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The League of Women Voters Advocates for Metro Funding

By: Nancy Soreng, LWFVNC Member

In the fall of 2016, the Board of the League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area voted to actively engage in the pursuit of a dedicated funding source for Metro. This interleague organization was founded in the 1960's and one of their initial priorities was to advocate for a regional public rapid rail system. Its member Leagues include the state Leagues of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia and eight local Leagues that surround DC. The original name of LWFVNC was "the Metro League Council". A 1965 transportation study by this League documents that in 1963, members of the Metro League Council testified before Congress in favor of a \$793 million rapid rail system with a total length of 83 miles, 19 of them underground. This ambitious plan was rejected, but negotiations continued over the next decade. By 1974, due to inflation, the cost of building the system had risen to \$4.5 billion. None-the-less, with many a hic-cup along the way, a plan to pay for the initial construction of the system was finally in place. On March 27, 1976 the first phase of Metro opened.



By 1980 the Interleague Organization was named the League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area. A

(Continued on page 2, Metro Funding)

Voter Registration at Naturalization Ceremonies

By: Ralph Watkins, LWVMD 3rd Vice President

One of the most gratifying volunteer experiences for League members is registering new citizens to vote. People are excited to become United States citizens and part of that excitement is registering to vote. The new citizens often express their appreciation to the League for helping with voter registration at these ceremonies and our volunteers enjoy the festive nature of the occasion –

(Continued on page 2, Registration)

(Continued from page 1 Metro Funding)

study they produced highlighted the fact that while funds had been secured to build the system there was not a reliable, dedicated source to pay for operations, upkeep and improvements. In 1979, Douglas Feaver, a senior federal transportation official stated, "If you wanted to design an organizational structure that was guaranteed to fail, you would design Metro...The wonder of it all is that it has held together this long."

Fast forward to 2018. Metro was experiencing issues of reliability, safety, and reduced ridership. Studies done by the Council of Governments, Ray LaHood, former federal Transportation Secretary, and Paul Weidefeld, WMATA General manager, all agreed that an additional \$500 million annual increase of dedicated, bondable funding, was necessary to keep this vital transportation system from further decline and get it back to safe and efficient operation.

Edith Holmes, LWV Falls Church and Nancy Soreng, LWVMD agreed to co-chair an action committee to explore opportunities for advocacy for Metro funding. Following a successful forum co-sponsored by LWVNCA and the Coalition for Smarter Growth in the fall of 2017, advocacy began on a region-specific basis. Thanks to the hard work of League members in Virginia in conjunction with other members of the Fund It/Fix it Coalition lead by the Coalition for Smarter Growth and Metro Now, a coalition of major business players, the state of Virginia committed to an additional annual contribution of \$154 million. Maryland League members also collaborated with these coalition partners and the state of Maryland set aside an additional annual dedicated contribution of \$167 million. The District of Columbia passed emergency legislation the week of April 9 that committed to providing their full share of \$178.5 million.

All involved are thrilled that the campaign turned out to be so successful and LWVNCA, whose roots are linked to the Metro system, was able to play a part.

(Continued from page 1, Registration)

children dressed in their finest as smiling parents take the oath, new citizens proudly displaying their naturalization certificates for family photos, and, on one occasion, the choir from a new citizen's church singing "America the Beautiful" as part of the ceremony.



The League was invited in 2015 to conduct voter registration following naturalization ceremonies at the United States Courthouse in Greenbelt and we then contacted the clerk of court at the U.S. Courthouse in Baltimore and were soon registering voters there. We are also



one of several organizations registering voters at the ceremonies conducted at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service office in Baltimore. Since the beginning of 2018, League volunteers have registered

(Continued on page 4, Registration)

Important Election Dates 2018

V

February 27, 2018 - Deadline for candidates to file Certificate of Candidacy

O

May 12, 2018 - Absentee ballots transmitted to overseas voters

June 5, 2018 - Deadline to register to vote or change party affiliation for the primary election (unaffiliated voters cannot participate in party primaries)

June 14, 2018 - Early Voting begins

June 19, 2018 - Deadline to request absentee ballot to be delivered by mail or fax

June 21, 2018 - Early Voting ends

June 22, 2018 - Deadline to request absentee ballot to be delivered via internet (voter must print and mail the completed ballot to Board of Elections)

