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News You Can Use

DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT

May 2022

"It is critical that we show up in solidarity, and make our voices heard for reproductive choice. Our democracy depends on it," said League of Women Voters of the United States president Dr. Deborah Turner and CEO Virginia Kase Solomón in their [recent statement](#).

The call to action is crystal clear.

It is critical that we all show up in allyship with trusted organizations—those with years of advocacy and expertise in the reproductive justice movement.

All of us must show up, all of us must be seen and all of us must be heard. We must protect access to reproductive healthcare for every person, in every state.

We are outraged, and it is imperative that we carry our outrage beyond social media, kitchen tables, Zoom screens. Beyond even rallies and marches.

We need to carry our outrage directly to our elected representatives. Make sure they know that reproductive healthcare is a priority for you. Not just that you expect them to support and protect these rights, but that this is an urgent priority—now.

Right now, today, call Senator Durbin and Senator Duckworth. Call your US representative, your state senator and state representative. They need to know this is your priority.

Make the time to ask the same of everyone you know. Only our collective action will make change.

It is, as always, a long game.

And we must continue the energy and carry the message until the result is freedom and equity. Freedom to choose healthcare, family, religion... freedom for each of us to live **our** best life, not someone else's.



[Allyson E. Haut, Ph.D.](#)

President

League of Women Voters of Illinois

[Contact Senator Dick Durbin](#)

202-224-2152

[Contact Senator Tammy Duckworth](#)

202-224-2854

[Contact your other elected representatives.](#)

Illinois General Primary Election: June 28



Make Your Voice Heard on June 28

[Apply for a vote by mail ballot.](#) Ballots will be sent beginning May 19. Return ballots by mail or at designated locations.

May 19: Early voting starts at office of election authorities

June 1–28: Voting at election authority and polling sites

June 12: Last day of online voter registration. In person registration continues at the polls through election day; register and vote at the same time

June 13: First day of early voting at permanent polling places

June 23: Last day for election authority to receive vote by mail applications

June 28: General Primary Election Day! Polls are open from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm

Coming Soon to the Illinois Voter Guide: Candidate information!

The [Illinois Voter Guide](#) is a one-stop shop for nonpartisan voting information, no matter where you live in Illinois. This online, statewide voter resource is powered by the League of Women Voters of Illinois and activated by you.

A key element in the [Illinois Voter Guide](#), candidate information includes responses to a set of questions LWVIL sends to state and federal candidates. Voters can see who answered (and possibly who didn't) before deciding how to vote.

Voters across the state can go to [IllinoisVoterGuide.org](#) to:

- make a plan to vote
- check their registration and register to vote
- find their polling place
- find information about the candidates on their ballot (coming in May)

- listen to recordings of many of the League’s candidate forums (coming in May and June)

Everyone can use the [Illinois Voter Guide](#) to help **increase voter turnout** by informing and empowering every voter they know. Help voters find the information they need. **Download and share the handy Illinois Voter Guide graphics found on the [LWVIL website](#).**



Candidate Forum Calendar

Candidate forums are a League hallmark and an excellent opportunity for community members to learn about their candidates. Check out our [statewide candidate forum calendar](#). Recordings of most forums will be posted on the calendar and available in the Illinois Voter Guide for maximum accessibility.

Gubernatorial Candidate Forums

LWVIL is partnering with ABC7 and Univision to hold candidate forums for gubernatorial candidates running in the June 28 primary election. The Republican forum will be recorded on June 2 and televised at a time to be determined. Forum coordinators are awaiting responses from Democrat gubernatorial candidates.



Choosing a Ballot for the June 28 Primary?

In Illinois primary elections, voters must declare a party affiliation in order to receive a ballot. This is because Illinois primary elections are considered partisan primary elections—voters vote a ballot listing only candidates from one party or the other.

However, Illinois voters do not need to be a registered member of either party. In Illinois, voters simply choose which ballot they would like to vote by declaring a party

for that particular primary. Two years later, in the next primary, they can crossover and choose to vote the ballot of the opposite party. This is often referred to as a partially open primary. Illinois is one of 15 states with partially open primaries.

Open primaries are held in another 15 states. In these primaries, voters are allowed to choose a party ballot in private, without publicly disclosing a party affiliation. In Illinois, a voter may request a nonpartisan ballot to vote on referenda only.

In the nine states with closed primaries, only voters registered with a political party can vote, and only on a ballot for the party to which they are registered. There are also six states with partially closed primaries, where unaffiliated voters may receive either party's ballot, but voters registered to a party cannot cross party lines and request the other party's ballot.

[Read more from the National Conference of State Legislatures.](#)

NOTE: In the general election on the first Tuesday in November, Illinois voters receive only one ballot, listing candidates from all parties.

League Advocacy



LWV of US Calls for National Action on Climate Change

Following a new report from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicating the importance of collective action by international governments, League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) CEO Virginia Kase sent a [letter to members of the US Senate](#) on behalf of 500,000 League members and supporters. In it, she urged Congress to take the following steps to address climate change:

- invest in renewable energy
- implement a plan to put a price on carbon
- address the long-term impacts climate change has on public health

Kase noted that climate change has serious financial impacts, stating “while states and local governments are working to address climate change at the community level, it is imperative that climate action also be taken at the national level.”

The League holds that “action now is critical to curb the most dramatic impacts of climate change that may occur at warming levels higher than 2 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels.”

Economic Change Can Protect the Environment

In a [recent blog entry](#), Kristen Kern, Federal Advocacy and Policy Manager, LWVUS, advocates for changing our economic structure as a path toward protecting the planet. Kern is among those who advocate that a change from a linear economy to a circular economy would “create a more sustainable society.”

“Linear processes ‘take, make, and waste,’ by taking materials from the earth, making a product, and moving it to a landfill at the end of its useful life,” Kern writes. In contrast, “a circular economy redefines materials that were once considered trash and gives them new, valuable lives.” Kern advises that, like many ways of addressing climate change, an economic shift toward a circular economy will take collective action and engagement.

Be part of the collective. Contact your legislators and let them know you expect them to be proactive about climate change. Then join other engaged voices—[join a local League](#). Many local Leagues are actively focused on pro-environment legislation in their communities and on a national level.



LWVIL supported legislation becomes Illinois law

Important legislation supported by LWV of Illinois was passed by both chambers of the Illinois General this term.

The General Assembly has 30 days to send approved legislation to the governor for his signature. Bills are not submitted simultaneously so that there is ample time to consider each one. The governor has 60 days to sign bills into law. Any vetoed legislation is returned to the General Assembly.

Governor has signed into law

Budget: Permanently expands access to Illinois’ earned income credit

Education HB900 (Budget)

- Increases Evidence-Based funding for FY 2023
- Increases funding for Early Childhood Programs by 9%
- Provides funding for Minority Teacher Scholarships

Sent to Governor

Healthcare HB4343: Expands access to free and affordable healthcare to low income Illinois residents ages 42 and over.

Housing HB2775: A renter’s source of income cannot be used as grounds to deny them a lease.

Immigration SB3144: Ensures that the state has the infrastructure to provide legal representation for deportation cases

Elections SB829: Provides for accessible vote by mail for Illinoisans with print disabilities.

Educational Events

In Illinois, forty local Leagues regularly host virtual events related to both voter education and action on issues. Events are open to the public. [See the LWVIL website events calendar.](#)

A short article in April's News You Can Use should have referred to Illinois primary elections as partially open rather than closed.

Stay up to date!

Follow the League of Women Voters of Illinois on social media. Share the message.



Thank you for supporting our work to defend democracy and empower voters.

[Donate Now!](#)

