



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND,  
INC.**  
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## STATE BOARD LETTER

Mid-February 2019

## LWVMD Calendar

### February

28 – Program Planning Recommendations Due

### March

4 – LWVMD Board Meeting, Wilde Lake Interfaith Center in Columbia, 10am

5 – Legislative Day (see page 7)

Planning your local league calendar? Click [here](#) to see the whole calendar.

## Presidents' Message



If I counted correctly, we have 22 different individuals tracking legislation in the 2019 Maryland Legislative session on at least 25 different topic areas. And we have begun to see the results of their work in our bi-monthly *Report from State Circle*. In just the past week I have been able to pull up the latest issue on my cell phone to share the news on bills covering topics like human trafficking or efforts to make democracy work better.

Our reporters actually wear two hats. On the one hand we have the education-directed *Report from State Circle* and on the other, when the League has a clear position on a piece of legislation, there is a hat-switching, and our reporters submit testimony. Testimony goes to our Action Chair, Lois Hybl and to our two Co-Presidents, Elaine Apter and myself. When testimony has two approvals (out of the three of us) it is forwarded to our Administrative Director, Ashley Oleson for final formatting, copying and delivery to the appropriate House or Senate subcommittee on the day of the hearing. So far in the current session, we have produced testimony on 21 bills (all posted on our [website](#)), an effort that entailed over 200 emails at my last count!

Throughout this effort we have remained focused on our primary mission of Making Democracy Work and so have reserved the opportunity to present our testimony in person on bills relating to redistricting, voting rights and transparency in government. You have an amazing team representing the Maryland League in Annapolis!

Actually you are pretty amazing yourself - members of local leagues across Maryland have grown the League by close to 20% in the past year. We now number 1,449 members strong and have 9,464 persons who have related to us through our website! Keep up the good work!

*Richard Willson,*  
LWVMD Co-President  
[pres@lwvmd.org](mailto:pres@lwvmd.org)

## Notes from the Board

Congratulations to the Winter Workshop Team. The day was a great success and we

hope you were pleased. Right now the State Board is getting ready for Legislative Day on March 5. Be sure to take advantage of the Early Bird Special and sign up NOW. This will be another great day for LWVMD. Local League presidents are reminded to get their Program Planning information to Melanie this month. Richard Willson has updated the Action Reports on the State website. Check it out, there's lots of interesting facts located there. Your friendly Nominating Committee may be contacting you soon. Won't you think about how your presence on the State Board can benefit you and your Local League? Think about it, we need you. Your State Board continues to work on bringing you interesting workshops, helpful information and terrific training opportunities. Don't forget to put June 7-9 on your Calendar for LWVMD State Convention.

*Theresa Freligh*  
LWVMD Secretary  
[secretary@lwvmd.com](mailto:secretary@lwvmd.com)

## Conversion of Filing Status

At its February meeting, the LWVMD Board discussed a proposal to amend our bylaws so that the State League would have 501(c)(3) status under federal tax law. This would make it possible to merge the Education Fund into the League and just have a single organization going forward.

As many Leaguers know, we have kept the League and the Citizen Education Fund as separate organizations, with only the Education Fund as a 501(c)(3) organization, out of concern that the League's lobbying activities would exceed the amount allowed under IRS rules. Changes to IRS regulations in the past several years have refined the definition of "legislative advocacy" and also authorized a simpler test for determining whether an organization is staying below the maximum amount allowed for legislative advocacy. Our initial review of LWVMD's advocacy efforts seems to indicate that we may be well below the limit on "lobbying efforts" the IRS has set for a 501(c)(3) organization. We concluded that to maintain two separate organizations is making extra work for ourselves, plus we are missing the benefit of having all contributions to the League be tax deductible.

This change would require action by the LWVMD Convention coming up in June to amend our

bylaws. We are investigating the appropriate means for making this transition – either a merger of the two corporations or a conversion of LWVMD to a 501(c)(3) and then dissolving the Education Fund. We are working to clarify “the how” and other details before bringing a proposal to Convention.

