



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® of METROPOLITAN PHOENIX

January 26, 2016 Calendar & Comments

League Resources

Meetings Calendar: [click here](#)

Website: <http://lwvmetrophoenix.org/index.html>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lwvmetrophoenix/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/lwvazmp/>

Member page: lwvmetrophoenix.org/members_only.html



Legislative Days

Legislator contact information:

<http://azleg.gov/>

Find your state legislative district:

<http://azredistricting.org/districtlocator/>

Our state League (LWVAZ) sets priority issue areas. This year these are:

First Tier:

Voting Rights: Voter Registration, Election Process, Redistricting, Initiative/Referendum Reform

Campaign Finance: Money in Politics, Clean Elections

Education: Funding and Standards

Second Tier:

Women's Issues: Reproductive Choice, Pay Equity

Independent Judiciary

Health Care

Human Trafficking Environment

Bills currently being followed by League are primarily in the areas of Election Reform, Education and Social Policy. New bills are still be added daily (by the Senate until Jan. 30th, the House until February 10th). Information on specific bills will be provided as we move forward into the session.

Comment on a bill being heard in Committee online by opening a "Request to Speak" account.

Contact Alice [here](#) and ask for more information. Someone must activate the account in person at the Capitol. We can do that for you!

Calendar and Website

The Calendar is constantly updated. Find the latest at lwvmetrophoenix.org/calendar

LWVMP Community Team Meetings –

All may attend anywhere!

*You may start your own group.

East Valley

Thursday, February 16th, at 11:30 a.m.

Marge Thornton's, 400 E. Alameda, Tempe
(bring brown bag lunch)

The East Valley is reading John Paul Stevens' book,
Six Amendments, How and Why We Should Change the Constitution.
Discussion will be on Chapter 4: "Sovereign Immunity".



Scottsdale Team Meeting

Thursday, February 9, 9:30 am

The home of Judy Levine, 8155 E. Del Caverna Drive, Scottsdale (off of Via Linda)

Sam Campana or her representative will speak on her group's plans for the Desert Discovery Center at the Gateway Trailhead in Scottsdale.

Phoenix Community Team Meeting

Wednesday, February 8, 9:30 am refreshments, 10 am program

The Terraces, 16th St. between Glendale Ave. and Northern (turn west on Morten: 7550 N. 16th St.)

Speaker: Dr. Anne Schneider, ASU Professor emeritus of Political Science—What's Up at the Legislature?

Spend a Day at the Legislature

Don't be shy. With others, attend a legislative day and meet your legislators in person, at the State Capitol, 1700 W. Washington.

Environmental Day at the Capitol (Organized by the Sierra Club)

February 15, 8:30 am to 2 pm

AZ State Capitol Museum - Historic Supreme Courtroom

This year's theme is *Protecting the Arizona We All Share*. Come be part of one of our teams!

RSVP



UU (Unitarian Universalist) Day at the Legislature

Feb. 20., 9:30 am to 3 pm.

You do not have to be a UU member.

Register at <http://www.uujaz.org>

Notable Community Event **6th Annual Arizona Women's Conference**

Saturday, March 25th, 2017
Scottsdale Community College
<http://www.azwcl.org/>

Don't Forget! **League Meet & Green** **& Orientation**

Saturday, February 4, Scottsdale
Congregational Church
[See Invite & RSVP Here](#)

Issues of Interest

League's Position on the Electoral College

"The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. We support the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of the president until the abolition of the Electoral College is accomplished."

Support of the National Popular Vote Compact

By now, you've possibly heard of the **National Popular Vote Compact (NPV)** as one method for *using* the Electoral College to trigger the use of the popular vote in declaring a Presidential winner. States which sign on pledge to give all their Electoral College votes to the winner of the national popular vote. The compact is triggered once there are enough states to equal 270 electoral votes, the amount required to win.

Find background and supporting information on NPV at nationalpopularvote.com and on FairVote's webpage [here](#).

Views opposing NPV can be found at [Cato Institute](#) and in the editorial in The Arizona Republic, by [Robert Robb](#).

Education

League believes that the increased funding for schools in the governor's latest [budget](#) is extremely inadequate. And of course we are not alone! [AZ Schools Now](#), a collaboration of organizations led by Children's Action Alliance, released a statement with which we concur: [See their statement here](#).

Here's an interesting take on education, asking whether Finland's highly-esteemed education system could really work here in the U.S.: [What We Can't Learn from Finland About Education Reform](#)

Election Reform -- Multi-member Districts

League supports creating multi-member districts as one reform that would lead to representation of more citizens in our legislature. It would require consolidating districts in order to have multiple candidate run in each district--therefore allowing citizens to have at least one elected person representing their views. FairVote calls this "Fair Representation Voting". [Here's a great 6-minute video](#) explaining this option.

Controversy over Election Law Overhaul Being Proposed by Secretary of State

From Arizona Center for Investigative Reporting:

"Secretary of State Michele Reagan has begun circulating a memo detailing a proposed overhaul of the laws governing virtually every aspect of how elections are conducted in Arizona, from data protocols and recount procedures, to "sore loser" candidates and voter fraud investigations."

[Read full article here.](#)

Arizona Blue Meanie (blog) provides details of this proposal as submitted by the Secretary of State to that blog: [Read it here](#)

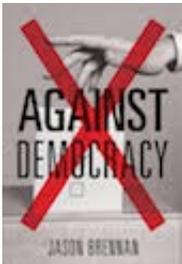
League reviewers feel that some of the proposals S.O.S. has introduced are pragmatic and make sense; others are written too vaguely to judge what the consequences might be. We will continue to follow this issue!

