



Volume 2021-2022

Issue 6

Jan/Feb 2022

### CALENDAR

#### January

- 19 Book Club - *How Democracies Die*, by Steven Levitsky and Danie Ziblatt  
virtual, 7:30pm
- 25 LWVMD DEI Book Club  
virtual, 4-5pm
- 29 LWVMD Winter Workshop  
virtual, 9am-12:15pm

#### February

- 1-28 African American History Month
- 3 LWVBCo Board Meeting  
virtual, 10am-12pm
- 21 President's Day

#### Baltimore County Master Plan 2030 Phase II **Public Input Meetings**

*All meetings will be held virtually from 6-8pm*

- Jan 11 Responsible Regionalism
- Jan 18 Livable Built Environment Part 1: Housing and Land Use
- Jan 19 Resilient Economy
- Jan 24 Livable Built Environment Part 2: Transportation, Infrastructure, and Public Facilities
- Jan 26 Healthy Community
- Jan 31 Interwoven Equity
- Feb 7 Harmony with Nature

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**LWV Baltimore County**  
Empowering residents  
through voter registration,  
education, and advocacy

# PRESIDENTS' LETTER



LWVBCo Co-Presidents, Tana Hamilton (l) and Ericka McDonald (r).

As we welcome 2022, the LWVBCo Board thanks you for continuing support of our work to empower voters and defend democracy. Last year was a busy one for the League, including our Freedom to Vote rally to bring attention to legislation aimed at restricting access to the vote of people of color. Likewise, the People Powered Fair Map rally and the League's advocacy against the racially gerrymandered Baltimore County Council redistricting map raised awareness of the importance of fair process to determine legislative districts.

We also began registering new citizens at USCIS again, a welcome activity after a long hiatus due to the pandemic. Our online speaker series continued to draw large crowds, some from across the county, to learn about issues critical to our democracy. And we were fortunate to be able to meet in person for our annual Holiday Party before the omicron surge began.

Moving forward, we look forward to reimagining our website, developing a financial plan to put our resources to good use, and creating a new strategy for the League to meet the new and evolving challenges of advocacy. In this issue you'll find information about the redistricting lawsuit, our annual meeting with legislators, the passage of Fair Election Fund legislation, and more.

We are grateful to our community dedicated to fighting for democracy at this critical time. Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Tana Hamilton

Ericka McDonald

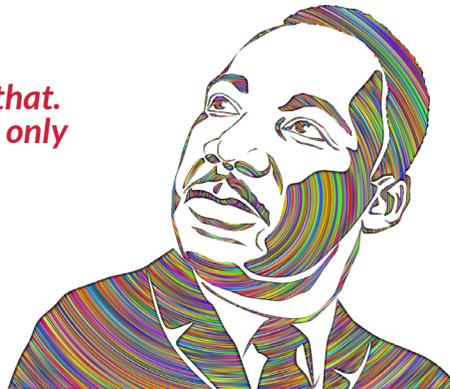
Co-Presidents

## WORDS OF HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT FROM DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

*"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."*

*"We shall overcome because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."*

*"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."*



*"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."*

*"True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice."*

*"I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant."*

## LWVUS

### **THE LEAGUE TELLS THE WHITE HOUSE: NO MORE EXCUSES, VOTING RIGHTS NOW!**

Right now, our country can advance and protect our right to vote by passing the Freedom to Vote Act, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, and DC Statehood. While these bills ensure a democracy that works for us all, there has been stagnation in the Senate due to the Jim Crow Era filibuster. Together, Leagues across the country are demanding action. From August through November, the League, in partnership with our allies, [showed up in front of the White House](#) to demand the Biden administration do everything in its power to pass these historic voting rights bills—including by [fixing or nixing the filibuster](#).

League members showed up in bigger numbers and bolder ways each time we took action at the White House. Dozens of members flew in from around the country from states including, but not limited to, Arizona, California, and Illinois, to take action. Many brought their friends and family with them to share and take in these moments. League members marched, held signs, and joined in chats. Members from Baltimore organized a busload of people to come to participate in the protest. Others volunteered to protect the ever-growing crowd of attendees. By the final action on November 19, over a dozen members – from Virginia, Maryland, DC, New Jersey, and elsewhere put their bodies on the line for voting rights and were arrested for their conviction.

