

# VOTER

## LWVSJ Happenings

**Monthly Meeting – Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**San Juan Island Library – 12 – 2pm**

### Addressing Food Insecurity in the San Juan Islands



The League of Women Voters monthly meeting will focus on educating all of us on the issue of food insecurity in the county. This is a fitting issue to address on Martin Luther King Day. With us will be **Rachelle Radonski**, manager of the Friday Harbor Food Bank, and **Kristen Rezabek**, MS,RDN,CD,CDES Health and Nutrition Coordinator, from the San Juan County's office of Health and Community Services. We will also hear from Steve Bowman, one of our members, who will familiarize us with a program for school-aged children called *36 Weekends*.

Moderating the session will be Steve Bowman and Diana Sibert and we hope to brief our members and guests on the needs of our islanders, programs available and roles we might play in assisting these programs, to increase both the service and the security of islanders.

The program is open to the public and will also be available on zoom:  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89406914267?pwd=S2lXZ29YSTQwWjFGclhBaHh4ZEpBdz09>  
Meeting ID: 894 0691 4267 / Passcode: 614002



*"I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies; education and culture for their minds and dignity; equality and freedom for their spirits."*  
**Martin Luther King**

*The library will be closed to the public for MLK Day – access to the meeting will be through the side door.*

## Meeting Dates Winter-Spring 2023/2024

Board Meetings	Membership Meetings
Jan 8	January 15
Feb 5	Feb 12
March 4	March 11
April 1	April 8
May 6	May 13
June 3	June 10
July 1	<i>Summer Picnic</i>
August <i>Board Retreat</i>	<i>Summer Break</i>

*All members are welcome to attend our board meetings – please send any board member an email and we will send you the zoom link.*

## Have you made your To-Do List for 2024?

This will be a momentous political year – an historic election season and a year that comprehensive plans begin to be adopted with detailed strategies outlining the provision of sufficient new affordable housing for the next two decades, along with clear guidelines on how local jurisdictions intend to address the pressing issues of climate mitigation and resilience. These are the crises of our time and will be the focus of much of the legislative session.

As we move into 2024, the League will be working at the state Legislature on those issues and others of importance to our members, as well as supporting local jurisdictions in their comprehensive planning work.

The League's mission, centered on Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy, manifests through diverse initiatives, with a key focus on advocating for democratic processes and voter empowerment across all levels. At the state level, our primary arena is the state Legislature; we also support the work done by Washington's local Leagues in communities across the state.

League advocacy work is rooted in an extensive process of research, analysis, publication of studies, membership consensus, and adoption of positions. Only after the completion of this process can the League advocate on specific issues. This ensures our advocacy is both evidence-based and supported by our membership. Beyond our advocacy work, the League's study and consensus process provides voters with solid, reliable, *and* verifiable information that empowers them to make informed decisions at the ballot box. This is how the League supports democracy.



## To-Do List

**We need YOU!** Our nominating committee are hard at work reaching out to those in our community to consider becoming a member of our Board. There are many reasons why members choose to apply for a board position. If you are interested in learning more please contact any of our nominating committee members -*Leslie Veirs, Chair; Audra Adelberger, Mary Campanella or Barbara Marrett*

- Make plans to attend [LWVWA Speak-Up School](#) and [Democracy Lobby Week!](#)
- If you aren't already, [subscribe to the Legislative Action Newsletter](#).

### An Update from the Voter Services Committee

Stephanie Butler, our Voter Services chair, has been hard at work putting together a committee to take on the challenges of the upcoming election year. Washington's Presidential Primary is a way for voters to help the major political parties choose presidential nominees. The primary will be held **March 12, 2024** (one week after Super Tuesday). If you are registered to vote in Washington, there is no need to request a ballot. Confirm your registration at [VoteWA.gov](https://VoteWA.gov).

Key dates include:

**January 9** - Deadline for each major political party to submit their final list of candidates to be printed on their side of the ballot. Once the names are submitted to the Office of the Secretary of State, changes cannot be made ([RCW29A.56.031](#)). The same candidates will appear in the printed Voters' Pamphlet and online Voters' Guide. If you're a major political party candidate/campaign, please [contact](#) our office.

**January 27** – Military and overseas ballots and Voters' Pamphlets are mailed.

**February 14 thru 23** – Voters' Pamphlets are mailed to every household.

**February 23** – Start of 18-day voting period (through Election Day). Ballots are mailed to every registered voter and voting centers are open with Accessible Voting Units (AVUs). Voters must mark one party box and sign the declaration on the return envelope.

