



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

Box 233 Lexington, Massachusetts 02420

LWVL NEWS AND INFORMATION

FIRST FRIDAY MARCH 4, 2016

LEXINGTON PLANNING BOARD INITIATIVES DISCUSSION

Over the past year, the Town of Lexington Planning Board has been working on a wide variety of initiatives. Whether your interests run to neighborhood conservation, Lexington Center, housing policy, or other land use issues, at least one of the topics will interest you. The League of Women Voters, Lexington will present a Planning Board Panel First Friday Forum on March 4, 2016 to discuss these initiatives as well as specific proposals the board will be presenting to Annual Town Meeting this spring.

This is the sixth in the series of 2015-2016 First Friday Forums hosted by the League of Women Voters of Lexington to promote awareness and understanding of public policy issues. The meeting will take place at the Cary Memorial Library in the Large Meeting Room. Coffee will be available at 9:15 a.m. and presentations will begin at 9:30. For more information, contact the League at lwvlexington@gmail.com. All League forums are free and open to the public.

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DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!!!!!!

Presidential Primary and Annual Town Elections

TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016

Polls Open 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.

To verify your voter registration status and polling location go to: www.sec.state.ma.us, click on the “**Elections and Voting**” tab on the left side of the page, then click on the “**Am I Registered to Vote?**” tab on the right side of the page.

LWVLexington Voter Services

RIDE TO THE POLLS!

The League is once again offering rides to the polls for the Presidential Primary and Annual Town Election on Tuesday, March 1, 2016. If you are interested in providing a ride or if you want a ride yourself, please contact Larry Belvin, LWVL Voter Services, at www.lwvlexington.org

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.

RENEW YOUR LWVL LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP!

Thank you to members who've renewed their memberships. If you haven't already done so for 2015-2016, please do so by returning the form you received in the mail or renew your membership via the web at www.lwvlexington.org

If you have a friend or neighbor who may be interested in joining the League as a new member, please encourage them to do so at this time.

Thank you!

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.

LWVMA

LWVMA Supports Automatic Voter Registration

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts is supporting a bill, H.3937, to bring automatic voter registration to Massachusetts.

Automatic voter registration is a new election reform that automatically registers eligible citizens to vote unless they choose not to be registered. Under this bill, people would be registered when they get a driver's license or identification card issued by the Registry of Motor Vehicles. The bill also provides for some social services agencies which now offer voter registration to switch to automatic voter registration. City and town election officials would also use their annual census to identify and register eligible voters.

When the RMV and other agencies send the voter information to registrars of voters, those registrars would then notify citizens that they have been registered to vote and offer the options of taking their name off the voter rolls and of choosing a political party affiliation.

Automatic voter registration laws passed last year in Oregon and California with the support of the Leagues of Women Voters in those states. Similar laws are pending in 16 other states and the District of Columbia.

This election reform has the potential to register thousands of new voters; research has indicated about 25% of eligible citizens are not registered to vote.

LWVMA also testified in support Election Day registration at a Joint Committee on Election Laws hearing held January 19, 2016.

Election Day registration has been shown to increase voter turnout and eliminate the need for provisional ballots. Voters could register at the polls after showing identification and proof of residency.

The League testified in opposition to several bills that would require voters to show a photo ID at the polls, arguing there is no evidence that in-person voter impersonation, the only issue such laws address, is a problem, and Massachusetts has better uses for the money such a system would cost.

The League also opposed bills allowing overseas voters to return voted ballots by email, fax or a secure website. The League does not object to sending blank ballots to overseas voters by those means, but argued that returning the voted ballots by any means other than mail does not have the guarantees of security and privacy that voting requires. The Department of Defense recommends that military personnel overseas return their ballots by mail only.

LWVMA Backs Early Voting Challenge

Advocates for election reform, including the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, have issued their recommendations for implementing early voting in the state, which will go into effect with the November 2016 election.

To encourage cities and towns to offer a robust early voting program, the Election Modernization Coalition has issued an Early Voting Challenge, with gold and silver “medals” to recognize communities which meet or exceed those recommendations.

The law passed by the state legislature in 2014 requires early in-person voting be available at city or town election offices for an eleven-day period before the election, during normal business hours.

The coalition, which also includes Common Cause Massachusetts, MassVOTE, MASSPIRG, ACLU of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Voter Table, MIRA Coalition, and

Progressive Massachusetts, urges cities and towns to offer at least one early voting location for every 35,000 residents. All ballots that will be used in a municipality should be available at every early voting location.

The coalition also urges that early voting locations be open at least one evening each week and for at least four hours on the weekend in the early voting period.

Early voting is already available in 32 other states, making it possible for people to vote in person who can't get to the polls on Election Day, and helping to reduce lines on Election Day.

For more details on the recommendations and the Early Voting Challenge, go to www.EarlyVotingMA.com

LWVUS

Ninety-six years ago during the final push for women's suffrage, Carrie Chapman Catt – the League of Women Voters' founder – called upon our emerging organization to “finish the fight,” the fight to ensure that our democracy is truly a government of, by and for all the people. In 2016, we will be continuing this charge by helping to register and educate millions of Americans in advance of Election Day – Tuesday, November 8. This week, we celebrated our 96th anniversary as well as Presidents' Day by calling upon our supporters to help us in Making Democracy Work® and bringing new voters into our electoral process. As we move through this important election year, share our resources to help your friends, family and communities prepare for the upcoming elections.

Remind everyone in your life, including those who just turned 18, became citizens, moved homes or changed their name, to get [registered to vote](#) by starting the process online at VOTE411.org! *Voter registration deadlines to participate in many states' primaries are approaching soon.*

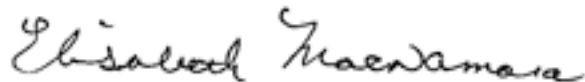
Our [presidential voters' guide](#) includes thoughts from the candidates on a range of issues from the economy to foreign policy, as well as their position on the role money plays in our political process. Share the guide as one more way to help voters learn

about the candidates and their visions for America's future. The guide will be updated so bookmark it and check back closer to your state's primary date!

2016 is a critically important election year, and voters are engaging in new and exciting ways. The League stands ready to take advantage of an engaged citizenry by providing them with the elections information they need to take control on Election Day. Just as our founders did nearly 100 years ago, the League will be harnessing the power of women in communities all across the country to do whatever it takes in to ensure we have more voters, and the most representative group of voters, participating in our electoral process.

Thank you for Making Democracy Work® for 96 years and counting!

In League,



Elisabeth MacNamara
League of Women Voters

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you'd like to submit an article for the April 2016 Bulletin, please send it to Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti at Nancor1106@gmail.com by March 23, 2016.

Dates to Save:

March 1 Presidential Primary and Annual Town Elections. Polls are open 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

March 6 LWVL March First Friday, “Lexington Planning Board Initiatives Discussion”, 9:30 a.m., Cary Memorial Library Meeting Room, Lexington, MA



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