As Becky Simon, President of LWV of Naperville put it, “I was proud to be there because that is the mission of League of Women Voters – defending democracy. We were standing just down the sidewalk from where the Silent Sentinels stood. We owe it to them to continue their work.” Nikki Tyree of LWV of Maryland added, “On November 3 I was arrested, not just for the sake of my voting rights, but for ALL Americans. The Freedom to Vote Act would ensure this right while also preventing self-serving politicians from gerrymandering their states to influence elections.”

The League stands on the side of voters. Many people showed up not just for themselves but for the people and communities who could not be there in person – and whose voting rights are most threatened.

#### **Our Advocacy Is Working**

Our senators and the Biden Administration see and hear us – literally, the White House could HEAR us outside when we showed up in protest. That’s as it should be. Our elected officials work for us and it is important both we and they remember that.

The Biden administration also received thousands of letters from folks who participated in our efforts from home, demanding that our leaders do more to support federal voting rights legislation. These letters came in, just like those taking action, from all across the country. League members from Utah to Tennessee to Vermont put pen to paper to make their voices heard. After every single action, the Biden Administration was asked why they weren’t keeping their promises and prioritizing voting rights. In November, the Biden Administration was moved to comment on the filibuster and how it stands in the way of progress. This was in no small part thanks to our protests and League members from coast to coast. As LWV of Seattle-King County and LWVEF board member Liz Bander said upon her arrest in one of our actions, “[T]his is about our shared future. Voting rights are foundational to democracy.” Right now, states are using census data to redraw district lines – a process that is vulnerable to manipulation but can be protected through the passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA).

Supporting this legislation will continue to be a major priority for the League. Next year we’ll have midterm elections; just as the VRAA will protect our maps, the Freedom to Vote Act will eliminate barriers to voting that disproportionately impact communities of color, particularly Black and Indigenous communities. We will continue to advocate for these essential bills to be passed in 2022.

We know this work will be powered by our members from state and local Leagues, from highly populous states to tiny townships. Our numbers and actions from Leagues all over the country will only grow. We will not stop until we see the action we need. Join us and [tell the White House](#) they must protect voting rights now!

- LWVUS 12/14/21 Blog Post by [Alicia Gurrieri](#)

## COMMITTEES AND REPORTS

### BOOK CLUB

There is plenty of room to join the book club since all meetings continue to be virtual. **All meetings start at 7:30pm.** If you'd like to attend, contact Betsy Sexton at [esexton2009@gmail.com](mailto:esexton2009@gmail.com) to receive the Zoom link.

- **Wednesday, January 19** - *How Democracies Die*, by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt

To watch a LWVBCo event recording of co-author Steven Levitsky address the topic of this book, visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQ6kBxB7bro](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQ6kBxB7bro).

- Betsy Sexton, Book Club Chair

### LWVBCo POSITION CHANGE: UPCOMING BOARD VOTE ON COUNTY COUNCIL DISTRICT EXPANSION



At the February 3, 2022, LWVBCo Board meeting, there will be a vote to change the position that favors maintaining the current number of county council seats, which states:

“ACTION to support maintaining the present number (7) of County Council Districts.”

This position was first approved in 1992 and again in 2002. Since then, the population in Baltimore County has expanded significantly and the Black population is compressed into one councilmanic district, diluting their representation.

Our League recently spoke up and joined an ACLU lawsuit in opposition to the racially gerrymandered redistricting plan. Another strategy to address this issue is to create additional council districts which could create additional majority-minority districts. The advocacy community in Baltimore County is planning to collect signatures to place this issue on the ballot as a referendum. One of our members, Linda Dorsey-Walker, is already working with the Fair Maps Coalition to collect signatures.

This issue is of great importance from a systemic inequality perspective and is in conflict with our Diversity Equity and Inclusion policy listed in our [Bylaws](#). Our position is out of date with what's happening in the county. If we keep the existing position, we will be unable to advocate for racial justice by championing an increase in councilmanic districts in Baltimore County.

