

Member Bulletin

August 2023

It was not so long ago that the US Supreme Court felt like a remote and highly formal institution, but lately we are all increasingly aware of the latest news from SCOTUS and the impact of its decisions on our daily lives and our democracy.

SCOTUS' own [website](#) states: *When the Supreme Court rules on a constitutional issue, that judgment is virtually final; its decisions can be altered only by the rarely used procedure of constitutional amendment or by a new ruling of the Court. However, when the Court interprets a statute, new legislative action can be taken.*

Decisions from SCOTUS can potentially affect legislation, and, by extension, future League advocacy efforts. I encourage you to [register for this August 29 event](#), sponsored by the Chicago-Kent School of Law and the League of Women Voters of Illinois, where speakers will discuss the implications and repercussions of several blockbuster cases that have captured the nation's attention.



[Becky Simon](#)

President

League of Women Voters of Illinois

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Back to School Reminders

Students are headed back to school, and election season is around the corner. It is time to reach out to young people who are newly eligible to register and vote!

Information for All Students

Illinois' relatively new election law, SB825, requires the State Board of Elections to prepare a one page document explaining the voter registration process that every high school must provide for its students (this can be done electronically). Find copies of the required documents at www.lwvil.org on the League Resources page under Voter Service.

Make sure high schools throughout Illinois are complying with the law. Local Leagues can help get the word out by [sending this letter](#) to high school superintendents or principals.

Pre-registration at Age 16

Illinois election reform bill SB2123, signed into law by Governor JB Pritzker on August 4, 2023 allows 16-year-olds to pre-register to vote, with the registration held in abeyance until they are of voting age. This change goes into effect January 1, 2024. Even more high school students will be eligible to register!

Remember—17-year-olds can register and vote in the Primary Election on March 19, 2024 if they'll be 18 by the General Election on Nov. 5, 2024.



Gun Violence Prevention Study

Do LWVIL's current positions allow members to advocate effectively for gun violence prevention (GVP)? Will those positions allow for maximum impact in the future? It is time to find out.

As the LWVIL issues & advocacy committee took stock of its advocacy efforts at the turn of the biennium, these and other questions arose about the current LWVIL GVP position. Based on the issues and advocacy committee's recommendations, the LWVIL

board advised a study to determine if and how our GVP position should be revised. During the 2023 LWVIL Convention in June, members voted to approve undertaking a study.

The LWVUS position on GVP, last updated in 1998, supports strong federal measures to regulate the ownership of handguns and assault weapons. The LWVIL position, last updated in 1989, additionally supports a ban on the manufacture and sale of handguns, assault weapons and their ammunition (see [Where We Stand](#) to learn more).

In the ensuing decades, much has changed in the GVP arena. Mass shootings at schools occur so frequently that active shooter drills are now interspersed with fire drills at many schools. Untraceable guns can be made on 3D printers, and US Supreme Court decisions pit second amendment rights against the right to be free from violence. What can be done to reduce the growing epidemic of gun violence and gun-related deaths that plague our nation?

The LWVIL GVP position study is designed to determine what is needed to advocate effectively for gun violence prevention. Members can volunteer to join the core study group, reviewing the current GVP position for possible updates. Meetings will be held virtually. LWVIL is also asking each local League to form a group to provide feedback on the work of the core group.

Please consider volunteering to help with the GVP position study. Interested members should email issues@lwwil.org.

The League Study Process

League studies, on the local, state and national level, are the process by which League positions are created or updated. After a League undertakes a thorough pursuit of facts and details, recommended position updates are voted on by membership.

Adding or modifying any position in [Where We Stand](#) may be accomplished in one of two ways: after study and member consensus, or by concurrence.

Adopting a Position by Consensus

1. The Board recommends, and members vote to approve, the commencement of a study at LWVIL Convention.
2. An LWVIL issue specialist creates a plan for conducting the study, introduces the study to the League at large, and develops a team of local League members to execute the study.
3. The study team interviews experts, conducts a review of historical legislation (both passed and failed) in Illinois and other states, and compiles other relevant data needed to review our position and determine whether or not it needs to be amended.
4. Using the data above, the study team drafts any language needed to change or supplement the existing position.
5. The study team educates LWVIL members about the recommended position amendments. Local Leagues convene to review the recommendations and report whether or not they have reached consensus on the recommendations.
6. The issues and advocacy committee brings the amended position to the floor for a vote during LWVIL Convention, excluding items on which consensus was not reached.