T

June 26, 2018 - Primary Election

June 30, 2018 - Deadline to file referendum petition on legislation adopted in 2018 session of Maryland General Assembly

October 16, 2018 - Deadline to register to vote

October 25, 2018 - Early Voting begins

October 30, 2018 - Deadline to request absentee ballot delivered by mail or fax

E

October 31, 2018 - Deadline to file as a write-in candidate

November 1, 2018 - Early Voting ends

November 2, 2018 - Deadline to request absentee ballot delivered via internet (voter must print and mail their completed ballot to Board of Elections)

November 6, 2018 - General Election

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS MARYLAND

REGISTERING TO VOTE CHECKLIST

VOTER REGISTRATION ELIGIBILITY

To register to vote, you must be:

- ☐ A U.S. citizen;
- ☐ A Maryland resident; and
- ☐ At least 16 years old*.

*You may register to vote if you are at least 16 years old but cannot vote unless you will be at least 18 years old by the next general election.

THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

You may register to vote at ANYTIME

ONLINE

- Using Vote411.org
- Maryland's Online Voter Registration System

IN PERSON LOCATIONS

- LWV Voter Registration Drives!
- State/Local Board of Elections
- The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- The Department of Social Services
- The Motor Vehicle Administration
- Offices on Aging
- All public institutions of higher education
- Recruitment offices of the U.S. Armed Forces

VERIFICATION

You will receive a Voter Notification Card, and Registration is permanent as long as you continue to live in Maryland and keep your name and address current.

INFORMATION TAKEN FROM THE MARYLAND BOARD OF ELECTIONS WEBSITE (WWW.ELECTIONS.MARYLAND.GOV)

Click the Image to Register to Vote Now! To be registered to vote for the June 26th Primary, **you must get registered by June 5th**. ***NOTE: In Maryland, to vote in a party primary, you must be registered with that party. If you register unaffiliated, you can still vote in nonpartisan races – check what's on your ballot by going to Vote411.org now!

(Continued from page 2, Registration)

316 new citizens to vote. We provide each new citizen a welcome packet that gives contact information for the Boards of Elections and the League, and also reminds them to watch for their voter registration card. The packet also includes a bookmark listing dates of the elections, plus deadlines for obtaining absentee ballots and updating voter registration records. We describe our *Voters' Guide* and VOTE411 and invite the new citizens to sign up for those services.



Our primary role is to review the forms to be sure that they are filled out completely, so all volunteers have been trained by their local Board of Elections. We also are available to answer questions about the election process, primaries, and party affiliation. We take the completed forms to the Board of Elections. Barbara Crain coordinates this effort for LWVMD, with Marjorie Wexler and Deborah Mitchell assisting at the Greenbelt courthouse, Phyllis Lansing at the Citizenship and Immigration Service location, and Argentine Craig at the Baltimore courthouse. The League's voter service work can be tedious (e.g., reminding candidates to respond to our *Voters' Guide* questions), but registering new citizens is a chance to participate in a festive and heartwarming experience with people who are grateful for our assistance. If you would like to be part of this work, contact Barbara Crain at bcrain@lwvmd.org

Call to State Council/National Convention

By: Richard Willson and Elaine Apter, LWVMD Co-Presidents

What does the end of the year mean for Leagues around the State and Nation? Annual Meeting time! Whether it is at the local, state or national level, Leagues are meeting to elect officers, prepare budgets and look at their "program" for the coming year.

In Maryland, our State Council meeting will be on Saturday, June 9 in Harford County. We will have workshops on the LWVUS presented Transformation Road Map and its possible impact on LWVMD and our Local Leagues, as well as the 2018/19 LWVMD budget. National LWV board member Amy Hjerstedt will join us for this discussion.

Our afternoon workshop will be devoted to guidelines for conducting studies along with updates on our two state studies; "Death With Dignity" and "Bails and Bonds". Full briefings on these two studies will occur at the Fall Workshop. Our luncheon speaker will be Meg Heubeck from the University of Virginia. Her topic will be Civic Education.

We look forward to having everyone to join us in beautiful Harford County on June 9. For registration and more information, see our website LWVMD.org.