We should support the expansion of county council seats for the following reasons:

- Our council districts currently each represent around 122,000 people. By contrast, Howard County's districts represent about 60,000 each and Montgomery County has 7 districts representing about 150,000 people AND four at-large representatives.
- The Black population of Baltimore County is currently packed into a single district. Creating more districts could create more minority-majority districts and give Black residents equitable representation.
- Creation of more districts would create more opportunity for people not currently represented on the council - women, youth, LGBTQ+, and people of color.

Because this is an issue of fair representation and apportionment covered by the LWVUS positions on voting rights, the LWVUS advises that we may invite members for input and have the board vote on the issue. We welcome your input. **Please feel free to send your input via email in advance of the meeting to Ericka McDonald, [elmcd@lwvbaltimorecounty.org](mailto:elmcd@lwvbaltimorecounty.org), or plan to attend the board meeting Thursday, Feb. 3 at 10am, via Google Meets, [meet.google.com/xpx-ugdp-avm](https://meet.google.com/xpx-ugdp-avm).**

- Ericka McDonald, Co-President

## COMMITTEES AND REPORTS

### SPOTLIGHT ON DEMOCRACY 2022 VOTE, GET EDUCATED, PROTEST, CONNECT

#### Voters Must Believe in a Post Office That Can Deliver Votes by Election Day

Remember the good old days when the Post Office was just considered part of everyday life in America? Mail came regularly, delivered by friendly postal workers whose biggest concern was watching out for the occasional barking dog.

Today, mail delivery is thought of very differently. Beginning in 2020, mail delivery changed direction under new leadership, and delays and lost mail had the country in an uproar. Although there has been spotty improvement, service problems have continued, including in certain parts of Baltimore County.

What does that have to do with our upcoming election? In truth, a well-run postal system is critical for voter confidence in mail in voting—services that are bound to be needed in Maryland for upcoming primary and general elections.

Voting rights organizations filed lawsuits over the service changes before the 2020 election, such as the August 2020 NAACP suit against the Post Office alleging that recent slowdowns in mail delivery could have grave consequences for Americans' right to vote. [The LWVUS, the National Urban League, and Common Cause also sued](#) the Post Office citing similar concerns. In response, the Postal System agreed to postpone further changes and to prioritize ballots through the 2020 election.

All fixed? Well, the first test was in Virginia's Governor's race where problems with ballot delivery were again noted. The Virginia Democrat Party sued the Postal System in October 2021 over concerns that up to 25% of requested mail in ballots in three counties had still not been received. Claims were denied by the postal service. The lawsuit was quickly settled, with the Postal Service agreeing to prioritize ballots, apply correct postmarks, and do daily sweeps at all post offices to ensure delivery.

In Baltimore, problems with regular delivery and lost mail never resolved. Constituent complaints in Maryland's Congressional 2nd and 7th Districts caught the attention of media and political leaders and in May 2021, Congressmen Ruppberger and Mfume formally requested and were granted a full audit of affected areas. Nine post office sites were reviewed based on congressional asks, six in Baltimore County and three in Baltimore City.

Baltimore County Zip Codes reviewed include 21221, 21222, 21234, 21220, 21237, 21286, and covered the period October 4, 2019, to July 2, 2021.

The [results](#), published in November 2021, were alarming. Significant delays and missing mail were well above the national average. Nearly a million pieces of mail were found languishing in the post office storage area, rating it only marginally better than one other postal district nationally. Only packages were given priority, deemed more important than first-class mail. Problems with staffing, training, proper scanning, and hiring were also noted. A corrective action plan was put in place that included new management, proper training and hiring levels. Though voting procedures were not addressed, it's good to remember that ballots are considered first class mail.

There is some good news. The NAACP announced the resolution of its original lawsuit in December 2021. Under the settlement, the USPS said it anticipates enacting policies and practices during the 2022 midterms that are like the "extraordinary measures" used during the November 2020 general election. Also, the USPS will provide the NAACP with weekly service performance scores for first class and standard mail for the six weeks before and one week after the November 2022 and 2024 general elections.