Adopting a Position by Concurrence

Sometimes a League will find that another League has adopted a position so compelling that they decide to adopt the same position. In other words, they vote to concur with the position studied and adopted by another League, exactly as written by the originating League – without amplifications, deletions or additional conditions.

If a League concurs with the position of another League, then it follows the same steps as for a position being adopted by consensus: the position is presented to the board for approval and League membership votes to adopt the position by concurrence during Convention.



Member Trainings

The following trainings are open only to League members. Registration is required. Registration closes 24 hours in advance.

Membership Recruitment & Management

Thursday, September 7
12:30 and 5:30 pm

[Register for 12:30 pm.](#)
[Register for 5:30 pm.](#)

Every League member can help grow League membership! Local League members and their connections are some of our best recruitment tools. Learn more about how to successfully attract and retain members to keep our organization thriving.

This is the first in a series of Leadership Development Trainings hosted by LWVIL, with presenters from the LWVUS Organizing Team.

Observer Corps

Saturday, September 9
10:00 am

[Register to attend.](#)

As more and more local newspapers close throughout the country, the League's Observer Corps often find themselves playing a key role in community education and engagement.

The League's Observer Corps helps ensure that citizens are aware of the decisions that impact their lives and they promote government transparency and accountability. League members can contribute to the civic health of their communities by joining or starting an Observer Corps

Additional training dates can be arranged for groups of ten or more. Contact [LWVIL Voter Service](#) to discuss.

Preference, Tradition, or Requirement?

Thursday, October 5
12:30 and 5:30 pm

[Register for 12:30 pm.](#)
[Register for 5:30 pm.](#)

"But we've always done it that way!" Use the Preference, Tradition or Requirement (PTR) evaluation tool to focus on what really matters, and how to best accomplish your goals.

This is the second in a series of Leadership Development Trainings hosted by LWVIL, with presenters from the LWVUS Organizing Team.



Upcoming Events

National Poll Worker Recruitment Day

Wednesday, August 23

You can make sure we have safe, fair, efficient elections for all: step up and become a poll worker for the next election in your community.

[Help staff your local polling place.](#)

Women's (In)Equality Day

Saturday, August 26

August 26, the anniversary of the certification of the 19th Amendment, is often known as Women's Equality Day. Yet with voting and reproductive rights under attack, women are still not equal in this democracy.

[Add your name to the League's petition](#) urging Congress to protect women's rights to vote, add the ERA to the Constitution, and restore reproductive freedom for all.

Use the [LWVUS social media toolkit](#) to amplify the message.

March on

LWVUS is joining the 60th Anniversary March on Washington—too much is at stake to sit on

Washington
Saturday, August 26

the sidelines. The League stands against the rise of hatred, violence, and threats to democracy and civil rights. [Learn more.](#)

**Blockbuster
Supreme Court
Cases**

Tuesday, August 29,
5:00–7:00 pm

Join LWVIL and the Constitutional Democracy Project for this two-hour virtual deep dive featuring a panel of legal scholars and constitutional experts.

[Register to attend.](#)

**National Voter
Registration Day**
Tuesday, September 18

How will your local League participate?

Step 1: [Sign up as an official partner.](#) Local Leagues are

encouraged to sign on. You can also order free swag and get resources and tips on how to host events.

Step 2: Host a community registration drive, spread the word on social media ([we have graphics for you to share!](#)), and contact voters to remind them about registration deadlines. The message is simple: now is the time to register, or update your registration, to ensure you can vote.

NVRD has been a huge success for hundreds of participating Leagues in the last ten years. The League has been the single-largest partner since NVRD's 2012 inception, helping to build the League's visibility among thousands of partners and tens of thousands of new voters.



Find more events (and share your local League's events!) on the [LWVIL website event calendar.](#)

Members power the League! Thank you for your time and donations!



Support the League today!

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