

DEMOCRACY WORKS

FALL | 2019



#SHEISME
Celebrating 100 Years

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF CALIFORNIA



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League of Women Voters of California



921 11th St. Suite 700
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lwvc.org | cavotes.org

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The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund conducts our voter service and civic education activities. It is a 501(c)(3) corporation, a nonpartisan non-profit educational organization.

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Moving? Send your change of address to: LWVC Mailing List, 921 11th St. Suite 700, Sacramento Ca, 95814, or email lwvc@lwvc.org.

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November:

4th	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Education Committee Meeting
9th	10:00AM	California Museum	California Votes for Women: A Golden State Suffrage Centennial
	01:00PM	LWV San Diego	Climate Change Forum!
11th	06:00PM	LWV Monterey County	General Board Meeting
	06:00PM	LWV Oakland	Development Committee
12th	06:30PM	LWV Butte County	Board Meeting
	06:30PM	LWV Oakland	Electric Vehicles 101: What You Need to Know
13th	12:00PM	LWV Monterey County	Lunch & Learn With the League
14th	12:00PM	LWV Monterey County	Natural Resources Committee Meeting
	12:00PM	LWV Butte County	Climate Change Speaker Series - Butte County Issues
	07:00PM	LWV Mt. Baldy Area	Board Meeting
18th	12:00PM	LWV Monterey County	Publicity Committee Meeting
	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Membership Committee Meeting
19th	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Action Committee Meeting
20th	06:30PM	LWV Oakland	Board Meeting
21st	12:00PM	LWV Mt. Baldy Area	November Unit Housing

December

2nd	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Education Committee Meeting
5th	07:00PM	LWV Butte County	Climate Change Speaker Series - Butte County Issues
9th	06:00PM	LWV Oakland	Development Committee Meeting
16th	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Membership Committee Meeting
17th	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Action Committee Meeting
18th	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Membership Committee Meeting

January

6th	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Education Committee Meeting
9th	07:00PM	LWV Mt. Baldy Area	Board Meeting
13th	06:00PM	LWV Oakland	Development Committee Meeting
15th	06:30PM	LWV Oakland	Board Meeting
20th	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Membership Committee Meeting
21st	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Action Committee Meeting

February

3rd	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Education Committee Meeting
10th	06:00PM	LWV Oakland	Development Committee Meeting
9th	07:00PM	LWV Mt. Baldy Area	Board Meeting
14th	ALL DAY	LWV Diablo Valley	Day of Action
15th	07:00PM	LWV S. San Mateo	100th Birthday Celebration
17th	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Membership Committee Meeting
18th	05:30PM	LWV Oakland	Action Committee Meeting
19th	06:30PM	LWV Oakland	Board Meeting

All events were taken from MyLO events at the time of printing. Please visit lwvc.org/events for up-to-date changes and additions.

ON THE COVER Adena | Berkeley/Albany/Emeryville (BAE), CA League

Adena first encountered the League of Women Voters as a college student when her local League asked her to help register and mobilize her fellow students. Finding herself to be a natural organizer and civic leader, Adena became more and more involved in her League and was eventually elected as the youngest president in their history.

Adena's democracy advancement work skyrocketed from there. She led initiatives to engage young voters of color, established efforts to increase diversity in League membership, and helped implement voting rights for 16 and 17-year-olds in local school board elections. As a young, passionate League leader, Adena's advocacy is shaping the next century of League activism.

DirectLine

from Carol Moon Goldberg, Board President
and Helen Hutchison, Interim Executive Director



Carol Moon Goldberg
Carol Moon Goldberg
Board President

Though I was vaguely aware of the League of Women Voters from reading about Eleanor Roosevelt, the first time I looked closely at the League was 34 years ago. I met a woman named Olga Batey shortly after I moved to Sacramento. She was a long-time League member who was also the first female member of her local school board. That impressed me. She immediately told me that “you are a good one for the League.” Olga repeated that to me every time we ran into each other. She persisted for eight years.

Why did I join League? After all that “suggesting” from Olga, I finally went to a meeting at her house where the topic was the 1994 ballot measures. I was impressed with the women I met, with their savvy and their concern for good government. I was quickly drawn in. That was 25 years ago.