#### Next Steps

From past experiences, it is clear local postal performance bears watching. First class mail must be tracked as priority if voting material is to get out and be returned according to election law. Election officials cannot do this all by themselves. If we want a postal delivery system that will deliver our ballots reliably and on time, we must fight for it. The LWVBCo will continue to monitor this issue and reach out to Maryland congressional offices asking for updates. We also ask that you, League member, write to your congressmen/senators and ask for a written plan for mail performance and whether a ballot handling plan is in place. For a list of elected officials' contact information, visit our website's resource page at [www.lwvbaltimorecounty.org/resources](http://www.lwvbaltimorecounty.org/resources) to access the brochure, *2021 Your Elected Officials*. Together we can work to affect change.

- Nancy Strohminger, Advocacy Committee Volunteer

## COMMITTEES AND REPORTS

### WE ARE LWV



League member  
Lisa Barkan

Lisa Barkan was familiar with the LWV as a child. She recalls that, “Each year I would accompany my parents when they voted. I often read the candidates’ profiles that the League published.”

Lisa grew up in Brooklyn’s housing projects and was taught in elementary school the importance of voting. Lisa developed “a deep belief that democracy works best when everyone votes.” Although her parents did not have much money or influence, she learned that voting helped give them a voice. She believes that voting can help alleviate inequality and is a civic obligation. “I am appalled at attempts by the government to curtail access to voting and the ability of people, especially people of color, to vote.”

After completing law school, Lisa worked as a litigator in private practice. For sixteen and a half years, she was an Assistant Attorney General with the Maryland Office of the Attorney General, assigned to the Department of Health. She handled general lawsuits on behalf of the Department of Health, its units, and its personnel. She also represented the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration, the state’s psychiatric hospitals, the Department of Health’s institutional review board, and dealt with many interesting cases.

Lisa joined the LWV Baltimore County last year. Now a retired attorney, she was looking for volunteer opportunities and met League Co-President Ericka McDonald through her work with the ACLU’s Baltimore County grassroots group. Ericka suggested that she join the League.

Lisa appreciates that the League in Baltimore County is a party in an action to declare that the redistricting map approved by Baltimore’s County Council violates the Voting Rights Act and the Constitution. She is “coordinating with the national League of Women Voters on this lawsuit.”

Also interested in police accountability, she is helping organize a panel on that issue and the related statutes recently passed by the General Assembly.

Lisa is the League. Her concerns regarding the justice system and desire to ensure that everyone is informed about and has access to voting aligns with the League’s involvement in these crucial areas.



- Gwen Wilson, Newsletter Committee Volunteer

### BALTIMORE COUNTY FAIR ELECTION FUND PASSES

Testimony was presented supporting the Baltimore County Fair Election Fund Work Group’s recommendations on behalf of the LWVBCo at the County Council’s [Work Session](#) on December 14, 2021.



[Bill 102-21](#), as presented by the Fair Election Fund Work Group, passed at the Baltimore County Council meeting on December 20, 2021. Councilman Todd Crandall was the only “no” vote.

Two additional amendments were proposed by Councilmen Kach and Jones which 1) limited expenditures for County Executive candidates to \$1.4 million of citizen funding and for County Council candidates \$150,000 of citizen funding, and 2) changing County Executive qualifying standards from \$40,000 raised from at least 500 contributors to \$50,000 raised from 550 contributors and County Council qualifying standards from \$10,000 raised from at least 125 contributors to \$15,000 raised from at least 150 contributors. These additional amendments passed with Council Todd Crandall voting “no”.

The passage of this bill into law owes much to the hard work and commitment of the work group members, including LWVBCo volunteers Phyllis Panopolous and Sue Garonzik. Their advocacy work on this legislation has helped Baltimore County take a step toward moving campaign financing away from big money and into the hands of the public.