**March 4** – Deadline for **online** and **by mail** registration and address updates. Mailed registrations must be received by an elections official by this date, not postmarked by this date.

**March 12** – Presidential Primary

- Last day to register or update **in person** at a county elections office.
- Mailed ballots must have a March 12 postmark to count.
- Ballot boxes and voting centers close at 8:00 p.m.
- After 8:00 p.m., counties begin transmission of results to the Secretary of State.

**March 29** – Last day for Secretary of State to certify Presidential Primary results.

**July, August** - The major political parties hold conventions to officially nominate their candidates for U.S. President. The 2024 Democratic National Convention is August 19-22, 2024, and the Republican National Convention is July 15-18, 2024.

For more info, contact the WA State Democratic Party at 206-583-0664, or the WA State Republican Party at 425-460-0570.

# Around the League – State & National Issues

## A Letter from the League President for 2024

As we prepare for the crucial primary elections and gear up for the monumental 2024 Presidential Election, the LWV knows your vote has never been more critical in the fight to defend our democracy.

These elections won't just be about choosing a president, but they'll also have the potential to shift the balance of power in Congress and in your local representation closer to home.

Knowing the immense impact of every vote in the primaries, the League works hard registering voters and providing polling and election information. We depend on donor funds to carry out these efforts and ensure everyone can cast their ballot in their state.

These are urgent times riddled with unprecedented efforts to strip away individual rights, including a woman's right to make her own decisions. We need your help to fight back. Let's work together **now** to preserve the values that we hold dear.

As a dedicated supporter, you know the importance of casting your vote. You also know that voter registration hurdles and widespread lies are major threats to our democratic process.

Help defend democracy by getting ready to vote NOW in the fast-approaching elections. Don't miss your chance to participate in your state's primary elections and decide who will be on the ballot in the general elections to represent your values in November.

As always, thank you for standing with the League to empower voters so that every voice is heard.

*Deborah Ann Turner, MD, JD  
President, League of Women Voters of the United States*

## Empowering Change: The League of Women Voters of Washington 2024 Legislative Agenda

With the 2024 legislative session set to begin on January 8, the League of Women Voters of Washington has announced our Board-adopted legislative priorities for this year. Our Lobby Team will use these priorities to ensure that their advocacy work aligns with our commitment to justice, fairness, and civic engagement.

You can get updates on our progress on each of these issues in our weekly Legislative Action Newsletters. Watch for the first 2024 issue on Sunday, January 14, and weekly through the end of the legislative session on March 7, with a final closeout newsletter a couple of weeks later.

Subscribe to the Legislative Action Newsletter [here](#).

The LWVWA's advocacy work is broken up into three areas—Making Democracy Work®, the Environment, and Social and Economic Policy—and includes 16 separate issues. You can find a brief explanation of our aims in each area below. More in-depth information about each issue can be found [here](#).

## **Making Democracy Work®**

### **Elections and Money in Politics**

Support changes in the electoral system that streamline process while protecting the integrity of records and ballots as well as limitations on the influence of money in election outcomes.

### **Redistricting**

Support redistricting reform by 2031 that includes an updated commission, ongoing staff and technical support, process transparency, clearly defined rank criteria, an inclusive process for public input, and language accessibility.

### **Education**

Ensure the school funding model is ample to meet the education needs of today, including those of students with special needs; ensure that state academic standards are sustained in local districts; and ensure that equitable education is available for all students.

### **Local News and Democracy**

Support efforts to ensure conditions are such that ethical local journalism survives and thrives.

## **The Environment**

### **Climate Crisis & Energy**

Support measures that address the climate crisis and create clean and renewable energy sources as well as opportunities to enhance climate and environmental justice.

### **Forests**

Support measures that protect and restore mature and old-growth forests, reform the adaptive management program and enhance community resilience to wildfire.

### **Growth Management**

Assure that land use decisions protect resource lands, forests, shorelines, rural areas and agriculture, and also enhance climate resilience.

### **Waste Diversion**

Divert waste from disposal through reuse, reduction, recycling through a variety of methods including producer responsibility and product stewardship policies with special attention to packaging, plastics, batteries and digital electronic products.

### **Transportation**

Achieve balanced and efficient systems, prioritizing those that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and congestion.

## **Social and Economic Policy**

### **Housing & Homelessness**

Ensure affordable housing for all and that new housing development is transit-oriented and contains environmental justice provisions.

### **Health Care**

Support interim measures needed to progress toward Universal Healthcare funded by a single payer system for Washington State. Also support increasing the healthcare workforce capacity and improvements in system regulation.

