



League of Women Voters of Massachusetts

Annual Report

2017-2018

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Dear Friends,

We are proud to share with you the 2017-18 Annual Report of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts and the League of Women Voters Lotte E. Scharfman Memorial Fund, highlighting our activities between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.

While the 2016 elections were polarizing and divisive for the country at large, LWVMA emerged with new vitality and energy. The challenges to our values and principles posed by the new administration spurred many people to action, resulting in an influx of new members, the formation of new local chapters, and an organization-wide commitment to fight back.

Throughout 2017 and into 2018, LWVMA recommitted itself to the mission and priorities that define our organization. We reaffirmed the bedrock principle that the necessary work must be done by all of us, not just our elected officials. And, we rededicated ourselves to addressing critical issues here in the Commonwealth, regardless of what was happening in Washington.

Our work is far from done. But the 2017-18 fiscal year marks a period of achievement and activism. We are proud of the work not only of the state League, but also of our local Leagues and our grassroots membership throughout Massachusetts. Working together, we are strengthening our democracy and ensuring that it works for everyone.

In League,



Mary Ann Ashton
President



Meryl Kessler
Executive Director



Mary Ann Ashton



Meryl Kessler

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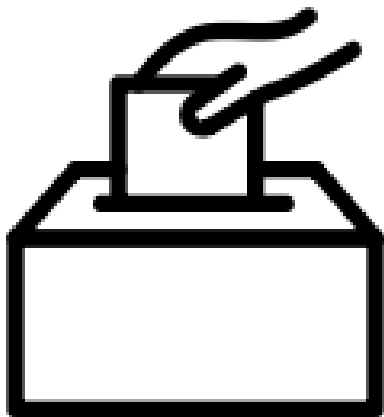
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Brynne Gorman, Membership and
Community Engagement Manager
Taylor Grenga, Administrative
and Program Associate
Martha Maguire, Bookkeeper

Advocacy and Activism

- Led statewide efforts to pass **Automatic Voter Registration** (AVR) bill; as part of Election Modernization Coalition, organized two AVR lobby days and one press event; organized direct lobbying and letter-to-the-editor effort with local Leagues.
- Filed *amicus* brief with the Supreme Judicial Court in support of **challenge to Massachusetts' 20-day voter registration deadline**.
- Submitted comments to Secretary of Commonwealth regarding **scheduling of state primary to maximize voter engagement**.
- Engaged in highly visible **lobbying efforts in other priority areas**: criminal justice reform, renewable energy, safe communities, women's issues.
- Held successful **"Day on the Hill" lobby day** with over 100 participants featuring keynote speakers Rep. Patricia Haddad, Speaker Pro Tem, and Sen. Cynthia Creem, Assistant Majority Leader.
- Launched **Legislative Envoy Program** to better engage local Leagues in statewide advocacy efforts and improve coordination between state League and local chapters.
- Initiated monthly **Massachusetts Action Newsletter** to inform members of opportunities for activism and advocacy.
- Created **Citizen Lobbyist handbook** with tips and resources for legislative advocacy.



Elections and Voting

- Conducted three **moderator trainings**--in Acton, Cape Cod/southern Massachusetts, and western Massachusetts—to prepare League members to moderate candidate debates and forums during the 2018 election cycle and beyond.
- Supported five local Leagues with **VOTE411 online voters' guide platform** for fall city elections.
- Initiated planning for **MOVE 2018 voter education and engagement initiative for 2018 midterm elections**, including creation of comprehensive, interactive online voters' guide covering every race on the ballot throughout Massachusetts.

Citizen Education

- Convened ***Beyond the March: Women Leading the Way in Massachusetts*** conference at Clark University featuring keynote speaker Congresswoman Niki Tsongas; Barbara Berenson, author, *Massachusetts in the Woman Suffrage Movement: Revolutionary Reformers*; Lisa Wong, Deputy Director, Asian American Civic Association; Ruthanne Fuller, Mayor, Newton; Yvonne Spicer, Mayor, Framingham; Sarai Rivera, City Councilor, Worcester; and Daniel Ziblatt, Professor of Government, Harvard University, co-author, *How Democracies Die*.
- Hosted ***Climate and Energy Solutions Series*** educational forums and webinars: “Extreme Events and Climate Change: What We Know and What We Can Do” with UMass Boston Professor Ellen Marie Douglas at the New England Aquarium; “The Health Benefits of Renewable Energy Choices: A Role for Carbon Pricing” with Harvard researcher Joseph Buonocore at Winchester Town Hall; “Greening the Grid: Preparing for Our Clean Energy Future” with Ariel Horowitz and Megan Herzog at Cary Memorial Library in Lexington; and a reprise of Professor Douglas’s popular “Extreme Events and Climate Change” at Falmouth Public Library.
- Sponsored “**Get In the Game... and Vote,**” student video contest to encourage youth civic participation. Over 250 Massachusetts students participated, creating 30-second videos encouraging Massachusetts voters to register and get to the polls for the 2018 midterm election.



Supporting Our Local Leagues

In Massachusetts, **our grassroots are our 46 local Leagues and units** that, through their citizen education and voter service activities, make democracy work every day. To support



their efforts, our Daniel Scharfman Citizen Education Grant Program provides funding for local Leagues to carry out programs that increase citizen participation in the democratic process, study key community issues in an unbiased manner, and enable people to seek positive solutions to public policy issues through education and conflict management.

In 2017-18, LWVMA distributed **\$3,988** in grants to **local Leagues**.

The Bottom Line: Our Year in Numbers

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS
AND LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS LOTTE E. SCHARFMAN MEMORIAL FUND
COMBINED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2018**

SUPPORT, REVENUES, RECLASSIFICATIONS:	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	TOTAL ACTIVITIES
Gifts, Grants and Contributions	\$144,960	\$19,275	--	\$164,235
Membership Dues and Assessments	57,067	--	--	57,067
Program Fees	4,370	--	--	4,370
Change in Value of Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trust	--	--	36,025	36,025
Investment Return	35,000	8,496	--	43,496
Other Income	688	--	--	688
Net Assets Released from Restriction	25,262	(25,262)	--	--
TOTAL SUPPORT, REVENUES AND RECLASSIFICATIONS	267,347	2,509	36,025	305,881
FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES:	--	--	--	--
Program Services	146,518	--	--	146,518
Administrative	71,406	--	--	71,406
Fund Raising	26,280	--	--	26,280
TOTAL FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES	244,204	--	--	244,204
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	23,143	2,509	36,025	61,677
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	316,199	25,794	969,460	1,311,453
NET ASSETS – END OF YEAR	339,342	28,303	1,005,485	1,311,453

We are grateful for the generosity of our many supporters and our volunteers. We wish to particularly acknowledge the Nathalie and Theodore Jones Trust, the Donald and Nehamah Quimby Charitable Foundation, the Lincoln and Therese Filene Foundation, and the Salem Five Charitable Foundation.