- Phyllis Panopolous, Fair Election Fund Volunteer

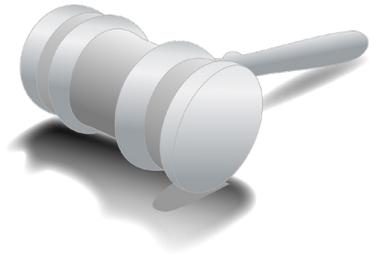
**New Member**  
LWV Baltimore County Welcomes You!

\* Sue Talbot

## COMMITTEES AND REPORTS

### LWVBCo JOINS REDISTRICTING LAWSUIT

On December 21, 2021 the LWV Baltimore County joined with the Baltimore County branch of the NAACP, Common Cause Maryland, and individual plaintiffs and filed a federal lawsuit which challenged the racially discriminatory and unlawful redistricting plan adopted by the Baltimore County Council on December 20, 2021. The plan violates the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution as well as the Voting Rights Act.



The Council adopted the plan despite outcry by the community and being provided with redistricting plans that comply with the law by various civil rights groups. The unlawful plan approved by the Council failed to take into account the significant increase in the number of Baltimore County residents who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) since the last census. The plan also failed to increase the number of majority-minority districts in Baltimore County. Instead, it only included one majority Black district, the same number that was based on the prior census. The County's plan unlawfully dilutes the votes of BIPOC residents. We will keep you apprised as the lawsuit moves forward.

- Lisa Barkan, Secretary

## OF INTEREST

### MEANING OF EQUALITY IN AMERICA

In December 2021, the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, hosted as part of their America's Town Hall programs a panel discussion to explore the idea of equality throughout American history. Up for discussion was where did the idea that "all men are created equal" come from, and what did those words mean when Thomas Jefferson wrote them in the Declaration of Independence. Panelists further discussed what has equality meant in America over time and what does it mean today. Panelists included William Allen, emeritus professor of political philosophy and emeritus dean at James Madison College at Michigan State University; Erika Bachiochi, fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center; Ellen Carol DuBois, distinguished research professor at UCLA; and Jack Rakove, emeritus professor of history and political science at Stanford University. To view a recording of this event, visit [constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/town-hall-video/the-meaning-of-equality-in-america](https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/town-hall-video/the-meaning-of-equality-in-america).

The National Constitution Center is a non-profit organization which serves to disseminate information about the U.S. Constitution on a nonpartisan basis.



### UNDERSTANDING NEWS MEDIA BIAS

In fall 2021, the [News Literacy Project](#) (NLP) hosted a series of webinars called *Understanding Misinformation and How to Talk to People Who Believe It* to help people understand what misinformation is, how people come to believe it, and how to effectively and compassionately communicate and debunk those beliefs.

The final installment in this series will be held on January 19, 2022, at 2pm. Titled *Understanding News Media Bias*, this webinar will tackle the subject of bias in news coverage and help you think more clearly about what causes bias in reporting, what it looks like in coverage and what you can do when you encounter it in your news diet. To register for this webinar, visit [newslit.org/updates/understanding-misinformation-and-how-to-talk-to-people-who-believe-it/](https://newslit.org/updates/understanding-misinformation-and-how-to-talk-to-people-who-believe-it/).

NLP, a nonpartisan national education nonprofit, provides programs and resources for educators and the public to teach, learn and share the abilities needed to be smart, active consumers of news and information and equal and engaged participants in a democracy

### Understanding News Media Bias

Sponsored by Fore River Foundation



## COMMITTEES AND REPORTS

### LWVBCo LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON: WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2022

While we missed being at the Woodbrook Baptist Church, our virtual Legislative Meeting went off without a hitch thanks to Sharalyn Luciani, Ericka McDonald and Neilson Andrews. The Legislators attending were also a great help in that they kept their comments to the specified three minutes each, which allowed for more questions and answers. More than 68 members, guests and state legislators attended the Zoom meeting.

What follows is a brief review of comments from the legislators who accepted our invitation to participate. To look up bills by number or subject, track bill actions, watch hearings, register to testify, and see the whole history including votes on bills, visit the General Assembly website at [mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/). To contact Baltimore County legislators, visit the LWV Baltimore County website's resource page at [www.lwvbaltimorecounty.org/resources](http://www.lwvbaltimorecounty.org/resources) to access the brochure, 2021 Your Elected Officials, for contact information.



