



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

OF SALEM, MA

May 2018, Volume 1, No.1

“The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization of women and men, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.”

2018 Steering Committee Chairs

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LWV United States <http://www.lwv.org>

News, Announcements, Suggestions for Newsletter, contact Patti Morsillo prmorsillo@gmail.com



Congratulations to Salem!

**On Friday, May 4, the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts elected to recognize the Salem group as a Unit! We are the 1st Unit to be recognized this year in MA, and the 5th since 2017. This status gives us the support we need from the state and national League to organize and work towards becoming a fully recognized League.
Let's get to work!**

From LWVMA:

LWV Salem Unit Launches

We are delighted to announce the launch of our newest League unit--in Salem in May! Salem joins the other four new units that have started up in Massachusetts since the start of 2017: Framingham, Central Berkshire County, Franklin County and Greater Lowell.

Last fall, Salem member Chris Ross reached out to the LWVMA, and an initial meeting took place with four potential Salem members and four LWV Marblehead members. Marblehead member Kathy Leonardson pitched in and continues to act as Salem's mentor today. After the New Year, 12 women gathered to review

leadership approaches, non-partisan positions, advocacy interests and next steps. After outreach to their community, they held their first public information meeting in April which drew over 50 attendees! Breaking into smaller groups they identified priorities and focused their efforts. More members joined, and the Salem board is now led by Jennifer Lynch, Judith Reilly, Katie Hallett, Shelly Stulter and Jill Declare. Welcome!



Calendar of Events

- Wednesday May 30:** **Getting to the Point with Eric H. Holder Jr.**
6:30 pm Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate
The 82nd US Attorney General discusses gerrymandering and its impact on the American political system.
REGISTRATION NOW MOVED TO WAITLIST
- Saturday June 2:** **Voter Services and Civic Engagement Working Group Meeting**
11:30 am - 1:00 pm; Beverly Bank Community Room, 73 Lafayette Street, Salem
- Wednesday June 6:** **Environment and Climate Change Working Group Meeting**
7:00 pm; Salem Common
- Wednesday June 13:** **Education Working Group Meeting**
7:00 pm; 33 Pleasant St, Salem
- Saturday June 16:** **Affordable Housing Working Group Meeting**
10:30 am - noon; Jodie Bee Bakes, 7 Church St, Salem
- Wednesday June 20:** **Gun Safety Working Group Meeting**
7:00 pm; 53 Broad St, Salem
- Saturday June 23:** **North Shore Pride Parade**
11:30; meet at Shetland Park
- Monday, June 25:** **Healthcare and Reproductive Freedom Working Group Meeting**
7:00 pm; 16 Buchanan Rd Salem
- Friday July 13:** **Free Friday at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate, Columbia Point, Boston**
10:00 am - 5:00 pm Free admission all day

We Took Action!

The League of Women Voters of Salem held our first High School Voter Registration Drive at Salem High on Tuesday May 22. Congratulations to the 47 new voters who registered at the event. Thanks to Lori Marend-Lang for organizing the event, and to the Salem LWV and SHS student volunteers. This is the first of many events we will hold at the high school to register and educate our up-and-coming voters.



Steering Committee Update

The Steering Committee met on Friday May 4, 2018. The main focus of the meeting was to review the results of the survey from the kickoff meeting, and establish working groups for the year. Overwhelming interest was shown for Voter Services, with many other topics also receiving many votes. The working groups receiving the most votes were:

- Voter Services: Judith Reilly, Chair (judith.reilly.77@gmail.com)
- Climate Change: Chair to be decided
- Gun Control: Chair to be decided
- Reproductive Freedom/Healthcare: Chair to be decided
- Affordable Housing: Lori Stewart, Chair (loreleestewart@gmail.com)
- Education: Chris Ross, Chair (christine.ross271@gmail.com)
- LGBT: Chair to be decided

If there is a topic which is not represented above, that you feel strongly about, let us know. We will assist you in starting a working group.

It was also decided that for this year, all interested people will receive the newsletter. After the year, only members of the League of Women Voters of Salem will receive the newsletter each month.

See below for information on our participation in the North Shore Pride Parade on Saturday June 23 in Salem!

Lori Marena announced a Voter Registration Drive at Salem High School on Tuesday May 22, during 1st and 2nd lunches in the first floor cafeteria. Fliers have been made and hung, and it will be announced in the daily announcements. (See above - our first Action!)

The Steering Committee will meet every third Friday of the month. Next meeting: June 15 at Shelly Stuler's home, 40 Summer St, Salem. All are welcome to attend, RSVP to lwvsalem@gmail.com.

