

September 2026

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FREDERICK COUNTY

BECAUSE DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT



A Legacy of Democratic Engagement



LWV- A New Generation



Who are we?



Non Partisan



Advocacy

"Free, fair, and accessible elections are the cornerstone of a healthy democracy. President Trump's call to eliminate vote-by-mail is a **direct attack on Americans' freedom to vote.**"



A Dangerous Attempt to Silence American Voters



LWV Responds to President Trump's Anti-Voter Executive Order



LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS OF MARYLAND

Advocate Manual



UNFINISHED REVOLUTION



ADVOCACY, ACTIVISM, AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

The League of Women Voters and the
Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit Program

By Bianca Serbin and Ellen Starnon

Policy Issues



We Encourage



LWVMD Civic Education & Youth Engagement Working Group

—
Collaborate with local League
members & LWVMD to amplify
our efforts across the state!
—

Contact: gmassey@lwvmd.org



National and Local LWV



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Maryland Strengthens Voting Rights as Federal Protections Weaken



LWVUS



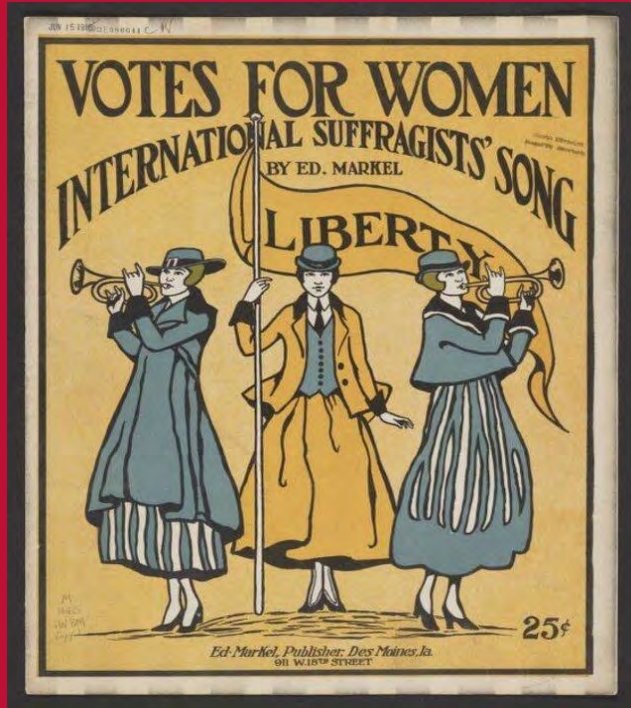
LWV Frederick



Principles Guiding the LWV

- Empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide.
- Actions taken have membership consensus on well- researched and unbiased information to achieve solutions in the public interest on key community issues at all government levels.
- Build citizen participation in the democratic process.
- Engage communities in promoting positive solutions to public policy issues through education and advocacy.

Our Beginnings



History

The League of Women Voters was officially founded in 1920, just six months before the 19th amendment went into effect and women won the right to vote.