The big advantages of this change would be that donations to the League would be deductible for income tax purposes – you would no longer need to make a distinction between gifts to the League and gifts to the Education Fund. Also, we believe that this will simplify the management of our activities and finances. At present our treasurer keeps two sets of books and has to deal with multiple transfers between our two entities. A potential disadvantage could be that some donors might be less willing to contribute to the League if they object to some of our advocacy positions. One way to address that concern would be to establish restricted funds that could only be used for a specified purpose, such as to support the expenses of VOTE411 and the *Voters’ Guide*. This would be similar to the way that we now treat funds that the state League holds in trust for local Leagues that do not have their own 501(c)(3) education fund.

If you have questions regarding this proposal you may contact Carolyn Hetterick [treasurer@lwvmd.org](mailto:treasurer@lwvmd.org) or Ralph Watkins [vp3@lwvmd.org](mailto:vp3@lwvmd.org).

## Registration for Legislative Day

Please notice that **February 20** is the deadline to get the “early bird rate” to join us in Annapolis for an exciting [Legislative Day on Tuesday, March 5th](#). Your early registration helps the caterer plan for enough food for lunch and gives the LWVMD office time to prepare the information folders. See the flyer in this issue of the State Board Letter or [lwvmd.org](http://lwvmd.org) to register.

**Please note the new location for our meeting, Room 180 of the House Office Building.**

From 8:30 to 10 a.m., we hope you will lobby your representatives ([Don’t forget to make your appointments soon](#)). If you share your schedule for appointments with me at [lhybl@lwvmd.org](mailto:lhybl@lwvmd.org), we could give some new members without appointments the opportunity to tag along to see how it is done.

After we review results of legislator visits and discuss our priority legislation, Victoria Gruber, the Executive Director of the Department of Legislative Services (DLS), will provide an overview of the state budget. Before Gruber joined DLS, she had been Senate President Miller’s chief of staff since 2006. From 1996 to 2006, she worked for DLS, first as a policy analyst, then as senior legislative counsel to the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee. She also worked as a lobbyist while attending the University of Baltimore Law School.

Our luncheon speaker, **Stewart Schwartz**, Executive Director of the [Coalition for Smarter Growth](#), will discuss transportation, smart growth policy, and infrastructure in relation to environmental protection, climate change, equity and quality of life. He has been asked to include remarks on the [Transportation and Climate Initiative](#) through which Maryland recently joined eight other states and the District of Columbia to design a regional approach to cap greenhouse gas pollution from

transportation and on the [Transportation Climate Accountability Act of 2019](#).



**Stewart Schwartz** founded and built the Coalition for Smarter Growth into the leading smart growth organization in the Washington, D.C. region, addressing the interconnected

issues of land use, transportation, urban design, housing, and the environment. The Coalition has been recognized by the Catalogue for Philanthropy as one of the best small charities in the Washington, D.C. region. In 2017 it received the Regional Partnership Award from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Mr. Schwartz also serves on the board of the Virginia Conservation Network where he leads efforts to reform state transportation policies and funding. Mr. Schwartz has worked for the President’s Council on Sustainable Development, the Land Trust Alliance, the Southern Environmental Law Center, and as a volunteer for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

This will be an informative day for all and a wonderful chance to acquaint new members and guests with the workings of the General Assembly and LWVMD action on legislation.

## **Making Appointments with Legislators for Legislative Day**

Check with your local League president or action chair about appointments your local League may be making.

**It is important to begin making appointments with your legislators now because the session is getting busier. Our schedule for Legislative Day calls for arranging these meetings between 8:30 and 10:00 a.m.**

Ideally, you will meet with your legislators. However, even at that early hour, some may have caucus meetings or other conflicts. If you can’t meet with a legislator, try to arrange a meeting with a staff person.

Experienced Leaguers suggest the following procedure:

Call or e-mail their office. Contact info can be found at <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmmain.aspx?pid=legisrpage&tab=subject6>

Even if you call their office instead of e-mailing, they will likely want you to send a follow-up email with the following information: Your name and address (so they can verify that you are a constituent)

- Who else, besides you, will be attending the meeting?
- Reason for your meeting request
- Some dates, times that work for you

If you don’t get a reply in a day or two, call the office and bring their attention to the request.

We will be eager to hear the results of your meetings at the beginning of the Legislative Day program.

