



State Program Planning Action Priorities and Goals

2023 – 2025

Dear League Member,

Every two years, usually in January or February, local Leagues, Units and Members-at-Large have an opportunity to propose areas of focus for LWVMA Program—important state governmental issues on which we have positions—for the next biennium. You will hear before long from the leaders of your League or Unit when and how they plan to discuss State Program Planning.

This year, the LWVMA Board has decided on five Action Priorities with attendant Action Goals. We are asking you as individuals to approve these goals and actions; you may include added goals and/or actions you think important. Then when you participate in your League's Program Planning event, you will be in a position to contribute to the group's decision.

At that Program Planning event, your League or Unit will indicate whether it approves of the Action Priorities and Goals, or would like to make changes. Your League or Unit will also be able to propose a New Study, a Restudy, or a Concurrence. For more information, consult the *Guide to State Program Planning*: <https://lwmva.org/member-resources/program-planning/>

If you would like to learn more about the Program Planning process, please join us in a Townhall at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, January 11. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZl0c-CspjgpGtbzjHJIHCAI_99z5YIcLRIH

If you have any questions, contact one of us, the co-chairs of State Program Planning: Marie Gauthier (mgauthier@lwmva.org) or Courtney Henderson (chenderson@lwmva.org).

First and foremost, we will continue to encourage understanding of racial justice issues by Massachusetts Leagues. We will

- *Encourage the continued education of our local League members on fundamental aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion;*
- *Hold safe spaces for League members and community partners to discuss the current challenges around DEI.*

As we advocate for the action priorities and goals accepted at Convention or added as circumstances demand, we will always use the lens of DEI.

Program Planning Categories

Consider what broad, general subject areas the State League should focus its energy on. We would concentrate on legislation, programs, and actions in these areas.

Suggested action priorities for 2023-2025 are listed below, with action goals in those areas. Feel free to suggest others.

Action Priorities and Goals:

Action Priority: Improving Elections

Action Goals

Advocate for election reforms including Election Day voter registration, inactive voter assignment, poll access for voters with disabilities and clearer mail ballot information, as well as ensuring adequate funding for these measures. Inform voters about changes in polling locations and operations and recruit volunteers for election protection efforts as needed.

Action Priority: Empowering Voters and Fostering Civic Engagement

Action Goals

Support civic education in schools, supporting successful school implementation of S2631 “An Act to promote and enhance civic engagement” with continued advocacy for its annual funding and resource support for schools. Support civics education with statewide Civics Portfolio events in cooperation with school districts.

Continue to encourage informed and active participation in government and understanding major public policy issues. Ongoing actions include: Online voters’ guide; Lotte E. Scharfman citizen education grants to local Leagues; candidate forums; building “democracy partnerships” in under-resourced communities, civic trivia events.

Examine the operation of Senate and House rules, selection of president and speaker, and assignment of chairmanships and stipends in order to promote more transparency and to ensure public accountability. Advocate for legislation adding hybrid meeting options, which provides wider access to constituents.

Action Priority: Advocating for Justice and Equality

Action Goals

Racial Justice: Take action to identify, educate, and advocate to eradicate systemic racism in the state of Massachusetts as it exists in education, housing, employment, healthcare, and every aspect of American life, since such racism and socio-economic inequalities have marginalized, discriminated against and harmed Black people, Indigenous people, and all people of color (BIPOC).

Gender Equity: Advocate for strengthened and extended rights for all women and all LGBTQ residents of Massachusetts to ensure that the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion are applied to all historically disadvantaged groups.

Criminal Justice: Support legislation to reform sentencing, probation and parole policies; support rehabilitative and re-entry services; promote alternatives to incarceration, including enhanced mental healthcare.

Action Priority: Addressing the Climate Emergency

Action Goals

Advocate for monitoring the implementation of the comprehensive climate legislation which was already passed to be sure that it addresses the scope, scale, and urgency of the climate crisis; advocate for increased use of renewable energy, especially related to transportation; advocate for improved public transportation funding that includes transitioning towards electrification and expanding availability of options, especially in our Environmental Justice Communities.

Action Priority: Advocating for Equitable Access to Basic Human Services

Action Goals

Advocate for single-payer universal healthcare coverage legislation for all residents of Massachusetts.

Develop and advocate for strategies to improve educational access and learning experiences for historically disadvantaged communities.

Advocate for affordable housing for all as a matter of equity by seeking to expand the rights of tenants, promoting the establishment of affordable housing, preserving existing affordable housing, and promoting tenancy preservation.

Thank you very much. Your input is important.