

VOTER NEWSLETTER

REDISTRICTING

/rē'distrīktiNG/

Redistricting is the process in which congressional and legislative districts are drawn to determine how communities are represented based on census data.



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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Becky Gladstone, LWVOR President

Dear members,
Here's to spring, to rejuvenating and recovering as we begin to re-emerge from COVID-19. As I write this, I realize that much of what I want to say belongs at our convention in May, "Reset, Reboot, and Reconnect!" I hope we can have record-breaking attendance, an easy commute!

Please keep reading for Spring VOTER news:

Redistricting, Nominating Committee, and lots more. I want to emphasize two serious pleas, with more in the related articles:

- Contact our Nominating Committee ASAP, Norman, Sheila, Jackie, or Jane, to recommend a few more names, including considering newbies with fresh perspectives.
- Our Action Committee currently needs a Social Policy Director and an Education Coordinator in training. The training and support for this challenging and rewarding work are a plus.



Meanwhile, from me to you, the current stresses play out in ways that we may not realize, as damaging “secondary trauma”, like second-hand smoke, needing our attention for ourselves and those around us. Flags are still lowered nationally for one mass shooting as another happens. Partisan political division stymies negotiations and attending to the people’s business in Oregon and around the nation. I’ve heard that partisan pandemic attitudes could benefit from moderating, both taking mask-wearing and distancing more seriously and being more confident in our safeguards. I hope that we can find ways together to re-emerge from the pandemic, continue with our important work, supporting each other and the causes we hold dear.

Thank you to each of you, from being informed to participate and guide others who depend on you as a trusted League source to the specific work many of you do that would not happen without you! Here’s to Teamwork! Late-breaking—The Biocides and Pesticides study is off to the Board for approval!

- Becky Gladstone, LWVOR President

UPDATE ON REDISTRICTING IN OREGON

By Norman Turrill, LWVOR Advocacy Fund Chair

Senate and House redistricting committees were busy in February learning about their redistricting duties. They heard from experts on mapping software, from experts on the Voting Rights Act and preventing discrimination, from the Population Research Center at PSU, and from the Census Bureau. They also heard from Legislative Policy and Research Office about potential alternative data sources for redistricting, and from National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) about how other states are adjusting to the census data delays.

The Census Bureau announced February 12 that apportionment data (used by Congress for distributing seats to states) will not be available until about 4/30/21. That is when Oregon will learn for sure if the state will receive a sixth congressional district. The Bureau also announced that it will not deliver to all states the data that is necessary for congressional and legislative redistricting until about Sept. 30, 2021.

These dates are a major, major problem for Oregon. The Oregon Constitution says the legislature must complete any redistricting plans by July 1. After the legislature fails, the legislative redistricting process passes to the Oregon Secretary of State, who must complete the redistricting by August 15. However, the SoS will not have the census data by that deadline either.

When the legislature fails, the congressional redistricting process will be controlled by ORS 188.125 (a law adopted in 2013 but never used). It currently specifies that a lawsuit challenging congressional redistricting must be filed by August 1. Such a lawsuit would trigger the Chief Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court to appoint a panel of five state judges to do the congressional redistricting. However, that now cannot happen without the legislature amending ORS 188.125.

Speculation is rampant about how this situation will play out for legislative redistricting. There is talk of an appeal to the Oregon Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus to extend the constitutional deadlines (as was done in California last year), so that the legislative redistricting could be done late in the year by the legislature in a special session. To this end, the legislature’s Joint Committee on Legislative Counsel has hired an outside law firm to research and assess the options to deal with the redistricting timeline created by the census data delay. This law firm may also represent the legislature in any court proceedings, such as an appeal to the Oregon Supreme Court.

However, if the courts do not extend the deadlines, the Oregon constitution says, “At the odd-numbered year regular session of the Legislative Assembly next following an enumeration of the inhabitants by the United States Government, the number of Senators and Representatives shall be fixed by law and apportioned among legislative districts according to population.” Since the constitutional deadlines for redistricting will be passed before the census data arrives, does this mean that the legislature will have to wait until 2023 to do the job? Since filings for the 2022 elections start in September, will legislators have to run in the current districts in 2022?