Kickoff Meeting - League of Women Voters of Salem - April 12, 2018

What an overwhelming feeling to be in a room of people passionate about educating themselves and others on important issues! If you were not able to make it to the meeting, here are some things we talked about:

- The LWV is a NONPARTISAN, EVIDENCE-BASED organization committed to building stronger communities and championing democracy. We want to work together so our citizenry here in Salem is informed and engaged. We want voters to cast their ballot at every election
- The League works towards this goal in 2 distinct ways: Voter Services and Citizen Education, and Program and Action.
- Voter Services and Citizen Education includes conducting voter registration drives, hosting candidate forums, and providing educational materials on ballot initiatives, among other things.
- Program and Action takes an issues-based approach to legislation. Local and state leagues conduct research on an issue and feed it into the state. When there is ample evidence to take a position on a given issue, the League will vote to adopt a position.
- **You are invited to contribute as much or as little as your time and circumstances allow.** We do not function to provide more stress.
- Membership in the local League will entitle you to information about events, research initiatives, and opportunities open to you, but will not commit you to participating.
- We will not have meetings for the sake of having meetings. We value your time, and we want people to be engaged and enthusiastic about the time they volunteer to the League.
- We will establish working groups based on the survey results (see Working Groups below).
- **Ready to Join?** Send a check for \$50 (make out to "League of Women Voters of MA") to Shelly Stuler, 40 Summer St, Salem, MA 01970. (\$25 for students; please send proof of student status.)
- We want a diversity of members and if the registration fee is financially untenable at this time, please do not let it dissuade you from joining. We encourage those able to help support memberships, and those who would like information about financial aid to speak up. **We welcome ALL, regardless of current financial situation.**
- We encourage anyone with questions to reach out to us: lwvsalem@gmail.com

Working Groups

The following Working Groups will be meeting in the next few weeks. Upcoming newsletters will communicate the status and activities within each of the groups.

Questions specific to a working group should be addressed to the chair of the group.

1. **Voter Services and Civic Engagement:** This umbrella group includes many subtopics and activities. Briefly, we have volunteered to help the state collect voter information on candidates and ballot initiatives. We would like to host public information events. This group is interested in creating a “Know Your City” document, which will collect all of the municipal government information you could ever need. The document could be used in a “new resident” packet.
Chair: Judith Reilly, judith.reilly.77@gmail.com
Meeting: Saturday, June 2, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm; Beverly Bank Community Room, 73 Lafayette Street, Salem

2. **Environment and Climate Change:** The LWV has been invited to participate in local discussions about climate change and coastal resiliency. This group will work with other active local groups to support research initiatives and work towards solutions to one of the most pressing challenges of our time.
Chair: Shelly Stuler, shelly.stuler@comcast.net
Meeting: Thursday June 7, 7:00 pm; Salem Common, rain location tbd

3. **Gun Safety:** The Marblehead LWV has a very active group focused on this issue. We are working with our sister league to determine how we can help complement their efforts.
Chair: Patti Morsillo, prmorsillo@gmail.com
Meeting: Wednesday June 20, 7:00 pm; 53 Broad St, Salem

4. **Healthcare and Reproductive Freedom:** This group will be researching and working on healthcare and more specifically women’s health issues.
Chair: Norene Gachignard, norene.gachignard@gmail.com
Meeting: Monday, June 25, 7:00 pm; 16 Buchanan Rd Salem

5. **Affordable Housing:** There is a wave of momentum in Salem about tackling affordable housing and homelessness here in Salem. This group will attend city meetings to collect and share information, and contribute to researching possible solutions.
Chair: Lori Stewart, loreleestewart@gmail.com
Meeting: Saturday June 16, 10:30 am - noon; Jodie Bee Bakes, 7 Church St, Salem

6. **LGBTQ:** This group will conduct research to recommend a position for the state league and then lead efforts to educate the voting public on the matter. Going forward, this group will work on LGBTQ issues.
Chair: TBD

7. **Education:** This group will track and engage with national, state, and local educational measures.
Chair: Chris Ross, christine.ross271@gmail.com
Meeting: Wednesday, June 13, 7:00 pm; 33 Pleasant St, Salem

Beyond the March: Women Leading the Way in Massachusetts League of Women Voters of Massachusetts Conference

The following was submitted by Lori Marendia, High School Outreach, who attended the conference:

On April 28, 2018, the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts held a conference at Clark University in Worcester. The theme: Beyond the March: Women Leading the Way in Massachusetts. The purpose of the conference was to provide some ideas for action and call for solutions to strengthen our civic foundations at the local, state, and national level.