**Senator Shelly Hettleman**, District 11, is a member of the Judicial Proceeding Committee. She has a bill on medical parole for inmates over 60 years of age, who have much less chance of recidivism than younger inmates and also suffer from more medical issues. She also hopes to pass a grant program for schools to teach and monitor the recycling of organic waste in the schools. While Sen. Hettleman's housing bills passed last year, there was no funding for legal counsel during the eviction process; she said this is a priority for her.

**Senator Clarence Lam**, District 12, is Chair of the Environmental Subcommittee of Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee (EHE). This subcommittee has been focused on the Health Department efforts during the pandemic, first monitoring the roll out of vaccines and now monitoring the roll out of testing equipment. Senator Lam would like better protections for Health Officers who have been under fire during the pandemic. He also thinks there should be caps on the price of insulin.



**Senator Delores Kelley**, District 10, is Chair of the Finance Committee which hears the financial aspects of health care, insurance, energy and utility issues before the Senate. She wants to see that legislators live in the districts that they represent, citing a good example in legislation from Florida. She would like to further delineate the tax structure for developments with an HOA so owners are not being double taxed. She stated there are more than 16,000 assisted living facilities in Maryland that currently are not adequately monitored or regulated. She also wants to assure Marylanders do not lose the right to an abortion and that there is some funding for affordable access to the services.

**Senator Charles Sydnor**, District 44, thanked League members for their work on the County Council redistricting plan. He wants to assure legislators live in the districts that they represent and would like to enact a Maryland Voting Rights Act. He has a continued interest in cleaning up the legislation on the use of body cameras by local and State Police, stating there should be some control for defendants or bystanders in an action to monitor or cover up the coverage in these tapes.



**Delegate Lisa Belcastro**, District 11, will be focused on the emotional growth of students during the pandemic. She is particularly interested in a grant program for schools to upgrade their playgrounds. She thinks the amount of testing is excessive as it disrupts the learning process. Delegate Belcastro is also concerned about the rate of suicide among young people and would like to create a Suicide Fatality Board. She would like to see a bill passed allowing transgendered people to self-edit their official documents with a name change.

**Delegate Harry Bhandari**, District 8, would like to see elderly patients be able to monitor their health from home. He would also like to make it possible for pharmacists to be able to prescribe or assist with smoking cessation products and prescriptions.



Kim Shiloh, legislative aide for **Delegate Benjamin Brooks**, District 10, said the Delegate will again advocate for tax credits for veterans and senior citizens. He will also sponsor a healthy homes bill to increase the standards of ventilation in homes. He is worried about certain food deserts in Baltimore County.

**Delegate Jon Cardin** is also on Ways and Means and is interested in economic justice and in the no-knock laws, as Maryland's neglected to include bounty hunters in the law. He also thinks the Good Samaritan law needs to include people who call 911 for an overdose, and that Grace's law, which covers cyber bullying, needs updating.



## COMMITTEES AND REPORTS

### LWVBCo LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON: WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2022, CONT.



**Delegate Eric Ebersole**, District 12, indicated there are plethora of educational issues before the House. He agrees that there is excessive testing in our schools. He is concerned about the number of child care facilities that have closed their doors during the pandemic, so he wants to fund new child care initiatives in the state. He also would like to see increased presence of mental health professionals in schools. Last but not least, he would like to see the student member of the School Board able to vote on the budget.

**Delegate Jessica Feldmark**, District 12, sits on the Ways and Means Committee, which hears bills related to finance, banking, insurance, and elections. She would like to see an expansion of the local campaign funding to cover the state positions. Delegate Feldmark would like to assure that home owners make use of the home owners tax credit, as too many people going to tax sale for failure to pay their taxes who have not accessed the credit. During the question period she noted that there will be a hearing on the Health Department Cyber-attack on Jan 13 in Ways and Means.