Alternative scenarios have emerged on how redistricting could happen this year. Since the Oregon Constitution does not explicitly require the use of census data, either the legislature or the SoS could draw “slap-dash” maps based on other data such as DMV driver licenses or utility records, thus meeting their constitutional deadlines. See this House Redistricting hearing for a discussion of such alternative data sources. Such maps would inevitably be challenged in the courts, which would likely result in the SoS being ordered to correct the maps. The SoS would then have up to Dec. 1 to use the delivered census data to redraw the legislative district maps. Alternatively, there is nothing to prevent the legislature from passing new midterm redistricting bills for both congressional and legislative districts.

The redistricting committees have set up a new website to help inform and involve the public in their work. They also have asked the League and others to publicize it widely. The two redistricting committees have begun a series of ten hearings focused on each of the five congressional districts of Oregon. Oregon law requires ten hearings before redistricting maps can be drawn and five hearings afterwards. It would be particularly helpful for individuals to testify about what they think are the “communities of common interest” in their area. However, these will likely not be the last opportunity for input into the process.

In the meantime, the League has not given up its Positions advocating for an independent citizens redistricting commission or perhaps for an advisory commission as part of the legislative or SoS process. Likewise, the People Not Politicians Oregon coalition is still working to that end and may file a new initiative petition. PNP also filed a motion for summary judgement in its federal court case against Oregon, which is left over from the IP 57 initiative campaign. The PNP coalition is asking the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon to rule that Oregon violated the U.S. Constitution when it failed to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by making reasonable accommodations in its 2020 ballot initiative process. See the media release here. See the motion for summary judgement here and the accompanying exhibits here.

LWVOR'S REDISTRICTING OUTREACH RAMPS UP for LWVUS National Day of Action, April 29, 2021

By Chris Cobey, LWVOR Governance Specialist (Redistricting)

As part of the LWVUS's People Powered Fair Maps (PPFM) initiative, LWVOR will be working in tandem with other groups and organizations to explain the importance and the process of redistricting to Oregon residents in the coming months.

Thursday, April 29, from 7:00 to 8:00 pm,
PPFM national Day of Action activities
Redistricting Update and ZOOM discussion.
Register here: lvor.org/peoplepower

LWVOR will join with local Oregon Leagues and other groups in sponsoring a Zoom meeting to provide resources to League members and others for understanding the process of redistricting, why it is important to individuals, where the process now stands, how an individual can help shape their state legislative and congressional districts for the next ten years, and to answer questions from participants. IP 57 (People Not Politicians) Chief Petitioner Norman Turrill and others are expected to participate in the discussions.



The COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the normal delivery date of the US Census Bureau population data the states use to revise their districts. The data is now due by September 30, 2021 -- more than six months later than its normal delivery date. As the Oregon redistricting process is spelled out in our Constitution with deadlines stated in specific months and dates which now cannot be met, the Oregon Supreme Court is currently considering a request of the legislative leaders that the Legislative Assembly be permitted to submit its redistricting plans by December 31, 2021. As this article went to press, the Court has not yet acted on that request.

In February, the LWVOR submitted both oral and written testimony to the state House and Senate redistricting committees, explaining the League's longtime state and national positions on redistricting, and again requesting that the legislature submit a ballot measure requiring the creation of an independent redistricting commission. League members from southern and eastern Oregon, and Portland, have also testified on their views of the process, a commission, and the application of one of the Constitutionally-mandated standards -- "communities of common interest" -- as that standard applied to their own communities.

Join us on the evening of April 29 for an education and update on this once-a-decade activity! **Further event details are available here: lwvor.org/peoplepower**



ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT

By Alice Bartelt, Action Committee Chair

This has been a challenging session of the Legislature. Not being able to attend meetings at the Capitol has meant that our committee members have not been able to develop relationships with the many new legislators that were sworn in prior to the 2021 session.

Because the legislative committees are meeting remotely, participation by people across the state has increased dramatically. This may be a sign of things to come. People being able to testify without having to spend time and expense to travel to Salem is a plus.