19th AMENDMENT

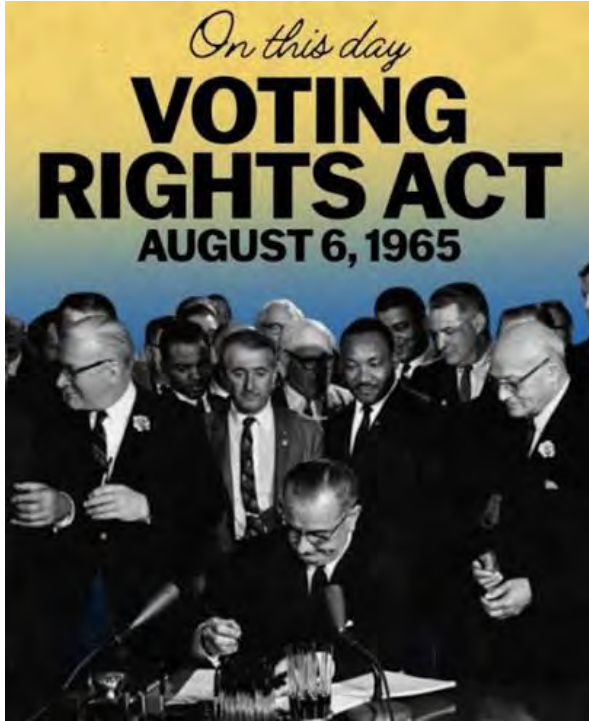


Amendment 19

When the 19th Amendment was ratified in August 1920, it prohibited denying the right to vote based on sex. **However, its implementation was deeply unequal.**

Mississippi was the last state to allow women to vote in 1984.

1920-1970



- Womens' right to vote. **1920**
- **Poll taxes** and **literacy tests** deliberately kept African Americans from fully participating in democracy until the passage of the ***Voting Rights Act of 1965***.
- Literacy tests were used to disenfranchise racial minorities as late as **1970**.

- Southern states passed the poll tax.
 - No one could vote unless they owned property
 - Or could pay fee to vote
- Grandfather Clause
 - State could not take away rights that you had prior to a change in the law
 - Passed to protect poor whites voting rights
- Literacy Test
 - Must be able to read and write to vote



Always Fighting for Democracy



2013 Shelby v. Holder

The US Supreme Court rolled back voter protections.

Anti-discrimination laws were reversed allowing states to return to previous unfair voting practices



UN Established & LWV Named NGO Observer

In **1945**, at the UN Charter Conference, the League of Women Voters was invited by President Harry Truman to serve as a consultant to the U.S. delegation.

Consultative status allowed the League to make formal oral or written statements to the UN and be consulted by the UN in areas in which the League has expertise.



Major Campaign to Ratify the ERA

1972 Congress passed the ***Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)***. LWV voted officially to support “equal rights for all regardless of sex.” The League followed this vote with a nationwide pressure campaign that continued through the 1970s.

1973 LWV amended its charter to include men

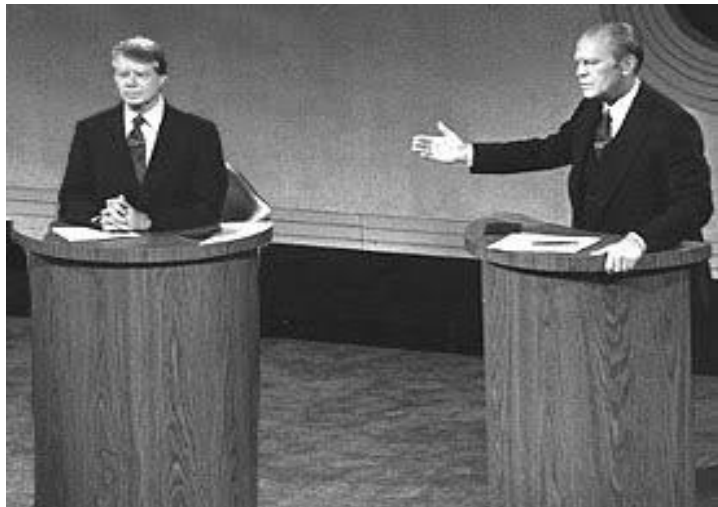
Today, 20% of LWV Members are men



Emmy Award for Presidential Debates

- **1976**

The League sponsored the first televised presidential debates since 1960, for which we received an Emmy award for Outstanding Achievement in Broadcast Journalism.



LWV Sponsored Presidential Debates

- **1980s**

The League sponsored televised general election Presidential debates in 1980 and 1984, as well as presidential primary forums in 1980, 1984, and 1988.

The debates focused on nonpartisan issues with a main goal of informing voters.

As candidates demanded increasingly partisan conditions, however, the League withdrew its sponsorship of general election debates in 1988.