State Leagues hold Councils in the even years and Conventions in the odd years. LWVUS presents Councils and Conventions in exactly the opposite order. This year LWVUS has their Convention in Chicago from June 28 to July 1. At Convention, members have the opportunity to attend workshops, caucuses and vote on things like studies and budget and most important, connect with League members from around the Country. We encourage local League members to join us in Chicago for a chance to meet Leaguers from across the country and participate in the process to determine League's direction in the future. Those planning to attend the national Convention will caucus briefly after our Council meeting.

A HOW TO GUIDE FOR ABSENTEE VOTING

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS MARYLAND



Who may vote by absentee ballot?



Any registered voter may vote by absentee ballot. You don't need a reason to vote by absentee ballot.

How do I request an absentee ballot?

You can request a ballot online, by mail or by visiting your local board of elections

How will I receive my absentee ballot?

You choose how you want to receive your absentee ballot. Election officials can mail or fax your ballot to you, or you can download your ballot from a secure link.

How do I return my voted ballot?

You must mail or hand deliver your voted ballot to your local board of elections.

Click Above to Request a Ballot!
Or Visit https://www.lwvmd.org/absentee_voting

For the 2018 Primary Election, your request must be received (not just mailed) by: Tuesday, June 19, 2018, if you want to receive your ballot by mail or fax; Friday, June 22, 2018, if you want to download your ballot from the State's website.

Tame the Gerrymander is Keeping the Momentum Going!

By: Ashley Oleson, LWVMD Legislative Reporter & Advocate

For redistricting reformers in Maryland 2018 it seemed like it was “the best of times, and the worst of times”. We had a great success in having the Maryland case of [Benisek v. Lamone](#) taken up by the Supreme Court. We were out in full force to support the District 6 petitioners in their effort to get Fair Maps for Maryland, and many reformers joined our coalition to see our mangled districts brought to life, and hear from so many great voices on why we need to end gerrymandering NOW!



Helenmary Ball, left, of Calvert County, Md., as “Maryland District 5,” points toward the separated area of Maryland District 3, being represented by Bobby Bartlett, right, as nonpartisan groups against gerrymandering protest in front of the Supreme Court, Wednesday, March 28, 2018, in Washington where the court will hear arguments on a gerrymandering case. The Supreme Court is taking up its second big partisan redistricting case of the term amid signs the justices could place limits on drawing maps for political gain. T(AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

Ashley Oleson, with the League of Women Voters of Maryland, carries signs of Maryland's districts, as nonpartisan groups against gerrymandering protest in front of the Supreme Court, Wednesday, March 28, 2018, in Washington where the court will hear arguments on a gerrymandering case. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)



However, Maryland legislators did not see fit to heed our calls for reform, killing every bill in the Maryland House on the very day of our rally. This was very disheartening to the reform community, but nevertheless, we will PERSIST.

We anxiously await the Court’s decision, set to be dispensed in June 2018. We hope that the Court recognizes that partisan self-interest is intractable, and establishes a bright-line rule that gerrymandering for partisan gain will not be tolerated under the law.

But no matter what the Court’s decision in the 6th district may be, Tame the Gerrymander will have it’s work cut out to ensure that any new plan for redistricting in Maryland is fair and open. We know what Marylanders want – they want to take the process of redistricting out of the hands of the politicians, and put it in the hands of the people, where our elections belong. So, even if the Court says “no more” to partisan bias, we need to make sure the path to get there includes clear district standards and an independent commission.

We are heartened to see that redistricting reform is becoming a trend across the nation. Just this month, [Ohioans won a ballot measure](#) to overhaul the way maps are drawn in their state. Earlier this year, [Pennsylvania won an important battle](#) to have their maps redrawn for their 2018 midterm elections, [but that fight isn’t yet over either](#). The process for drawing new maps in Pennsylvania will be triggered once again by the 2020 census,

and like Maryland, they need a constitutional amendment to change their state's process.

These cases of citizen activists standing up for what is right give us hope and show us that we will prevail if we continue to fight. So, to keep this momentum going, we here in Maryland are ready to do our part to ensure we can get our citizens a redistricting process that serves their interests. So stay tuned as we gear up for our commemorative party for Elbridge Gerry's Birthday in July!

As we finalize the details, show your support and stay in the loop by signing our petition here: https://www.lwvmd.org/redistricting_reform. You can also find us on Facebook [@TameTheGerrymander](#) or Twitter [@TameGerrymander](#).

We need supporters like you to make Fair Maps a reality in Maryland!