Our coordinators and portfolio chairs are working very hard. Much testimony has already been submitted to the legislature. Most bills must have had a work session scheduled by March 19, and considered by April 13. After that time, many bills will be dead.

The Committee hopes that most of our members are reading the parts of the Legislative Report that interest them. The articles take time and energy to put together. Changes to the format were made in a effort to make the publication more user-friendly. Readers may now just read the items that are of interest to them.

It is a privilege to work with such an energetic group of people. The committee meets once a week, and there are often as many as twenty folks attending. There are still areas that we would like to have followed, so more folks monitoring and reporting on bills are most welcome. Because there is no reason to have to go to Salem, even after the Capitol is reopened, new volunteers are encouraged. Hearings can be viewed online, and all testimony is submitted electronically. So, if there is an issue that a member is interested in, the Action Committee welcomes you.

JORDAN COVE UPDATE

By Shirley Weathers, LWV of Rogue Valley

Lots to report since the last issue. First, the long-awaited decision by the federal Department of Commerce on Oregon's objection to Jordan Cove's Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) certification came down in favor of Oregon on February 8! This makes two key state permit strikes against the project's ability to be constructed. The first strike happened on January 19, when the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) rejected project owner Pembina's charge that Oregon waived its authority to issue the Section 401 Water Quality Permit. That means that Oregon's denial of that important permit stands, too. Despite FERC's flawed authorizations of the Jordan Cove LNG and export facilities and Pacific Connector Pipeline in March 2020, the Order nonetheless mandates that all required permits must be obtained or construction can't begin.

Pembina has been steadily losing ground on that score. In fact, they haven't had a victory since then. The LWVVR and three other local Leagues that have been collaboratively opposing Jordan Cove over the years (Coos, Umpqua, and Klamath) wrote a letter to the Governor and Attorney General Rosenblum earlier this month, thanking both for their defense of Oregon against this harmful project and for the diligent and competent work of their staffs on which their decisions are based.

While not the only factors, these last two losses are central to serious negative indicators in the Canadian company's Quarter 4 Report. Pembina was forced to take a C\$350 million write-down on the project, as well as to reframe their previously optimistic public messaging about it. "In light of current regulatory and political uncertainty, Pembina recognized an impairment in its investment in Jordan Cove and is evaluating the path forward." Financial and fossil fuel sites are taking note of all of this with headlines such as "Pembina 'sadly' can no longer predict when Jordan Cove LNG will be built in US" and "Pembina eyes near-term Canada opportunities after US LNG project challenges." One site observed flatly, "Jordan Cove has suffered too many regulatory defeats." They have not thrown in the towel, but their pathway forward looks at least improbable at this point.

Returning to the CZMA decision, it also exemplifies the dramatic and horribly overdue shift with respect to federal consideration of tribal communities. JCEP officials' failure to deal appropriately with Native American leaders has been noted by the League and others over the years, but in upholding Oregon's denial of the Coastal Zone Management Act certification, the decision specifically noted that the project developer had fallen far short of its obligations to consider impacts on cultural and historical tribal resources. "[E]ach of the responding tribes noted their disappointment with the degree to which they had received government-to-government consultations," as is required under tribal sovereignty agreements. Then on February 18, Governor Brown wrote to the new FERC Chair, Richard Glick, requesting that the agency "provide for meaningful consultation with Oregon's federally recognized Tribes regarding the Jordan Cove Energy Project," including inviting any Oregon Tribe to be a signatory to the project's Section 106 Programmatic Agreement. Heretofore, FERC has offered only the lesser "concurring party" status to tribes. Brown indicated that this and other prior actions fall short of appropriate and meaningful government-to-government relationship with the tribes.