Speakers explored lessons from women's activists of the past, the key role of women leaders today, and concrete steps we can all take to strengthen our democracy going forward.

It should come as no surprise that the most significant action step to remember to make change was to persist and to start at the local and state levels. Some suggestions in making change in Massachusetts (according to Professor Erin O'Brien, UMASS Boston):

- 1) Reform for Same Day Voter Registration and Automatic Voter Registration
- 2) Elect women and women of color in local and state positions (state legislature and congressional delegation)
- 3) Political socialization (Ex: becoming a member of LWV), play a sport (Women who played sports were approximately 25% more likely to run for office. - Lawless and Fox, 2013), and run for office (Women are less likely than men to be recruited to run for office. -Lawless and Fox, 2010)

Biggest takeaway from the conference: join the League of Women Voters! Are you looking to make a difference in your community? Do you want your voice heard on important issues of public policies? Join the Salem League of Women Voters!



2018 North Shore Pride Parade

Join the League of Women Voters of Salem in the North Shore Pride Parade on Saturday, June 23. We are meeting at 11:30 am at Shetland Park.

Hope to see you there!

Environment and Climate Change

“Cooler Smarter” Webinar

John Rogers from the Union of Concerned Scientists presented practical steps for low-carbon living in this first LWVMA webinar. You can view the webinar, including the question and answer period on YouTube [here](#). Hosted by the LWVMA Steering Committee for Environmental Action and Advocacy, this is a continuation of the Climate and Energy Solutions Series.

Gun Safety

You can help with gun safety- from the State League

Extreme Risk Protection Order Bill: LWVMA is now supporting H.3610, which establishes a civil procedure for removing guns from people who pose a significant danger of causing harm to themselves or others. (A slightly different version, H.3081, is no longer active.) Please contact your Senator and Representative and let them know you want this "red flag" legislation to become law. It is strongly opposed by the Massachusetts branch of the NRA, so your legislators need to hear from constituents in favor of stronger gun control, even if you know they also support gun control.

The Legislative Action Committee now has a specialist for gun legislation, Jennifer Muroff of the Needham League, assisted by Sue McCalley of the Brookline League, who will be following this bill, currently before the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security.

On the federal level, urge your U.S. Senators to oppose the Concealed Carry Reciprocity bill, HR38. That bill has already passed the U.S. House. Even though Senator Warren and Senator Markey oppose this bill, they need reinforcement from constituents. This bill would allow someone granted a concealed carry permit in any state to carry concealed guns in any other state, regardless of that state's laws. [See the LWVUS letter](#) for talking points.

From LWVMA, about ERPO Legislation Summary:

An Act temporarily preventing firearm access for extremely dangerous or suicidal individuals

Initial bill number: H.3610 (Bill numbers will change as legislation proceeds.)

Sponsor: Rep. Marjorie Decker

This bill would enable a family or household member or a law enforcement officer or agency to petition the court for a one-year extreme risk protection order (ERPO) that would prohibit a person from “having in his or her custody or control, owning, purchasing, possessing or receiving any firearms or ammunition.” It includes a provision that such an order could be issued even before a court hearing if the petition includes detailed information that the subject of the petition poses a significant danger of causing imminent personal injury to self or others.

The first two sections add such an ERPO to the existing restrictions for granting firearms identification cards and firearms licenses.

The remaining sections spell out how the process would be implemented, including defining who could request such an order. Notably there is a provision to keep the address of a petitioner secret if certain conditions are met, protecting domestic violence victims who seek an ERPO. The bill details the process for obtaining such an order, enforcing it, storing confiscated weapons, and conditions for ending or renewing the order and for returning Weapons.

League position: From LWVMA Where We Stand, p. 47:

Until such a time as a ban on the private possession of handguns and assault weapons becomes law the League supports:

- improved and standardized licensing procedures
- training in the use of handguns and assault weapons and the responsibilities of ownership

- education of the public to the dangers of the handgun in the home
- strict enforcement of the present laws concerning handgun ownership
- measures to encourage the removal of all handguns and assault weapons from the home and street

From LWVUS Impact on Issues:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the proliferation of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. The League supports strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens. The League supports regulating firearms for consumer safety.

Voter Services and Civic Engagement



For the 2018 election cycle, LWVMA will be launching MOVE 2018, a multi-pronged initiative designed to engage and educate Massachusetts voters. As part of MOVE 2018, LWVMA will support the work of local Leagues by providing resources to help make your Get-Out-the-Vote work successful. These include a new online Voters' Guide, resources on how to conduct forums, and resources to increase voter registration in Massachusetts, described further below:

LWVMA Online Voter Guide is coming July, 2018!