I’ve been gratified and proud to see LWVC sponsoring and supporting campaign finance reforms, transparent government processes, the “Motor Voter” legislation, and the creation of the California Citizens Redistricting Commission. I’ve been impressed with LWVC’s outreach efforts to Californians in the languages they use (Easy Voter Guide) and in the places they frequent (online via Voter’s Edge).

Each new generation faces its own voter education, engagement, and policy concerns. With your help, LWVC continues to grow and adapt to meet the needs, to encourage Californians to engage with their elected officials, and to influence public policy.

Throughout its 100 years, the League of Women Voters honors its roots as an organization that envisions a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate in the process of governing ourselves. Join me in continuing the League’s vital role in educating voters and influencing public policy.



Helen L. Hutchison
Helen Hutchison
Interim Executive Director

I just recently celebrated a birthday – one that is not normally a significant number, but for me it was definitely important. I’m now a 50-year League member! I’ve been a member for half of the life of the League! My mother, a longtime League member, gave me a League membership for my 18th birthday. The League has literally been part of my life since before I can remember – being taken to meetings as a small child, helping my mother organize mailings at our kitchen table, and then formally becoming a member.

Over the years, I have been every kind of member – a “I’ll just pay my dues” member, a “once a month meeting” member, to the more active role I’ve taken more recently. I’ve been a member in California, in Massachusetts, in Oregon, and in Georgia. In each place, the League has provided me with a quick introduction to the community and an interesting group of people.

What keeps me in the League? Why do I devote my time and energy to it? I love being part of our work to safeguard democracy: making the electorate more representative of our communities, advocating for policies that make our communities safer and make our government more responsive to the community. Being part of the Schools & Communities First campaign – an initiative that will begin to undo a 40+ year legacy of disinvestment in our communities - is an amazing experience. I am inspired by League member support for the Schools & Communities First initiative. I’m looking forward to November 2020 when we declare victory.



Legislative Update

Legislative Wrap-Up 2019

It's been quite a year at the California Capitol, with a new Governor, and hard-fought legislative battles. The League of Women Voters of California was out in force. We experienced notable wins, a few disappointments, and several cliffhangers - the outcomes of which will become known in 2020.

Below are highlights of the legislative year in our three issue areas - government, natural resources, and social policy. To view a full summary of League advocacy, with appended letters to legislators, go to our Bill Status Report for 2019-2020. Our website is updated in real-time during the legislative session and the report resides at lwvc.org/legislation.

GOVERNMENT

Our chief legislative mission is to empower people to have a voice in their civic life, ensure that local and state government is representative of California's diversity, and eradicate impediments to those goals. To those ends, the League co-sponsored four bills this cycle: **Free the Vote, ACA 6** (McCarty); **Election Day Registration, SB 72** (Umberg); the **Fair Maps Act, AB 849** (Bonta); and the **People's Map Act, SB 139** (Allen).

Free the Vote, ACA 6, is one of the cliffhangers that stalled after moving through the first house. It's now a two-year bill for a constitutional amendment to restore voting rights to 50,000 Californians out on parole, who are living and working in our communities.

Mass incarceration disproportionately impacts Black and Brown Californians and results in a less representative electorate. Freeing the vote is a moral imperative, sound public policy, and essential to achieving an inclusive democracy. Our goal is to get ACA 6 passed through the legislature and on the November 2020 ballot as an initiative for voters to decide.

Successful passage of **Election Day Registration, SB 72**, means that it's never too late to register to vote in California. The new law allows same-day registration and voting, at every polling location, all the way through Election Day. Its purpose is to increase voter turnout, eliminate arbitrary deadlines that deny access at the peak of voter interest, and boost the registration of geographically-mobile Californians, those with lower-incomes, youth, and people of color.



The Fair Maps Act, AB 849, brings fair redistricting criteria to California’s cities and counties. It prohibits partisan gerrymandering, standardizes criteria, and prioritizes whole neighborhoods and diverse communities. This new law represents an extension of the LWVUS’ recently launched People Powered Fair Maps Campaign, a coordinated effort to reform redistricting across the country. The People’s Map Act, SB 139, which was regrettably vetoed by Governor Newsom, would have required large counties to create independent redistricting commissions to draw district lines.

