnerable residents and businesses.
- Stimulate the state’s economy by keeping energy dollars in Massachusetts and through growth in the technology, innovation and renewable energy sectors.
- Promote renewable energy jobs and businesses.
- Advance the transition to a renewable energy future for a habitable world.

Immigration: Safe Communities Act, S1305/H3269: To protect the civil rights of all state residents, regardless of immigration status. With the protections in the Act, undocumented immigrants living in our communities will be more likely to come forward to report crimes, educate their children, seek health care, and cooperate with community policing efforts in our cities, towns, and counties.

- Prohibits law enforcement and RMV from allowing access to any data for the purpose of enforcing any federal registry program based on national origin, religion, or other protected characteristics.
- Prohibits law enforcement from arresting or detaining someone solely for immigration enforcement purposes or an immigration detainer request.
- Prohibits inquiries about citizenship or immigration status without just cause.
- Prohibits collaboration agreements between ICE and local law enforcement for the purpose of deputizing local enforcement with the power of immigration officers.
- Grants due process protections when federal immigration agents interview people in jails and prisons.
- Broadly prohibits use of state/local resources for immigration enforcement purposes.

*Criminal Justice Reform: **Omnibus Criminal Justice Reform Bill:*** To improve the state’s criminal justice system. The League supports the omnibus criminal justice reform bill, S.2170, drafted by the Joint Committee on the Judiciary, which includes provisions from most of the criminal justice reform bills we support. This omnibus bill includes provisions to:

- Repeal of some mandatory minimum sentences.
- Reform practices around solitary confinement.
- Significantly change areas of the juvenile justice system.
- Alter the criminalization of poverty by reducing fines and fees imposed on persons charged with crimes.
- And enact reforms in such areas as bail and pretrial practices, sealing and expungement of records, felony larceny threshold, medical parole, and taking primary caretaker status into account in sentencing.

Other Bills LWVMA Supports/Opposes

Listed below are the other bills the League is supporting in this session. The full title of the bill, a summary of what it does and the testimony we have submitted if a hearing has been held is available on our website, lwvma.org/advocacy/league-supported-legislation/.

Affordable Housing:

H673/S723 To increase the production of low-and middle-income housing

H675 To issue bonds financing production and preservation of low- and middle-income housing

Child Safety:

S34/H85 To repeal the family cap on welfare benefits

S862 To increase training in recognizing domestic violence for child advocates in custody cases

S48 To raise the age at which a child is subject to juvenile court jurisdiction from 7 to 12

Criminal Justice Reform:

S777/H2359 To revise system of fines and court fees to reduce “debtors’ prisons” and the criminalization of poverty

S874 To parole terminally ill and incapacitated inmates

S779/H3121 To improve parole system and increase participation in rehabilitation programs

S770/H3072 To allow alternative sentences for primary caregivers of minor children

H74 To implement a task force’s recommendations to reduce recidivism

S944/2309 To remove records of mistaken arrests and juvenile arrests

S873/H967 To increase the item value for a felony larceny conviction from \$250 to \$1500

S834/H3120 To reform the pretrial and bail processes

S847/H793 To support and expand restorative justice programs

S1306/H3071 To reform solitary confinement practices

S819/H741 To repeal mandatory minimum sentences and minimum fines for certain drug offenses

S773 To increase prisoner participation in work, education, vocational training and/or social skills programs

Education:

S207/H3704 To provide age-appropriate sexual health education
S223 To update the foundation budget formula for state aid to school districts
S215/H2016 To require a program of K-12 civics education and engagement

Elections and Voting:

S373/H2091 To implement Automatic Voter Registration in Massachusetts
S371, H353, H2093 To implement Election Day voter registration
S365 To require candidates for president and vice president to disclose tax returns and provide financial information in order to be on the ballot in Massachusetts

Environment:

S1821/H1726 To establish a carbon pricing fee and rebate system
S1876/H2700 To increase the minimum percentage of renewable energy supplied by electricity suppliers from qualifying renewable resources
S1848/H2706 To eliminate solar net metering caps, establish a statewide solar target of 25% by 2030, and accelerate the Renewable Portfolio Standard by 3 percentage points a year
S1845/H2683 To provide an incentive for utilities to repair leaky gas pipes by prohibiting passing the cost of "lost" gas to consumers
H2148 To require producers to be responsible for collection, transportation, and reuse or recycling of specified electronic products
S1849/H3395 To transition Massachusetts to 100% renewable electricity by 2035 and 100% renewable energy economy-wide by 2050
S1875/H1725 To modernize the electric grid
H1245 To ban certain toxic flame retardants in Massachusetts

Good Governance:

S787/H873 To prohibit registries based on religion, national origin, etc. and to prevent collection of information on people based on First Amendment-protected activities

Health Care:

S591/H2960 To require that confidential health information be sent to the patient, not to an insurance policyholder
S619/H2987 To implement single-payer health care in Massachusetts
S610/H596 To study the costs of a single-payer system versus the current system
S1196/H2474 To create an advanced level of dental therapist
S1206/H1189 To license midwives practicing in out-of-hospital settings

Immigration:

S1305/H3269 To prohibit the use of state and local law enforcement agencies and resources to identify, register, detain and/or deport undocumented immigrants who pose no known threat
H644 To allow students who are not citizens or legal permanent residents to pay in-state tuition if they otherwise qualify
H3033 To require the costs of state and local enforcement of immigration law to be covered by federal funds

Meeting Basic Human Needs:

H659 To remove the requirement for families to spend a night in a place unsafe for sleeping before qualifying for a shelter

S612/H101 To create a common application for safety-net social services

S46/H695 To create a bill of rights for homeless people

S1521/H1504 To increase the earned income tax credit

Transportation:

S1905/H2877 To improve the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians

Water Resources:

S1126/H2116 To authorize municipalities to assess a “water-banking” fee on large-scale water users to mitigate the impacts of major new and expanded developments

S420/H2711 To maintain streamflow and water levels

S425/H2115 To require water conservation during droughts

H2139 To require a water quality and pollution control report

Women’s Issues:

S499/H536 To require insurers to provide contraceptives without copays or deductibles

S1023/H1038 To add pregnancy as a 'protected' category under the antidiscrimination law, requiring employers to provide reasonable accommodation to pregnant workers (This bill has been passed and signed into law.)

S545/H462 To require gender equality in privately-purchased disability insurance policies

S784 and S805 To repeal archaic laws on contraception, abortion and other issues

Listed below are bills the League is opposing in this session. The full title of the bill, a summary of what it does, and the testimony we have submitted if a hearing has been held are available on our website, wvma.org/advocacy/league-supported-legislation/.

Child Safety:

H811 To revise child custody guidelines in court cases

Elections and Voting:

S374, S397, H363, H372 and H386 To require photo identification for voting

Environment:

S1865, H1744 and H2686 To repeal the bottle deposit law

Water Resources:

H2777 To shift water pollution oversight from the federal Environmental Protection Agency to Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

Tips on How to Lobby Your Legislator

What is Lobbying?

Lobbying is part of participation in the democratic process, an extension of the right to be heard, and is an important form of advocacy and public policy participation. The goal of League lobbying is to produce a vote by a legislator in line with our position. Lobbying to convince a legislator of the merits of your position requires an understanding of the rationale that supports that position. The goal is to influence on the basis of your knowledge and understanding of the issue.

Why is the League Unique When It Comes to Lobbying?

There is no shortage of paid lobbyists and special interests who aggressively try to influence legislators on public policy. State legislators, however, are most responsive to their constituents. They need to know that a specific issue is a priority in their community, and it takes the people who live and work in the community to convince them. League members as constituents are the most credible messengers because the legislators are well aware that the League of Women Voters acts, advocates, and lobbies on positions that have been established through study and consensus.

DO:

- Address your Senator or Representative properly.
- Identify yourself immediately and establish clearly that you are a constituent.
- Understand that you may meet with an aide instead of the legislator.
- Know the status of the legislation. Refer to a bill by number whenever possible.
- Use your own words to describe why you care about the issue.
- Be brief and explicit, courteous and reasonable. Limit a visit to 10-15 minutes.
- Whenever possible, establish your own credentials or expertise on the subject.
- Familiarize yourself with any counter arguments to your position and develop responses.
- Give legislators succinct, easy-to-read literature; highlight important facts and arguments.
- Write the chair or members of a committee holding hearings on legislation in which you are interested if you have facts that would influence their thinking.
- Get to know legislative staff and treat them courteously. Their cooperation can make or break your chances to reach the legislators themselves.
- Always keep off-the-record comments confidential.
- Write to say you approve, not just to criticize or oppose.
- In a letter, include your address and sign your name legibly. In an email, include your full name, home address and phone number.
- Keep the door open for further discussion in spite of any apparently negative attitudes.

DON'T:

- Don't arrive unprepared.
- Don't apologize for taking their time.
- Don't be arrogant or rude toward legislators or their staff.
- Don't argue or back recalcitrant legislators into a corner when they take an opposing position.
- Don't send copies or form letters unless you include a personal note.

League Online Resources

The Citizen Lobbyist: A handbook on how the legislature works and how to lobby effectively — <https://lwvma.org/advocacy/the-citizen-lobbyist/>

Legislation LWVMA supports/opposes: A complete list of the bills LWVMA is working on this session, with summaries of the bills and League testimony on them — <https://lwvma.org/advocacy/league-supported-legislation/>

How Local Leagues Can Work with Legislators: Suggestions for ways local Leagues can establish strong relationships with members of the legislature — https://lwvma.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Ideas-for-Working-with-Your-Legislators.KP_.NBedit.pdf

Advocacy Toolkit: A variety of resources on League advocacy — <https://lwvma.org/member-resources/toolkits-for-members/advocacy-toolkit/>

State Legislature Online Resources

Information on Massachusetts Legislature — <https://malegislature.gov/>

How to find your legislator — <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>

State Senators (contact information) — <https://malegislature.gov/People/Senate>

State Representatives (contact information) — <https://malegislature.gov/People/House>

Legislative Committees — <https://malegislature.gov/Committees>

Status of Current Legislation — <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/Search>

Legislative Schedule, Committee Hearings — <https://malegislature.gov/Events>

State House floor plans — <http://lwvma.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/RO2LQG1.pdf>