### **Behavioral Health**

Support increased funding for behavioral health services and behavioral health workforce development.

## **Children's Issues**

Ensure policies that provide for the safety and well-being of all children as well as access to opportunities to develop their full potential.

## **Early Care and Education**

Promote the availability of safe, culturally appropriate early care and education services that support the development of young children, economic vitality for families and businesses, and living wages and training for early care and education workers.

## **Criminal Justice**

Advocate for a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable and transparent, including sentencing reform, restrictions on use of solitary confinement, police accountability and recognition that mental health conditions and substance use disorders are health issues, not crimes.

## **Revenue**

Promote a flexible, equitable tax structure that provides robust support for all government obligations and is based on sound economic policy, including measures that will support savings in government costs to do business.

# **What is the League doing about HealthCare?**

When asking the question – What are the critical challenges facing healthcare in the US today, most commonly, cost and accessibility are cited. However, related to, and contributing to, these problems are an increasing shortage of healthcare providers, health disparities among groups, an aging population, and the complexity of the healthcare system (in-network restrictions, prior authorizations, drug formularies, lack of interconnectivity of healthcare records).

Costs are rising for everyone: the cost to individuals (insurance premiums, deductibles, copays, drugs); employers providing health insurance for their employees; government programs (such as Medicaid, Medicare, the VA system and Tricare); and the organizations providing healthcare services (hospitals, pharmacies, and providers). According to the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) in 2022, half of adults said that it was difficult to afford healthcare costs. This was particularly burdensome for Black and Hispanic adults, persons with lower incomes, and those without insurance.

Even persons with insurance struggle with costs. They may be underinsured, that is, someone whose medical costs, excluding premiums, exceed 10% of their income. Persons covered by insurance purchased on the public market are the most likely to be underinsured; however, even those with insurance from their employers may be underinsured. Since 2010, it is the latter group that has fueled the growth in the underinsured.

In spite of the high cost of healthcare in the U.S. (nearly 18 percent of GDP), **The Commonwealth Fund** reported that Americans die younger and are less healthy than residents of other high-income countries. High costs impact accessibility to healthcare, which in turn negatively impacts an individual's health. A KFF survey in March 2022, found that 43% of adults said that they or someone in their household put off or postponed needed healthcare due to cost. Twenty-five percent said that they had not filled a prescription, cut pills in half, or skipped doses of a medicine due to cost. Location also is a factor in accessibility.



According to a **National Institutes of Health** (NIH) 2022 report, almost 63% of counties in the United States have been designated as primary healthcare professional shortage areas. Disproportionately more rural counties have received this designation.

### **What is the League position on healthcare?**

The **LWVWA Program in Action** states that the League supports action “to control total system expenditures and to provide universal access to affordable health services with seamless coverage regardless of one's health status.”

### **What is the Washington State Legislature doing to address these problems?**

Last year, the Legislature passed several bills that address expanding the healthcare and behavioral health workforce, establishing minimum staffing standards for nurses in hospitals, extending telemedicine authorization, increasing payments to hospitals for certain Medicaid patients, establishing the profession of dental therapy, requiring insurance coverage for hearing aids, and legislation addressing crisis response and suicide prevention. Workforce issues and access to healthcare and behavioral healthcare will continue to be addressed in the upcoming session.

Generally, legislation has addressed particular issues in healthcare, but important as these issues are, the legislature has not addressed the problem holistically. An exception would be SJM 8006, which the League supports, a bill requesting that the Federal Government create a Universal Health Care Program and, if not, then issue waivers for the states to do so. In addition, the **Washington State Universal Healthcare Commission** created by SB 5399 in 2021, is looking at the entire healthcare system in the state, attempting to identify how Washington State might provide healthcare to all its residents. Its **2023 report to the Legislature**, issued on November 1, states, “In the short-term, Washington is limited in both its ability to recoup federal funding to support a unified financing system, and to regulate coverage sources subject to or preempted by federal law. However, paths to achieving benefits parity in the short-term for Washingtonians eligible for Medicare, ERISA, and Medicaid have surfaced and will be examined further.”

So, we have much work to do to achieve a health care system that sufficiently addresses the coverage and cost issues that are so problematic for many people in Washington.



### **League in the News**

We provide this list of articles about the League's work in Washington State to showcase the work being done by our state and local Leagues. You may encounter a paywall when you click on an article. As our recent study “[The Decline of Local News and Its Impact on Democracy](#)” found, local newspapers play a crucial role in supporting healthy communities and healthy democracies. The LWVWA encourages you to subscribe to your local paper if you are able. We are pleased to see how many articles from the LWV San Juans are listed and especially those notes from the Observer Corps.