**Delegate Catherine Forbes**, District 44A, sits on the Appropriations Committee, which oversees the budget and education and economic development. Her first priority is to bridge the pandemic gap in funding for housing, teachers, and health care workers. On the environmental front, she would like to see a mandate for State funding for green building restoration. She explained that due to the veto override in the special session, the Blueprint for Education is funded through 2027. However, she would like to see additional capital funding for school construction.



**Delegate Terri Hill**, District 12, wants to make a change in the state constitution by stripping out language requiring a belief in God in order for religious freedom to be protected under the state constitution. She also wants to change certain constitutional clauses to gender neutral. She is sponsoring with Delegate Michelle Guyton a bill for equity in housing and to encourage the passing on of wealth.



**Delegate Sheila Ruth**, District 44B, is particularly interested in ethical and racial justice. She is sponsoring HB84/SB119, which would amend the law governing student offenses on the school grounds. Disciplinary action would be taken by the school rather than the courts. She is also sponsoring HB141 which would mandate equity in planning transportation routes. On the environmental front she would like to see additional setbacks for gas stations and pesticides regulated by the Department of the Environment, which understand this issue better.



**Delegate Dana Stein**, District 11, is vice chair of Environment and Transportation Committee and is focused on climate change and rising sea levels. He is concerned with making our buildings all electric by 2040 to eliminate the greenhouse gases. He also would like to see an update on the gun storage laws currently on the books. Delegate Stein thinks that financial literacy should be a stand-alone requirement for graduations from our high schools. He would like to eliminate the possibility of faceless electors following our presidential elections.



**Delegate Pat Young**, District 44B, will be working on climate change. He is also amending the guidelines for governmental offices regarding cyber-attacks, stating our data is insecure. He would like to see members of the National Guard, discharged under *Don't Ask, Don't Tell*, able to change their discharge classification to honorable.



There were many interesting questions from the members attending. In response to questions around redistricting, Senator Hettleman directed attendees to the link for the Legislative maps which in all likelihood will be the maps used for redistricting [redistricting.mgaleg.maryland.gov/planviewer-01072022/#LRAC-FINALRECOMMENDEDLEGISLATIVEPLAN-Jan7](https://redistricting.mgaleg.maryland.gov/planviewer-01072022/#LRAC-FINALRECOMMENDEDLEGISLATIVEPLAN-Jan7); input your address into this map to determine which district you are in. The new maps creates several new single member districts. In response to questions on safe needle exchange and consumption facilities, Senators Lam and Hettleman explained that there would not be a bill because there are six pilot programs for needle exchange in the counties and significant funds for safe consumption facilities. Regarding immigration, Senator Hettleman reiterated the need for legal assistance for people in the immigration process while Del Stein stated he would like to see a bill that stops ICE from obtaining information from Maryland databases, such as drivers' licenses and prison records. Finally, Delegates Feldmark and Cardin discussed help for prisoners reentering society, such as tax credits for businesses that hire ex-prisoners, expungement of records from the web, and re-entry support prior to re-entry.

- Neilson Andrews, Legislative Luncheon Chair

## BALTIMORE COUNTY

### BALTIMORE COUNTY MASTER PLAN 2030: PHASE II PUBLIC INPUT MEETINGS



Master Plan 2030 development continues to progress. At the heart of this process is the idea that local government should invest more, and more thoughtfully, in its people and infrastructure. Through the summer and fall of 2021, the Department of Planning conducted a series of Community Engagement Meetings that were held in different communities throughout the County. The input that was gathered will guide the vision for the local community and the County in the next ten years. Using what they heard in the summer and fall, the County has developed draft goals for six Master Plan topics.

All meetings will be held virtually and will **begin at 6pm and last for two hours**. Links to join the meetings online can be found on the Master Plan 2030 website, [masterplan2030-bc-gis.hub.arcgis.com](https://masterplan2030-bc-gis.hub.arcgis.com). On that site there are also summaries of input gathered from the earlier phases of community engagement along with a feature that maps this input around Baltimore County. Make your voice heard to help shape the future of Baltimore County.