While they weren’t among our co-sponsored bills, we provided high levels of support for AB 571 (Mullin) and SB 212 (Allen). Our success on AB 571 will curtail the influence of money in politics by placing a default limit on local candidate contributions, while also allowing each jurisdiction to set its boundaries. SB 212 would have given every local government the option to use new voting methods, like ranked-choice, to ensure more inclusive majority-winner elections. Unfortunately, Governor Newsom vetoed the legislation, expressing concerns about voter confusion.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Heat records are breaking, glaciers are melting, and the seas are rising. Protecting natural resources and mitigating against climate change are critical League priorities.



As a coastal state, many of our communities are threatened by rising sea levels. The successful passage of AB 65 (Petrie-Norris) will prioritize projects that use natural infrastructure, a valuable tool to protect coastal communities from the impacts of climate change.

A robust network of stream gages, mandated by SB 19 (Dodd), will help us learn more about the timing and volume of flow, thereby allowing for more effective water resource management and preparation for both droughts and floods.

Despite a hard fight by advocates, Governor Newsom vetoed SB 1 (Atkins), faced with threats from the current federal administration, and the legislation would have ensured continued legal protections for the state’s environment, natural resources, public health, and workers’ health and safety.

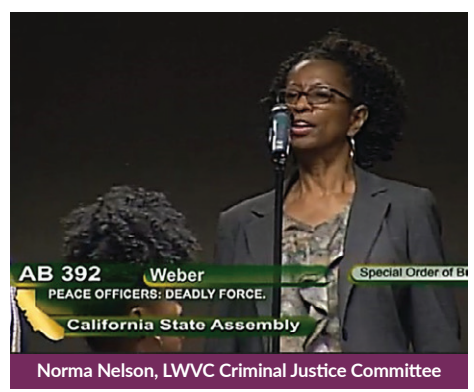
Next year we will continue our work to pass SB 54 (Allen) and AB 1080 (Gonzalez), companion bills aimed at reducing single-use plastic waste in landfills and oceans.

SOCIAL POLICY

The League successfully advocated for a plethora of bills focused on criminal justice, housing, and education. All share a common purpose to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Criminal Justice

League members testified, wrote letters, and lobbied hard to pass the California Act to Save Lives, AB 392 (Weber). This new law requires law enforcement to use deadly force only when necessary to defend against the threat of death or serious injury. We believe that strengthening the standard will reduce police violence, rebuild the community trust, and bring state policies on the use of force into compliance with recent court decisions and national best practices.



Incarcerated people are at high risk for medical problems due to conditions of confinement like crowding, malnutrition, stress, and trauma. They often face the Hobbesian choice between either suffering or incurring crippling medical debt. The passage of AB 45 (Stone) addresses the issue by eliminating burdensome medical copays and equipment charges for people in county jails.



Housing & Homelessness

The League supported several bills aimed at California's housing crisis. **The Tenant Protection Act of 2019, AB 1482** (Chiu), increases the equal opportunity to decent, stable, and affordable housing. It keeps families in their homes by limiting extreme or unreasonable rent increases and protects against discriminatory and retaliatory evictions.

Accessory dwelling units (AKA in-law units or backyard cottages) are a vital piece of the puzzle to relieve California's housing crisis. We supported **AB 68** (Ting), which eases barriers to building these low-cost, energy-efficient, affordable homes.

The Housing Opportunities Act, SB 329 (Mitchell), prohibits housing discrimination based on specified personal characteristics, including the source of income. The legislation will protect prospective tenants from being turned away solely because they want to use housing vouchers - a practice that disproportionately impacts communities of color.

Education

Charter school governing boards will observe the same open meeting, conflict-of-interest, and disclosure laws as traditional public schools thanks to the passage of **SB 126** (Leyva) - a massive victory for transparency and accountability.

The League advocated for a more equitable school-facilities funding formula in **AB 48** (O'Donnell). This four-year school bond bill passed the legislature with significant last-minute amendments is slated for the March 2020 ballot. While there was some progress toward addressing differences in property wealth between districts, we will continue to work in coalition with other advocates to achieve more equity in future bond measures.

To keep up to date on all our legislative work visit our website: lwvc.org/legislation



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#SHEISME Member Profile



Rita Zlochiver Barschak, 100 Years Strong Local League: Los Angeles County Member Since 1954 (65 Year Member)

As we approach our 100th anniversary, it's essential to explore stories of the women who have shaped the organization, both past and present, and join us in this movement as we begin to look forward to the next 100 years. She is me.