In regard to future Presidential Preference Elections, Secretary of State Michelle Reagan wrote in a recent post:

"To ensure the community has the opportunity to review polling place locations, I'm asking the legislature to establish local Citizen Commissions (which) will have the opportunity to review and provide feedback to election administrators before plans are presented to the County Board of Supervisors for approval."

Consider the topic of "democracy"

Read:



Jason Brennan's *Against Democracy* seems scarily prescient today. Writing well before the twin shocks of the Brexit and the U.S. elections, the Georgetown political scientist makes a powerful case that popular democracy can be dangerous—and, provocatively, that irrational and incompetent voters should be excluded from democratic decision-making. The case for elitism in governance never read so well.

Saving Capitalism for the Many, Not the Few, by Robert Reich (our most recent book group selection), is a national bestseller -- a truly "paradigm-shifting" explanation for the layman, about the false dichotomy the powerful like to encourage between the idea of a "free market" and "big government". Clearly describes the who/how/when/why of the change from a market organized for broad-based prosperity, and the ultimately democracy-killing structure we have today, guided by the invisible hands of the powerful to deliver almost all the gains of our economy to the top.

Listen: Diane Ream Show: [Threats to Democracy Here and Abroad](#)

And then:

Lift your mood with this: [A List of Things to be Thankful For in 2016](#)
Start you list for 2017 today! We'll need it!

Citizens' Clean Election Commission (CCEC)

The Citizens' Clean Election Commission is near and dear to the LWV's heart, as we were part of the steering committee responsible for the formation and passage of the initiative that created the CCEC back in 1998. Since the day that initiative was passed, it has been the target of legislators, who would like to repeal it or at least weaken it. This year is no exception. LWVMP member Rivko Knox has been attending meetings of the Commission. [Get your basic questions about the CCEC answered here.](#)

Highlights from the last several CCEC meetings:

1. The new Commission chair is Steve M. Titla, a Democrat from Gila County. He is a partner in the Titla & Parsi law firm and is admitted to practice law both in Arizona and on the San Carlos Apache Reservation. There is currently a vacancy on the Commission; applications have been submitted and Senator Katie Hobbs will make the final appointment.
2. One task of the Commission is to educate voters about the voting process. Staff are gearing up to provide education on the next set of elections to be held in March, i.e., in Goodyear, Phoenix and Tucson for City Council.
3. Voter Education Manager Gina Roberts has provided a very comprehensive report, with data showing when, how and how effective various voter education activities were in 2016 to include the number of TV ads, on line information, Voters' Guides, the number of debates, the number who watched and the comments submitted about such. Among the key findings: voters still don't feel they know enough about the issues; millennials remain apathetic – they do not feel their votes matters; there is distrust of the system; people don't see the importance of voting; and the Voters' Guide was a key tool for a large number.

Regarding the 2017-18 Voter Education Plan, Ms. Roberts said in the future, CCEC staff will try to customize the voting experience and continue soliciting feedback about their efforts.

4. There is an ongoing dispute between the CCEC and the Secretary of State's office regarding who has the authority to decide complaints about campaign violations brought against candidates *not* running as Clean Elections candidates--things such as types of ads and timely filing of expense reports. The issue of how far the authority of the CCEC extends is currently being litigated.
5. Funding of CCEC being questioned. There is an on going issue with an AZ Supreme Court Task Force on Fair Justice for All, which has looked at surcharges as part of its mission. Of course surcharges fund Clean Elections, so any decisions/legal actions/rules about such could very significantly impact the CCEC. The Task Force is proposing legislative language that would allow the courts to waive surcharges much more broadly than is done now, because they are seen as overly-burdensome to the poor. Clean Elections used to be funded by a voluntary tax check-off, which was removed as an option.



Democracy in Action

Your League dues supports education and advocacy at all levels of League!

Status of Landmark Constitutional Climate Change Lawsuit:

Juliana et al v. United States (LWVUS has filed an amicus brief in this case.)

This case was filed in 2015 by twenty-one youth from across the U.S., age 8 to 19, in the Oregon U.S. District Court. Additional plaintiff: world-renowned climate scientist Dr. James E. Hansen. Complaint asserts that in causing climate change, the federal government has violated that generation's constitutional rights to life, liberty, and property, and failed to protect essential public trust resources.

Update: In November, the court ruled the youth had standing and this case can go to trial. See details of the case and sign a petition supporting the youth [here](#).

League Sends Comments to Census Bureau

The League sent comments to the Census Bureau regarding the decision to continue using the "usual residence" rule. The rule counts incarcerated citizens at their prison addresses rather than their home addresses. The League believes that the Bureau's decision undermines the redistricting process in states across the country by distorting state and federal legislative districts. This upsets the balance of power and disproportionately under-represents minority populations in communities across the U.S.

WANT RELIABLE NEWS SOURCES?

Take a look at this helpful graphic! [Click here.](#)

*pdf available; contact Alice

Thoughts on the State of our Country, from LWVMP

Care Lengel, LWVMP President

Many citizens in all areas and from all political perspectives are expressing concern about what will happen in our nation next. While LWV is and always has been non partisan, we have always been political!! The League is committed to focusing on one overriding issue: **Making Democracy Work!**

Making Democracy Work includes addressing the polarizing effects of a broken campaign finance system. Please see information at lwv.org/issues/reforming-money-politics.

LWVAZ and LWV Metro Phoenix also address protection of voter rights; reform of voting procedures; maintaining a fair and separate judiciary; maintaining the Citizens' Clean Elections Commission; independent redistricting; education and education financing reform, and other issues on which LWV holds positions.

To engage, join the conversation online, respond to LWVAZ Action Alerts, and find resources regularly from LWVMP, LWVAZ & LWVUS. Lend your voice, your support, and your efforts so that all voices may be heard by our local, state, and national leaders.