- [Voter Turnout Hits Modern Low in WA](#) | **LWV of Washington** | *The Seattle Times*

- [OPINION: The Loss of Responsible Local Newspapers and Reporters is a Problem for Democracy](#) | **LWV of Washington** | *The Seattle Times*
- [County Council member Jane Fuller and Senator Liz Lovelett host public meeting on Lopez](#) | **LWV San Juans** | *The Journal of the San Juans*
- [Ferries awarded \\$4.8 million to extend lifespan of six aging vessels by up to a decade](#) | **LWV San Juans** | *The Journal of the San Juans*
- [League of Women Voters Observer Corps Notes](#) | **LWV San Juans** | *The Journal of the San Juans*
- [League of Women Voters Observer Corps notes on Council and Board of Health](#) | **LWV San Juans** | *The Journal of the San Juans*
- [LWV Observer Corps notes from SJHD1, Port and Town Council meetings](#) | **LWV San Juans** | *The Journal of the San Juans*
- [Controversial Zylstra Trail removed from TIP unanimously by San Juan County Council](#) | **LWV San Juans** | *San Juan Islander*
- [League of Women Voters Observer Corps notes on Council and Board of Health](#) | **LWV San Juans** | *The Journal of the San Juans*
- [League of Women Voters Observer Corps notes](#) | **LWV San Juans** | *The Journal of the San Juans*

*A great way to stay current and involved is to sign up for the Legislative Newsletter from the WA League. This provides a weekly update on key issues in the legislature, including Action Alerts for upcoming votes and information on current activity on major bills. Newsletters come out every Sunday during the Legislative Session.*

*Click here: [sign up for the Legislative Newsletter](#)*



## Upcoming Events

### 1.22-1.26 MON-FRI | Democracy Lobby Week

**REGISTER NOW:** [Meet with Lobby Team members](#) to learn about the issues coming up in Washington's 2024 legislative session. Attendees also have the opportunity to meet with their legislators.

### 1.8-3.11 | ACT via Zoom

**REGISTER NOW:** Action Coffee Time (ACT) gatherings are weekly informational and question-and-answer sessions using League, state, and community resources to provide the background information you need on topics related to current Washington State legislation. Learn more or register [here](#).



## Join Your Local League!

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person 16 and older may become a voting member of the League.

### Follow Us on Facebook!

Follow what local, state and national league are up to at our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVSanJuans>

## Board Members of the League of Women Voters of the San Juan's

### Officers

Susan Martin	President	360-370-5205	<a href="mailto:martinsf@georgetown.edu">martinsf@georgetown.edu</a>
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Mary Campanella	Nominating Committee And Action Chair	800-364-1984	<a href="mailto:marycampanella@icloud.com">marycampanella@icloud.com</a>
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Steve Bowman – Board Member Emeritus		360-370-5814	<a href="mailto:steve.bowman52@gmail.com">steve.bowman52@gmail.com</a>

*Nominating Committee: Leslie Veirs, Chair; Audra Adelberger, Mary Campanella, Barbara Marrett*

When you join the League, your dues go to three different places: to National League to help support voting rights advocacy efforts, to State League for voter education as well as advocacy for state issues that League supports; and then there are a few dollars left to support our local forums and programs. Below are the different levels of dues payments and the PO Box number. If you choose to give at a higher level than the "Regular" level, the extra money stays with our local League to support our important work here. Thanks for supporting LWV at all levels!

*A Note from the Treasurer:*

*A big thank you to members who have recently paid dues. We are well into our current fiscal year which started on June 1, 2023. When you receive an updated roster in your email inbox please look at the column (labeled "Paid thru") near the far-right-hand side to see if you are paid through 5/31/2024. If not, please consider sending your check to our PO Box. Also please let us know of any changes that need to be made to your contact information. Thank you for continuing to support the important work that we do.*

YES! I want to become a member of the League of Women Voters of the San Juan's.

**Name(s)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

Circle one:

	<b>Regular</b>	<b>Carrie Chapman Catt</b>	<b>Susan B. Anthony</b>
<b>Individual</b>	\$60	\$100 to \$249	\$250 and up
<b>Family</b>	\$90	\$150to \$374	\$375 and up
<b>Students</b>	Free		

I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the League of Women Voters of WA Education Fund and have enclosed a separate check (to LWVWA—EF) in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

**PLEASE RETURN TO:** League of Women Voters of the San Juans  
PO Box 784  
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

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