



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

Box 233 Lexington, Massachusetts 02420

LWV-LEXINGTON NEWS AND INFORMATION FIRST FRIDAY April 6, 2018

Lexington Youth and Family Services (LYFS)

LYFS , which is located on the side- entrance of First Parish Church on the Green, is a Lexington after school, non-profit committed to improving the mental health and well-being of teens with a focus on preventing teen suicide. LYFS places its priorities in three areas: counseling, suicide prevention, and community education. Teen suicide is a devastating tragedy; it needs to be addressed, discussed, and prevented.

The League of Women Voters' Lexington First Friday forum will host a panel including Erin M. Deery, LICSW, (Executive Director of LYFS), Lexington High School students from the LYFS Youth Board and LYFS Board Members.

Please join the Lexington League on Friday, April 6, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. in the *Cary Memorial Library - Large Meeting Room, lower level*. This is the seventh in the series of 2017-2018 First Friday Forums sponsored by the LWV-Lexington to promote awareness and understanding of public policy issues. Coffee will be available at 9:15 a.m., and the presentation begins at 9:30 a.m. For more information, contact the League at lwvlexington@gmail.com. We also ask that you please invite a neighbor or friend to attend.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization dedicated to the principles of self-government established in the Constitution of the United States. The League works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. All League of Women Voters forums are free and open to the public.

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LWV-LEXINGTON THANKS ALL WHO VOTED ON MARCH 5, 2018

The Town's Annual Election was held Monday, March 5th, 2018. The League wishes to thank all those who voted.

LWV-LEXINGTON RIDES TO THE POLLS March 5, 2018

The Lexington League wishes to thank Liz Andrews for offering to coordinate the League's Rides to the Polls for the March town election. There were no requests for rides to the polls.

LWV-LEXINGTON BOARD MEETING April 3, 2018

The next LWV/Lexington Board meeting will be held at the Lexington Community Center, 39 Marrett Road, Room 217, from 7:30 p.m. – 8:45 p.m. on April 3, 2018. All are welcome to attend.

The League is Looking for Volunteers

The League is looking for volunteers to fill position openings it has. If interested, contact the League at 781-307-3116 for more information.

Watch the League's Forums on Demand

If there is a League of Women Voters of Lexington's First Friday Forum that you've missed or would like to see again, log onto <http://www.lexmedia.org/ondemand.html> and scroll down to "League of Women Voters" under Categories.

LWVMA

Register Now for “Beyond the March: Women Leading the Way in Massachusetts”

Saturday, April 28, 2018, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Clark University, Tilton Wetzel Room

950 Main Street, Worcester, Massachusetts

[Click here to register now!](#)

In the current climate of gridlock and dysfunction, many of us are calling out for solutions to strengthen our civic foundations at the local, state, and national level. Women especially are feeling energized to “do something” to fix political institutions that are widely perceived as broken.

We’re feeling this way, too, and we’d like to help provide ideas for action. Please join us for a full day of engaging speakers to explore lessons from women’s activist past, the key role of women leaders today, and concrete steps we can all take to strengthen our democracy going forward.

Tsongas to Keynote April 28th LWVMA Conference

Congresswoman Niki Tsongas will be the keynote speaker for the LWVMA Spring conference “Beyond the March: Women Leading the Way in Massachusetts.” The conference is Saturday, April 28th, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at Clark University in Worcester.

This conference replaces our usual state Council held in non-convention years. All League members are encouraged to attend; there is no limit to the number of people from a local League. The conference is open to the public, so encourage your friends to attend.

Please join us for a full day of engaging speakers to explore lessons from women’s activist past, the role of women leaders today, and concrete steps we can all take to strengthen our democracy going forward.

In addition to Rep. Tsongas, conference speakers will include:

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- Ruthanne Fuller, May, Newton
 - Sarai Rivera, City Councilor, Worcester
 - Yvonne Spicer, May, Framingham
 - Lisa Wong, Deputy Director, Asian American Civic Association, Former Mayor Fitchburg
 - Barbara Berenson, author of Massachusetts in the *Women Suffrage Movement: Revolutionary Reformers*
 - Erin O'Brien, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Massachusetts Boston
 - Daniel Ziblatt, Professor of Government, Harvard University, co-author, *How Democracies Die*

Encourage your members to come and bring a friend, to feel the energy, and to be inspired and educated to “do something” when they leave.