*Lois Hybl,*  
LWVMD 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Action  
[vp1@lwwmd.org](mailto:vp1@lwwmd.org)

## Save the Date!

[League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area \(LWVNCA\) Annual Convention](#) will be on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at Maggiano's Little Italy Restaurant, 5333 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20015. Time: 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM. approx. Cost: probably \$35. This is in top Chevy Chase shopping area very near Friendship Heights METRO Station and parking opportunities. Publicity flier/registration form available soon.

Andrea Gruhl,  
LWVMD Liaison to LWVNCA  
[agruhl@lwvmd.org](mailto:agruhl@lwvmd.org)

### First Call to State Convention

Save the date - June 7-9 will be the Maryland LWV State Convention

This year Montgomery County is our host and they are already planning some exciting events.

Not only do we elect our officers, pass a budget and adopt programs and studies; we will also present some informative workshops.

**Each local League is entitled to three delegates and local Leagues with more than 50 voting members are entitled to an additional delegate for every additional 50 members.** We would like to encourage local Leagues to include new members as part of their delegation.

Watch for further information on our website and through the SBL.

### Efficient Email

Your State organization has lots of email addresses! Too many to keep track of? Depending on who you wish to reach the following shortcuts may prove helpful:

Use this address:	To reach:
<a href="mailto:stateoffice@lwvmd.org">stateoffice@lwvmd.org</a>	Ashley Oleson, Administrative Director (only)
<a href="mailto:redistricting@lwvmd.org">redistricting@lwvmd.org</a>	Ashley Oleson (on redistricting)
<a href="mailto:info@lwvmd.org">info@lwvmd.org</a>	Elaine Apter and Richard Willson + Ashley
<a href="mailto:pres@lwvmd.org">pres@lwvmd.org</a>	Elaine and Richard

<a href="mailto:action@lwvmd.org">action@lwvmd.org</a>	Lois Hybl + Elaine, Richard and Ashley
<a href="mailto:testimony@lwvmd.org">testimony@lwvmd.org</a>	Lois Hybl + Elaine, Richard and Ashley
<a href="mailto:rsc@lwvmd.org">rsc@lwvmd.org</a>	Ruth Crystal + Ashley and Lois

It is fairly common for members to send emails to any or all of these League leaders using their personal email addresses along with one or two of these “group” email addresses to make sure that all of the bases are covered, but the result is a deluge of multiple copies of the original email. It gets really exciting when someone along the thread uses a reply-to-all. Please use these shortcuts but carefully! Our inboxes thank you!



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND

# LEGISLATIVE DAY

## Tuesday, March 5, 2019

House Office Building

6 Bladen St, Room 180

Annapolis, MD 21401



Registration fee: \$35 Members/\$40 - Guests

**Includes buffet lunch Parking not included**

**Photo ID required for admission to all Maryland government buildings.**

- 8:30am Registration and Coffee
- 8:30 -10:00 am Visits to Legislators arranged by Local Leagues  
**Local Leagues are responsible for making those appointments in advance.**
- 10:00 am Report on legislative visits
- 10:15 am Discussion of proposed legislation impacting the League's legislative priorities
- 11:00 am State budget presentation by Victoria Gruber, Executive Director, Department of Legislative Services
- 11:45 am Discussion of impact of budget on our legislative priorities
- Noon Lunch - Speaker: Stewart Schwartz, the Executive Director and a founder of the Coalition for Smarter Growth
- 1:00 pm Optional visits to committee hearings

### LEGISLATIVE DAY 2019 REGISTRATION FORM

If you or someone you know would like assistance from the Lois Stoner Scholarship Fund for the workshop fee, please contact the LWVMD office.

**Register Early - Prices increase by \$5 on February 20, 2019**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

LEAGUE \_\_\_\_\_

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

Registration fee - \$35/\$40 \_\_\_\_\_ Donation to the LWVMD Education Fund \_\_\_\_\_

Or donate online: Go to [lwvmd.org/make\\_donation](http://lwvmd.org/make_donation)

Mail to: LWVMD, 111 Cathedral Street, Suite 201, Annapolis, MD 21401

Or register online: [http://www.lwvmd.org/leg\\_day\\_2019](http://www.lwvmd.org/leg_day_2019)

Questions? Email [questions@lwvmd.org](mailto:questions@lwvmd.org)