LWVMD Enjoys a Day on Capital Hill

By: Carole Conors, LWVUS Lobby Corps

It is so worthwhile for our elected officials to see and hear from their constituents and that is something we Maryland Leaguers do at least once a year when we make our annual "LWVMD Day on Capitol Hill." We talk with our US Senators and/or their staff members in their offices in the Hart Senate Office Building in the morning then walk across from the Senate side to the House of Representatives side of Capitol Hill. Passing the Capitol on our right and the US Supreme Court and Library of Congress on the left, we settle in for a fun lunch at the House staff food court in the

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS MARYLAND

☒ **EARLY**

☒ **VOTING**

☒ **GUIDE**

WHO CAN VOTE EARLY?

Any person that is eligible to register to vote can vote!

CAN I REGISTER TO VOTE AT EARLY VOTING?

Yes! You can register to vote anywhere early voting is held!

WHEN CAN I VOTE EARLY?

Primary: June 14, 2018 - June 21, 2018 from 10 am - 8 pm.
General: October 25, 2018 - November 1, 2018 from 10 am - 8 pm.

WHERE CAN I VOTE EARLY?

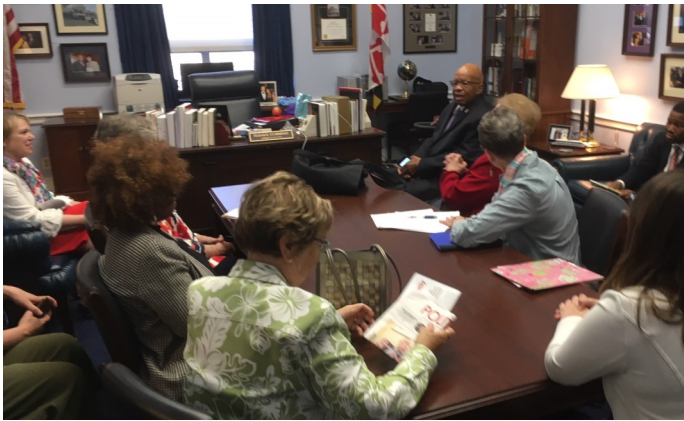
You can vote in an early voting center in the county where you live.

HOW WILL I VOTE DURING EARLY VOTING?

Voting during early voting is the same as voting on election day. When you get to the early voting center, you will check in to vote and vote your ballot.



Click the Image Above to be Redirected to a list of Early Voting Sites in MD for the 2018 Elections or go to: www.lwvmd.org/early_voting.



basement of Longworth House Office Building.

We then split into two groups, each group going to the offices of four of our eight Representatives with our members going with the group that includes their Representative. One group visited first district Representative Dr. Andy Harris, second district Representative Dutch Ruppersberger, the sixth district's John Delaney and the eighth district's Jamie

Raskin. Meanwhile, the other group went to visit third district Representative John Sarbanes, fourth district Anthony Brown, fifth district Steny Hoyer and seventh district Elijah Cummings. We put the elected officials in touch with our concerns about two matters: to please enact general gun safety legislation; and a specific bill, S.1989 in the US Senate and HR4077 in the US House of Representatives. These are known as the Honest Ads Act and would extend to the internet the same campaign advertising laws and rules currently applied to radio, television, and newsprint. We asked them to please co-sponsor and support and talk up and get them passed. Senator Van Hollen already is a co-sponsor of S.1989 and Senator Cardin said he would co-sponsor. On the House side, Rep. Sarbanes was already a co-sponsor of HR4077 and, as a result of our visit among other things, Rep. Elijah Cummings said that he would be a co-sponsor. All had a good time and did something worthwhile. Please watch for next year's "A Day on Capitol Hill" and be sure to join us!



Race, Punishment, and the School to Prison Pipeline

By: Jill Muth, 2018 LWVMD Juvenile Justice Reporter for *Report from State Circle*

Recent studies by [USC Rossier's online masters in school counseling](#), backed up by additional studies from the [U.S. Department of Education](#) and the [Government Accountability Office](#) have shown that students of color are more likely than their white peers to be disciplined at school, often for the same behaviors. The data in these studies tells a sobering story about how racial biases infect our schools, and inhibit pathways to success for students of color.