LVMA Advocacy

LWVMA Urges Speaker DeLeo to Bring AVR Bill to a Vote

On March 26, 2018, the League of Women of Massachusetts sent a letter to House Speaker Robert DeLeo urging him bring to the floor for a vote the bill to authorize Automatic Voter Registration in Massachusetts, H.4320. Text of letter follows:

The Honorable Robert DeLeo
Speaker of the House
The State House, Room 356
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Mr. Speaker:

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA), on behalf of our thousands of members and supporters in 46 local Leagues from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, urges you to support and bring to the floor for a vote the bill to authorize Automatic Voter Registration in Massachusetts, H.4320.

Automatic Voter registration (AVR) is the next local reform to the voting process, creating an opt-out system to replace the current opt-in voter registration system and

helping to assure that all eligible citizens in the Commonwealth are registered to vote. Such a system would particularly benefit those who move frequently, including young people, people in traditionally underservice communities, among military families. We estimate that 680,000 eligible voters would be brought onto Massachusetts voting rolls through adoption of AVR.

AVR has already been adopted in 11 states and the District of Columbia, always on a bipartisan basis. It's been approved in blue states like Oregon, red states like Alaska and West Virginia, and New England states like Connecticut, Rhode Island and Vermont. We would like to add Massachusetts to that list.

H.4320 has been carefully crafted to assure that non-citizens are not accidentally registered to vote and that citizens have the opportunity to decline to register if they wish to do so. Because automatic voter registration happens in state offices and involves eligible voters showing documentation, it actually increases security and decreases errors, especially over processes conducted by third parties. In addition, the legislation requires Massachusetts to join ERIC to further eliminate duplicate or other inaccurate registrations.

H.4320 is endorsed by over 60 organizations, including environmental, civil rights, consumer, community, labor, --- and good government groups, and has also won the backing of Secretary of the Commonwealth Gavin. Additionally, the tents in the Automatic Voter Registration bill have been endorsed by the Massachusetts Town Clerks Association, and adoption of AVR should ease the task of municipal election officials by reducing the spikes on voter registration just before elections.

The League was founded almost 100 years ago to assure the right to vote for all citizens. AVR is the next logical step in continuing to make sure all citizens have ready access to the ballot box. We look forward to the passage of Automatic Voter Registration in this session of the legislature and seek our assistance in making that happen.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann B. Ashton
President

LWVUS

LWVUS Press Release: Census Citizenship Question Will Result in Inaccurate Count

March 27, 2018/Washington, DC – The League of Women Voters president **Chris Carson** issued the following statement in response to Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross’ decision to include a question pertaining to citizenship in the 2020 Census:

“Including a question about citizenship in the 2020 Census will damage the chances for an accurate count of our country’s population. This unprecedented change to the way we count the number people living in the United States is a betrayal of the idea that in America, every person counts.

“Make no mistake: this decision isn’t about improving demographic data on citizenship. It’s designed to frighten immigrants—citizens and noncitizens alike—so they won’t participate in the Census. It’s a blatant political maneuver meant to disenfranchise these groups and deny them equal representation. So Secretary Ross’ claim that this question helps enforce the Voting Rights Act is preposterous. Indeed, including this question on the Census undermines the rights of eligible voters and threatens a process vital to our democracy.

“For more than 200 years, the Census has collected information about the geographic distribution of our population so we can provide representation and invest in our communities equitably. A fair and accurate Census is essential to the way the federal

government allocates resources for infrastructure, education, and transportation. Census data is critical when determining resources for fire, water and trash collection. Without a complete count of our nation’s people, businesses will not have the tools to make sound investment decisions that keep our communities thriving.

“Adding this question to the Census now is not only unnecessary and jeopardizes the accuracy of the report, but it comes at a huge financial expense. Taxpayers should not be held responsible for the time and cost of changing the forms and making the report less accurate.

“The United States Constitution mandates an accurate count of all people living in the United States – not all citizens. Non-citizens are an integral part of our economy and need to be included in the 2020 Census to paint a complete picture of our great country. The clock is ticking toward 2020. We call on Congress to take action and correct this issue before it is too late.”



Chris Carson
President, League of Women Voters of the United States

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you'd like to submit an article for the May 2018 LWV-LEXINGTON Bulletin, please send it to Nancy Corcoran Ronchetti at Nancor1106@gmail.com by April 24, 2018.

Dates to Save:

April 3rd LWV-Lexington Board Meeting, Lexington
Community Center, 39 Marrett Road, Room 217,
7:30 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.

April 6th LWV-Lexington First Friday, Lexington Youth and
Family Services (LYFS), to learn more about the
Lexington after school, non-profit committed to
improving the mental health and well-being of teens
with a focus on preventing teen suicide. Cary
Memorial Library, Large Meeting Room, Lower
Level, 9:30 a.m. Refreshments at 9:15 a.m.



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