NVRA Became Law

- 1993

The League's grassroots campaign for national legislation to reform voter registration resulted in passage of the ***National Voter Registration Act (NVRA)***, also known as the “**motor-voter**” bill.

The motor-voter bill enabled citizens to register at motor vehicle agencies automatically, as well as by mail and at agencies that service the public.



HAVA

Make Your Vote Count



Federal Law: Help America Vote Act (HAVA)

Requires:



- Provisional Voting
- Voting related materials in alternate formats
- One accessible voting machine in each polling place **by 2006**

HAVA Became Law

- 2002

When the 2000 election exposed the many problems facing the election system, the League began to work on election reform. Working closely with a civil rights coalition, LWV helped draft and pass the ***Help America Vote Act (HAVA)***, which established **provisional balloting**, **requirements for updating voting systems**, and **the Election Assistance Commission**.

LWV Launched VOTE411.org

- **2006**

The League provided a dedicated website for voter information as early as the 1990s. In 2006, the League launched the next generation of online voter education with **VOTE411.org**, a “one-stop-shop” for election-related information.



LWV Launched People Powered Fair Maps Campaign



LWV Launched People Powered Fair Maps Campaign

- **2019**

In June 2019, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that partisan gerrymandering cannot be solved by the federal courts. In response, the League initiated **People Powered Fair Maps™**, a coordinated effort across all 50 states and D.C. to create fair and transparent, people-powered redistricting processes to eliminate partisan and racial gerrymandering nationwide.

Letters to Congress - Major Legislative issues in 2025

- The **SAVE Act**- documentary proof of citizenship proposals. LWWUS mobilized voters nationwide to oppose this legislation and prevent passage of this bill
- The **One Big Beautiful Bill**: Cuts to Healthcare and Nutrition, Funding ICE
- The Government Shutdown Impacting Human Needs and Healthcare
- The **Equal Representation Act**
- DC Autonomy

LWV ongoing issues

Census Counting

The League focused on empowering people to get involved in the creation of fair districts through census data.

Immigration

LWV lobbied both the [House](#) and [Senate](#) for a path to citizenship and the ***DREAM Act***.

No More ICE or CBP Funding

- LWVUS joined immigrants' rights advocates in opposing any funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) in Fiscal Year 2027 appropriations.



Birthright Citizenship



July 1, 2026 Trump v. Barbara

The LWVUS issued an urgent call to action following the Supreme Court 6-3 ruling on *Trump v. Barbara*, upholding birthright citizenship under the Fourteenth Amendment.

While the decision is a vital victory for constitutional democracy, the League warns that the razor-thin margin should alarm every American.

LWV faces Controversies

- LWV has been accused of partisan bias such as endorsing transgender rights, opposing voter ID laws, and advocating for strict administrative reforms to the police.
- LWV has confronted its own history acknowledging that its founder made racist remarks in support of white supremacy to advance women's suffrage and did not advocate for women of color during the Civil Rights movement.
- LWV frequently engages in heated legal battles regarding election administration such as a rule change that prevented nonpartisan civic groups from registering new citizens at administrative naturalization ceremonies.

What is LWV Frederick doing for you?

Voter services

- Candidate forums
- Voter Guides in English and Spanish

Education

- Online forums ex. Dialogue in Democracy
- Library Outreach ex. Civic Programs
- Girl Scouts, Homeschoolers: democracy education
- Table events for voter information ex. 1st Saturday, rallies, festivals
- VOTE411.org updates
- Registering High School students to vote

Election Monitoring at polling centers

Become a LWV Frederick member

- <https://my.lwv.org/maryland/frederick-county/join>
- When you join the League of Women Voters of Frederick County, you are also joining the national, state and local Leagues.
- Thirty-three percent (**33%**) of your dues payment will go to LWVUS
- Forty-seven percent (**47%**) goes to LWV Maryland
- Twenty percent (**20%**) goes to LWV of Frederick County
- **Membership Dues:**
- Individual members: \$75 per year is the recommended amount, or pay what you can (\$20 minimum).

