

LWV ADVOCACY

Advocacy: Supporting an idea or cause publicly.

Action: Any effort aimed at influencing a decision on an issue.

Action Alerts are launched in LWV newsletters (LWVUS Updates and LWVMI League Links) and in separate email messages to members.

Members who provide an email address when joining should automatically receive LWVMI League Links and alert messages. To receive LWVUS Updates and alerts, go to <https://www.lwv.org/league-management> and click the box “Sign Up for The League Update.”

Ensure the League Speaks with One Voice:

- Responding to an Action Alert, the **local LWV Board**:
 - Sends official communication in the name of the local League. This is done only by the president/chair or designated spokesperson, signed by that person, in the name of the League.
 - Reports to LWVMI office any response from a legislator.
 - May determine that the membership does not agree with the LWV position and may choose not to take action in the name of the League. Such decision must be reported to LWVMI.
- New leagues and **Units-at-Large** have a special responsibility to become familiar with LWV position and background on the position before taking action. Education?
- All action at the state level must be authorized by the LWVMI Board. This includes any effort aimed at influencing the decision on a state issue, communicating with an elected or appointed official, joining a coalition, taking part in a rally or press conference, or writing a letter to the editor.
- A League **member** always acts as an individual in response to an Action Alert, communicating with legislators as a responsible and informed citizen without reference to LWV membership. A member expresses personal opinions and views on issues and gives reasons for them but may link to League positions.

Related Priorities for 2019-2020 approved by our local League:

4. LWVMI and LWVUS Positions. Review and discuss positions of interest as identified by local members, *participate in advocacy identified by LWVMI or LWVUS* and learn about the LWV study and program adoption process.
5. LWVMI and LWVUS Project and Action Priorities. *Participate when possible in alerts and activities recommended by LWVMI and LWVUS.*

Initial Steps*

1. Respond to state and national Action Alerts on behalf of our local League.
 - When does the membership need to come to a consensus first?
 - Post state and national alerts on our local League website or Facebook page and disseminate to others using LWV graphics and social media post suggestions.
 - Use LWV templates to prepare letters-to-the-editor signed by Chair or designee.
 - Check the LWVUS and LWVMI websites for current action opportunities
2. Let members know how our legislators vote on Action Alert legislation.
3. Use LWV templates and talking points to develop letters to the editor about priority issues, notable dates, e.g. Women's Equality Day.
4. Guided by the LWVMI VP for Advocacy, monitor selected state legislative committees, engage in advocacy training, and recommend the state board take a position as bills arise related to LWVMI priorities.
5. Research a local ballot issue; provide pro/con arguments for our local voter guide, publicize to the media and other organizations.
6. Conduct biennial legislative interviews on current LWVMI priorities.

*Portions taken from LWVMI Advocacy Manual p.4, "The Power of One"

Some Recent Action Alerts

- July 1: Add your name to a petition and tell lawmakers in your state to make sure the 2020 Census is conducted fairly and is fully funded.
- June 29: Demand a Senate Hearing on the For the People Act so that every American can hear for themselves the content of the For the People Act. The League helped shape The For the People Act which includes fair redistricting standards for the entire country.
- June 25: Call Governor Whitmer's office and tell her to shut down Line 5.
- June 24: Call-in day (June 25) to Congress asking them to restore the Voting Rights Act.
- June 19: Shelby Co. v. Holder 6th Anniversary Week of Action
Calling on Congress to restore the Voting Rights Act by passing #HR4—the Voting Rights Advancement Act.
- June SCOTUS decisions
Before the Supreme Court decided the partisan redistricting and census cases LWVUS shared talking points for Leagues to speak on decision day providing message guidance so that we are all speaking with one voice.
- May 23: Urge your representative to co-sponsor H.R. 1923, the Women's History and Nineteenth Amendment Centennial Quarter Dollar Coin Program Act.
- Apr. 30: Sign the #Count MeIn Pledge to be counted and to educate your community about the importance of the 2020 Census.