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts will introduce a new online Voters' Guide to voters throughout Massachusetts for the 2018 primary and state elections. The LWVMA Voters' Guide is a customizable digital resource based on the BallotReady platform, replacing Vote411. BallotReady has been licensed by LWVMA and is available at no cost to our local Leagues!

BallotReady will allow Massachusetts voters to access personalized ballot information - for all candidates on the ballot from US Senator down through county positions, such as District Attorney, plus ballot questions - simply by entering a street address. Voters will also be able to access in-depth information about candidates (including candidates' responses to questions created by LWVMA) and ballot measures, an online voter registration tool, local and state voting requirements and rules, and videos of candidate debates.

Voters can "Make a Plan to Vote" with this new platform. It will show voters where and when to vote, email or text calendar reminders to show up and vote, and is easily shareable on social media.

The Voters' Guide will be custom branded for the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts and available in both desktop and mobile platforms.

Look for more information soon about LWVMA online Voters' Guide and our bigger effort to engage and educate voters in 2018.

From LWVMA, Legislative Action

Gun Control (event has passed):

Gun Bill Lobby Day April 30: Join LWVMA and the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence at the State House to support passage of [H.3610](#), the extreme risk protection order (ERPO) bill to temporarily remove guns from people who may harm themselves or others. The bill has been reported favorably out of its joint committee. There will be speakers from 11 to 11:45 a.m., then visits with legislators. Lobby day participants are asked to contact their own Senators and Representatives to make appointments to stop by after noon that day. [Please register here for the lobby day and/or to help the coalition distribute literature about the bill to legislators at other times.](#)

Elections and Voting:

Automatic Voter Registration: It's time to get AVR passed! If you haven't already done so, please contact your Representative and urge him/her to ask the Speaker to bring AVR, H.4320, to the floor for a vote. See LWVMA's letter to Speaker DeLeo [here](#). Continue the League's almost-100-year effort to improve access to the ballot box.

[Explain that automatic voter registration would benefit those who move frequently such as young people and military families and could add an estimated 680,000 Massachusetts residents who are eligible but not registered to the voting rolls.](#) This bill has been carefully crafted to assure that non-citizens are not accidentally registered to vote and to give those who wish to decline to register an opportunity to do so.

2020 U.S. Census:

Oppose Citizenship Question: Help oppose the addition of a question on citizenship status to the 2020 U.S. Census. The national League has issued a strong [statement](#) condemning this last-minute decision by the Commerce Department.

LWVUS has put together [talking points](#) to use when addressing the citizenship question in the 2020 Census. LWVUS is working on a petition to Congress and will roll out additional materials soon.

Children's Issues:

Lift the Cap on Kids: The Cap on Kids - also called the family cap - denies welfare benefits to children conceived while the family received assistance. Currently, 8,700 Massachusetts children and their families are harmed by this outdated policy that many other states have eliminated. LWVMA supports [H.85](#) and [S.34](#) to repeal this cap, bills currently in the House and Senate Ways & Means Committees.

The desired result could also be accomplished by adding funds to the Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children budget to provide \$100 per month more for each "family cap" child, but these funds are not in the recently released House FY 2019 budget. Rep. Marjorie Decker is filing an amendment to the House FY 2019 budget to provide the spending to effectively lift the cap on kids. Please call your state Representative today and ask him/her to co-sponsor the Lift the Cap on Kids budget amendment.

Immigration:

Update on Safe Communities: The coalition for the Safe Communities Act, recognizing that the bill is unlikely to pass this year, is proposing that some key provisions should still be adopted by other means, including in the state budget. The coalition and the bill sponsors have identified three specific provisions that could be adopted as outside section amendments to the budget. Please ask your legislators to support these amendments during the budget deliberations. You can find details [here](#).

Progress Update: Action on LWVMA Bills since April 1

Signed into law:

- **Success!** Two major criminal justice reform bills, S.2371 which is the omnibus bill, and H.4012 to implement some task force recommendations, passed both the House and Senate and were signed into law by Governor Baker on Friday, April 13. *Kudos to legislative specialist Colleen Kirby for her hard work on this important legislation! And thanks to all of you who contacted your legislators and the Governor in support of these reforms; it worked.*
- The bill, S.2296, formerly S.591/H.2960, requiring that confidential medical information be sent to the patient rather than to an insurance policyholder was signed by the Governor.