According to USC Rossier's study, on the national level, students of color make up 49.6% of the student population, but receive 66.6% of the school related arrests. Additionally, 46.6% of African American students have received more than one out of school suspension, compared to 28.9% of white students. In Maryland, students of color make up 60% of the total school population, but receive 75% of school related arrests.

This becomes especially troubling when examining data on school behaviors that shows [that students of color are not more likely to commit serious offenses than their white](#)

[peers](#). Rather, students of color are more likely to be disciplined more harshly for minor infractions and normal childhood behaviors.

This issue is exacerbated further when school discipline goes beyond suspensions and expulsions, and into the territory of arrests and uses of force. Zero tolerance police and school resource officers can turn a disciplinary record into a criminal record, and according to [Amir Whitaker](#), a civil rights lawyer for students, school districts are “spending several times as much on basically using the tools of mass incarceration and the war on drugs to police [and] criminalize students instead of lowering the counselor ratio.”

Female students of color bear a double burden when it comes to school discipline. Not only are they more likely to be disciplined more harshly for the same behaviors as their white peers, they are also subject to arbitrary and [racially biased dress code violations](#). In addition to unfair disciplinary practices, they face constant disruptions to their learning by being asked to leave to alter their appearance to be “more ladylike” or “less distracting”. They may even be asked to alter natural hairstyles or remove head wraps and scarves.

The issue starts as soon as Pre-K, with Black preschoolers making up half of those suspended from 2011-2012, in spite of being only 18% of the preschool population.

How does this effect students of color? [Annie Walden of ProPublica](#) explains how racially biased discipline can effect student behavior and disrupt students’ ability to succeed:

“Harsh discipline can backfire, especially when meted out arbitrarily. It may reinforce bad behavior, or encourage students to drop out, creating what sociologists call the “school-to-prison-pipeline.” A suspension increases the likelihood of dropping out by 77 percent, and the incarceration rate of high school dropouts is 63 times higher than that of college graduates.”

If change will come, it will have to come from the local level. While the Obama administration prioritized investigation into civil rights complaints in school and authorized the Department of Education to conduct thorough investigations in schools districts, newly appointed Secretary DeVos has announced plans to reverse prior guidelines on racially biased school discipline, and ordered investigators to limit probes into civil rights complaints.

In Maryland, the [Commission on the School to Prison Pipeline and Restorative Practices](#) is examining this issue. The Commission is tasked with making recommendations to establish a Collaborative Action Plan to change school disciplinary practices and gain legislative and policy support by January 1, 2019. This will provide a key pressure point for advocacy and action on these issues.

LWVMD’s Education, Juvenile Justice and Children and Families reporters will continue to report on these issues, and advance LWVMD’s position for “ secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all, and that promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.” Stay tuned to LWVMD’s legislative newsletter [Report from State Circle](#) and sign up for [Action Alerts](#) to find out how to get involved with this issue.

2018 PRIMARY CANDIDATE FORUM SCHEDULE



Debates or forums for candidates for state-wide office are sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD). Such forums must conform to its [policy](#) governing debates. Candidate forums for other offices are the responsibility of local Leagues, which establish their own criteria.

Schedule as of 5/18/2018 – check https://www.lwvmd.org/links_to_forums for the most up to date information and past forum & info links

Representatives to Congress

District 1 - June 10, 2018, 1:30pm - 4:45pm, both Republican and Democratic Primary candidates in back-to-back sessions - Cadby Hall at Chesapeake College, Routes 50 & 301, Wye Mills, MD 21679 - Contact: Nancy Smith, nismith@verizon.net; 410-708-5653 or 410-639-2739

District 6 (Primary Election) - June 5, 2018, 7:00 PM - Hagerstown Community College, Kepler Theater - [Sign up](#) online to attend.

District 6 (General Election) - October 11, 2018, 7:00 PM - Hagerstown Community College, Kepler Theater - [Sign up](#) to attend.