We had the honor of speaking with Rita Zlochiver Barschak, about her life as a League member for more than 65 years. Rita will also be celebrating her 100th birthday soon.

While in her 40s and living in Southern California raising her three children, Rita had a friend who brought her to a League of Women Voters meeting in Beverly Hills.

"I was interested in politics, and I was very liberal," she recalls. "What I liked about the League, I never knew who was a Republican or a Democrat. It had nothing to do with the League, and we just looked at the issues. I didn't care, and they didn't care about party affiliation."

Rita was an active member of the LWV Beverly Hills and later the LWV Los Angeles League, working as President, Action Chair, Co-President, Study Chair, and filling any role that needed to be filled. "The most important thing League does is action - such an important part of our work. I push that League doesn't just study but that we take action."

Rita's League experience extended beyond Los Angeles. In the 1960s, Rita found herself at her first LWV Convention in Chicago: "Being in a room with 1,500 women who were all intelligent and committed to improving their communities, regardless of a political party, was one of the most energizing experiences of my League life."

Rita applied the expertise she'd gained in her local Leagues to statewide issues when, from 1989-1993, she served on the LWVC Board as the Government Director focusing on studies as well as critical issues: campaign finance, initiative and referendum, and voting rights.

"Every woman fighting to break the glass ceiling should be a member of the League"

Notably, Rita was part of a trailblazing delegation that honored California Legislator Shirley Temple Black in Czechoslovakia during the Velvet Revolution. The 13-member delegation hosted an awards ceremony, which included the President of Czechoslovakia, the Head of the Red Cross, and other high ranking officials. Rita's delegation held signs that read, "The LWVC stands with the people of Czechoslovakia."

From Rita's first local League meeting to attending national conventions, the League provided opportunities for her to learn from and get inspired by League members. "I'm grateful to the League for what I learned. The things I learned made me want to take action. Also, I had Trudy Schafer as a mentor, and Trudy represented everything wonderful about the League. I remember her with great love."

Among her many accomplishments, Rita feels her work during the early 1980s in Los Angeles to improve and expand rapid transit remains her proudest legacy. LWV LA County supported Proposition A, which raised the needed funds to reach more riders in often overlooked neighborhoods. Rita was the face of the campaign and won the votes needed to pass the measure.

Rita's mother, a Russian immigrant, was not able to cast a vote even after women achieved suffrage. Rita herself voted for the first time at age 21 and in every election since, adding, "Your vote is your voice, and if you don't speak out, that is your problem."

When asked why someone should join the League today, Rita replied, "For the same reasons we did - we want to make some impression, have some effect on what is going on in our lives. When you join the League, you do - you take part in a political system which is a tremendous part of our lives".

What does Rita think the League could do better in the next centennial? "I don't think we are getting the publicity we deserve. We have had many successes, even those who don't agree with us recognize that we are important. We are a women's organization, and that is important."

In her spare time, Rita enjoys spending time with her daughter, five grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren along with attending her book club. She still actively supports her local and state Leagues by attending events and through her generous financial contributions. Rita sees our advocacy work to reform Proposition 13 (as part of our Schools & Communities First Campaign) a priority issue to improve the lives of Californians.

Find out more about the She is Me campaign and get involved with the League today: lwvc.org/sheisme.

'Tis the Season There's still time to donate before 2019 draws to a close. Your gifts are what allow us to advocate and educate. Your gift may even qualify for a tax deduction.

HERE ARE SOME QUICK IDEAS FOR YEAR-END GIVING:

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR.

Becoming a monthly donor gives us a voice. Together we can ensure elections are free fair and accessible, and reduce the influence of money in our elections. Become a monthly donor at lwvc.org/monthly.

DONATE A VEHICLE.

Vehicles, boats, RVs and RV's are gladly received through League of Women Voters of California Education Fund. It's easy call 855-500-7433 or cavotes.org/auto

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Holiday Tributes make great last-minute gifts. More at lwvc.org/tribute

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Making a gift of stocks, bonds, or other securities, allows you to make an immediate impact on our ability to protect democracy. Vist lwvc.org/stocks for more info.