Bills in conference committee:

- H.4134, formerly H.675 To issue bonds financing production and preservation of low- and middle-income housing. Different versions passed the House and Senate and bill is now in conference committee.

Bills reported favorably from committee and awaiting a vote in the first chamber:

- S.46 To create a bill of rights for homeless people

- H.2686 To repeal the bottle deposit law (LWVMA opposes)
- H.2116 To authorize municipalities to assess a "water-banking" fee on large-scale water users to mitigate the impacts of major new and expanded developments

Bills sent to "study" and killed for session:

- S.365 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
- S.374, S.397 To require photo identification for voting (LWVMA opposes)
- S.371 To implement Election Day voter registration (but in part included in new bill, S.2399)

How to Contact Your Legislator:

You can find phone numbers, email addresses and office addresses on the legislature's web page for your Senator and Representative. Go to www.malegislature.gov and click on the Legislators tab. If you don't know who your legislators are, click [here](#).

LWVMA Joins Two Coalitions

The LWVMA board has voted to join two advocacy coalitions.

The [Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence](#) is an umbrella organization bringing together groups across the state to end the epidemic of gun violence. We worked with them during the 2013-2014 legislative session and are reactivating our membership.

The [Freedom for All Massachusetts](#) coalition was originally formed to enact transgender rights and is now opposing the repeal of the law establishing those rights by a ballot question in November, advocating for a "yes" vote on that ballot question.

Message From LWVUS : League Joins Groups Demanding Oversight Hearings on Census Citizenship Question

The League joined over 300 civil rights, faith, and labor groups are calling on Congress to hold oversight hearings on Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross's decision to include a new citizenship question on the 2020 Census.

Identical letters were sent to the chairs and ranking members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform – Senators

Ron Johnson and Claire McCaskill and Representatives Trey Gowdy and Elijah Cummings – the groups asked for lawmakers to ask Secretary Ross to address the following issues:

- Why he made this decision despite widespread objections from stakeholders, former Census Bureau directors, and career staff at the Census Bureau;
- Why he believes the citizenship question is “well-tested” when in fact the question has never been tested in a contemporary census-like environment;
- How the inclusion of the question will impact the bureau’s ability to reach and count all communities equally well, especially in the current contemporary environment of fear.

[4-12-18 HSGAC Coalition Letter Concerning Citizenship Question.pdf](#) (112.65 KB)

[4-12-18 OGR Coalition Letter Concerning Citizenship Question.pdf](#) (112.73 KB)

League Membership! Join Us! *Shelly Stuler, Membership Chair*

Please send payment of \$50 and an optional contribution with the following dues statement:

LWV SALEM DUES STATEMENT

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Dues \$ _____ Optional Contribution \$ _____

League activities I am interested in _____

Dues are \$50.00, which include emails from LWVMA (State League) and LWVUS (National League) as Bulletins, Studies, Legislative Action Alerts, Notices of Informational Sessions and Conferences.

Please make your check payable to: LWVMA

Send check with this dues statement to: Shelly Stuler, 40 Summer St., Salem, MA 01970

Contact Information for Action

<p>Representative Paul Tucker State House, 24 Beacon St. Room 136 Boston, MA 02133 Tel: 617-722-2396 E-mail address: Paul.Tucker@mahouse.gov</p>	<p>Senator Joan Lovely State House, 24 Beacon St Room 413A Boston, MA 02133 Tel: 617-722-1410 E-mail address: Joan.Lovely@masenate.gov</p>
<p>The Honorable Seth Moulton 1408 Longworth HOB Washington DC 20515-2106 DC Phone: 202-225-8020 Contact Form: https://moulton.house.gov/contact/email</p>	
<p>The Honorable Elizabeth Warren Russell Senate Office Building 2 Russell Courtyard Washington, DC 20510 DC Phone: 202-224-4543 Contact Form: https://www.warren.senate.gov/?p=email_senator</p>	<p>The Honorable Edward Markey 218 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 DC Phone: (202) 224-2742 Contact Form: http://www.edmarkey.com/contact/</p>

How to Access League of Women Voters Positions

The League takes action at the National, State and Local level based on League positions. We do not support candidates or parties. Actions in the Massachusetts League Action Newsletter are based on established positions.

State league positions Where We Stand can be found here :

<https://lwmvma.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Where-We-Stand.2013.pdf>

National League Positions: <http://lww.org/content/impact-issues>.

An abbreviated list of state League positions is at the end of the program planning booklet is here :

https://lwmvma.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/3-pp-guide.final_.pdf