Gubernatorial Election

Democratic Gubernatorial Forum - May 21, 2018 - 7:00-8:00pm - Tune on your local MPT channel or watch online here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rF9Wl733iNE>

You can set a reminder now! Hosted by: LWVMD, Maryland Public Television, The Reginald Lewis Museum, WBAL AM and WBAL TV - Contact: Barbara Crain, bcrain@lwvmd.org

Maryland General Assembly

District 36 - June 5, 2018, 7:00-8:30 PM - Board of Education Building 202, Chesterfield Avenue, Centreville, MD - Contact: Mary Campbell lwvqac@gmail.com

2018 PRIMARY CANDIDATE FORUM SCHEDULE

District 40 - May 18, 2018, 7:00-9:00 PM - Heritage United Church of Christ, 3110 Liberty Heights Ave Baltimore, MD 21215

District 41 - June 6, 7:00-9:00 PM - Edward A. Myerberg Center (co-host), 3101 Fallstaff Road, Baltimore, MD 21209 - Contact: Sally T. Grant, sallytgrant@gmail.com, 410-358-0192 OR 410-409-7775

District 43 - May 23, 7:00-9:00 PM - Immanuel Lutheran Church, 5701 Loch Raven Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21239

District 45 - June 6, 6:00 - 7:45 PM - Mt. Pleasant Church and Ministries, 6000 Radecke Ave., Baltimore 21206

District 46 - May 15, 5:30 - 7:30 PM Southeast Anchor Library, 3601 Eastern Ave, Baltimore, MD 21224

County Offices

Baltimore County Executive, Republican Candidates - April 24, 2018, 7:00 PM - Stemmers Run Middle School - Contact: Betsy Sexton, esexton2009@gmail.com, 410-821-5014

Baltimore County Executive, Democratic Candidates - May 2, 2018, 7:00 PM - Stemmers Run Middle School - Contact: Betsy Sexton, esexton2009@gmail.com, 410-821-5014

Frederick County Council At-Large Candidates - June 12, 2018, Unity Church 5112 Pegasus Ct., Ste E, Frederick, MD 21703 - Contact: Sarah Matthews, sarahfkm@yahoo.com

Montgomery County Board of Education - April 23, 2018, 6:30 to 8:45 PM - Gaithersburg High School - Video of the forum can be seen online [HERE](#).

Montgomery County Executive - May 17, 2018, 7:00 PM - East County Community Recreation Center - [Click here for more information.](#)

Prince George's County Executive - March 10, 2018 – [Video](#)

Prince George's County Sheriffs Candidates Forum - April 26, 7:00-9:00 PM - St. Stephen Baptist Church

Queen Anne's County Commissioner (Republican Candidates) - June 7, 2018, 6:30-8:30PM - Board of Education Building 202, Chesterfield Avenue, Centreville, MD - Contact: Mary Campbell jimaryc@atlanticbb.net

2018 PRIMARY CANDIDATE FORUM SCHEDULE

Queen Anne's County Clerk of Court & Board of Education, District 2- Meet & Greet - June 7, 2018, 6:30-7:00pm - Board of Education Building 202, Chesterfield Avenue, Centreville, MD
- Contact: Mary Campbell jimaryc@atlanticbb.net

St. Mary's County Primary Election Candidate Forum - May 21, 5:00-9:00 PM - Lexington Park Library. Streaming [Here](#)

Washington County Board of Education - Sept. 13, 7 PM - Washington County Free Library, Hagerstown - [Sign up](#) to attend.

Board of County Commissioners of Washington County - Sept. 13, 7:00 PM - Washington County Free Library, Hagerstown - [Sign up](#) to attend.

Municipal Offices

Town Council Candidates Forum St. Michaels - May 2, 6-8pm - Christ Church Parish House (Etherton Hall) - 103 Willow Street, St. Michaels, MD. CONTACT: Hilary Gibson, Chair, Voter Services, League of Women Voters of the Mid-Shore, 443-646-3338
- LWVMS.MD@gmail.com

Links to web streaming of forums among candidates for both state and local offices in the June 2018 primary election will be posted as they become available.





GET INVOLVED!!!

THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS TO
HELP US MAKE DEMOCRACY
WORK!

JOIN

Membership in LWVMD means a voice in the direction of the League - all of our positions are arrived at by study and consensus of our membership

**CLICK TO LEARN HOW
TO BECOME A MEMBER**

VOLUNTEER

Not quite ready to join? Volunteer! We are always looking for dedicated individuals to support our mission in different ways.

**CLICK HERE TO LEARN ABOUT
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
(SOME ARE MEMBER-ONLY)**

DONATE

YOU CAN SUPPORT LWVMD'S EFFORTS
IN A VARIETY OF WAYS BY DONATING

**CLICK HERE TO LEARN HOW
SUPPORT LWVMD**