#### Master Plan Meeting Topics and Dates

*January 19: Resilient Economy*

*January 24: Livable Built Environment Part 2, Transportation, Infrastructure, and Public Facilities*

*January 26: Healthy Community*

*January 31: Interwoven Equity*

*February 7: Harmony with Nature*

### BALTIMORE COUNTY BUDGET TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Baltimore County Budget Town Hall meetings will begin at the end of January and run through the end of March. These meetings, now in their fourth year, will provide a forum for public discussion focused on FY23 budget priorities and ensure that community members have the opportunity to provide input into the budget planning process.



There will be seven meetings in all, one for each Council district. Due to spikes of the omicron variant, the meetings will begin virtually with the possibility of in-person options later on, depending on public health metrics. To register for your district's meeting, visit [www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/executive/townhallmeetings.html](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/executive/townhallmeetings.html). If you are unsure which Council District you live in, go to the County's Representative search page at [vote.baltimorecountymd.gov/Address.aspx?pageid=3](http://vote.baltimorecountymd.gov/Address.aspx?pageid=3).

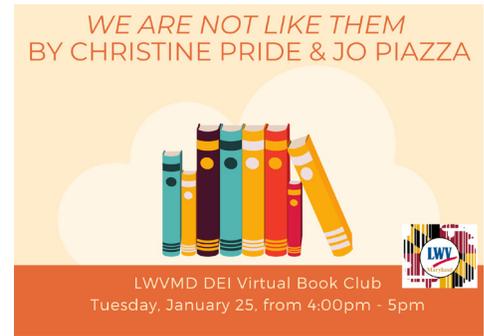
# LWVMD EVENTS

## LWVMD DEI Book Club

The LWVMD’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee (DEI) sponsors a monthly, virtual book club in which participants discuss a book selection within the framework of diversity, equity, and inclusion. November’s book is:

***We are Not Like Them*, by Christine Pride & Jo Piazza  
Tuesday, January 25, from 4-5pm**

The book club is free and open to all. To join the conversation, register for the Zoom discussion at [us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcqdeitrT4iHddNBCTHbYQjvLh89DFWn49I](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84461212121). For more information, contact LWVMD Executive Director Nikki Tyree at [stateoffice@lwvmd.org](mailto:stateoffice@lwvmd.org).



## LWVMD WINTER WORKSHOP

The LWVMD Winter Workshop is just days away, **Saturday, January 29, from 9am - 12:15pm**. The theme of this year’s workshop is Advancing the League Agenda, so content will center around positions, actions and skills.

In addition to time for networking and building skills, author and Columbia University Professor Donald Green will talk about Get Out the Vote efforts, a LWV California member will speak about their Criminal Justice position, Maryland Senator Ben Cardin will address the ERA and voting rights, while LWVMD members will discuss the LWVMD’s Equity in Health Care position.

Participants can also attend skills-based sessions on: Digital Advocacy, Copyright Do’s and Don’ts, Defusing Contentious Conversations, and Best Practice for Coalitions and Partnerships. Finally, local Leagues will share what they are doing to advance their mission.

Registration for this event is currently open on the LWVMD webpage, [www.lwvmd.org/winter-workshop-2022](http://www.lwvmd.org/winter-workshop-2022). The workshop will again be held virtually, and participants will receive a link to join the event once they have registered. Questions about the event can be directed to LWVMD Executive Director, Nikki Tyree, [stateoffice@lwvmd.org](mailto:stateoffice@lwvmd.org).



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League of Women Voters of Baltimore County  
6600 York Road, Suite 211  
Baltimore, MD 21212  
Return service requested

LEAGUE OFFICE HOURS  
Tuesday, Thursday, 10am-1pm  
410-377-8046  
[contact@lwvbaltimorecounty.org](mailto:contact@lwvbaltimorecounty.org)  
[www.LWVBaltimoreCounty.org](http://www.LWVBaltimoreCounty.org)



## Membership

*Open to all men and women*

Not a member yet?

**Join Today!**

» Call the office at 410-377-8046

» Visit us at  
[www.lwvbaltimorecounty.org](http://www.lwvbaltimorecounty.org)

Create Positive Change  
Join the League Today!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021-22

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