Article links (also available online):

- <https://coast.noaa.gov/data/czm/consistency/appeals/fcappealdecisions/mediadecisions/jordancove.pdf>
- <https://www.naturalgasintel.com/jordan-cove-lng-faces-another-setback-as-ferc-upholds-oregon-authority/>
- <https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/idmws/common/opennat.asp?fileID=15487862>
- <https://www.pembina.com/media-centre/news/details/135496/>
- <https://www.spglobal.com/platts/en/market-insights/latest-news/petrochemicals/022521-pembina-sadly-can-no-longer-predict-when-jordan-cove-lng-will-be-built-in-us>
- <https://www.spglobal.com/platts/en/market-insights/latest-news/natural-gas/022621-pembina-eyes-near-term-canada-opportunities-after-us-lng-project-challenges>
- <https://coast.noaa.gov/data/czm/consistency/appeals/fcappealdecisions/mediadecisions/jordancove.pdf>
- https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/filelist?accession_num=20210219-4004

NOMINATING COMMITTEE PROGRESS

By Norman Turrill, LWVOR Nominating Committee Chair

The LWVOR Nominating Committee urgently requests suggestions now for future state League leaders. Suggestions can be either other members or self-nominations. The LWVOR Bylaws require the Nominating Committee to present a slate of officers and directors to be elected at the 2021 LWVOR Convention. These positions include President, First Vice-president, Secretary, three Board members, and three elected members of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will also be on the look-out for members who can be recommended to the Board to fill board and off-board positions, particularly a budget chair. Please send your suggestions to committee Chair Norman Turrill at n.turrill@lwvor.org.

SAVE THE DATE: LWVOR CONVENTION 2021

LWV Oregon 2021 Biannual Convention, Reset! Reboot! Reconnect!, will be held over the week of May 10 through 16. This will be a virtual event. We will spread workshops, caucuses, invited speakers and the plenary throughout the week. Each day will be limited to three to five hours, so as not to overwhelm our online time. Caucuses and workshops will be early in the week, with the plenary towards the end. We hope that many local members will be able to attend portions of the convention, even if they are not formally a delegate. If a local league is planning a caucus, please register at the link below.



**INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE NOW AT
LWVOR.ORG/LWVOR-CONVENTION-2021**

LWVOR CONVENTION UPDATE

By Robin Tokmakian, 1st Vice President

Several of us had a meeting on March 9 to discuss the minutia of the convention. Things decided at the meeting that need no board approval were that a convention website would be created (linked to from LWVOR site). It will include Registration information, Information and a form to request a caucus, other information such as how the business meeting will be conducted including how motions can be made (via chat on zoom), etc.

CONVENTION DATES TO NOTE

April 15: By-Laws sent out to membership

Nominations due from committee

Determine Honorees Apr 1 5: Send 2nd Call to convention

Workbook Finished

May 10-16: CONVENTION (Virtual)

THEME: RESET! REBOOT! RECONNECT!!

POSSIBLE WORKSHOPS

DEI

LWVUS Advocacy – THRIVE Agenda & other things

Advocacy at the state level (including redistricting)

Volunteer Recruitment

Training by LWVOR Staff (e.g. Zoom)

Pre-convention tutorial

Civil Discourse (Sheila has some ideas)

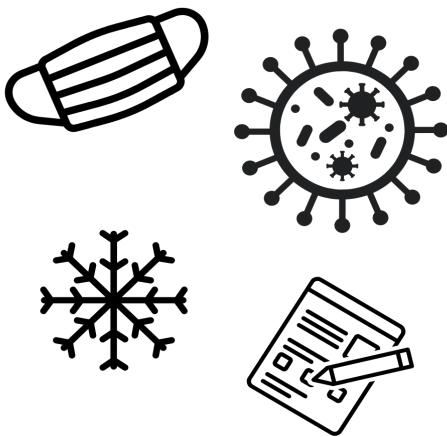
POSSIBLE SPEAKERS

Panel on Forestry/Fires etc (Timber Wars journalist as moderator)

Sec. of State

Author – Kristin Eberhard <https://www.sightline.org/author/kristineberhard/>

Please watch your email for Convention registration and meeting materials.



A COVID SONG: “LET IT GO, LET IT GO, LET IT GO!”

By Kim Scott, LWV of Deschutes County

This song came about because I was asked to come up with a version of a Christmas song with league and Covid thoughts/ideas in the wording. My son and I enjoy making up different wording to songs so this is what we did one evening!

Sent by Carol Loesche, president of the LWV of Deschutes Co, OR.

Let it Go, Let it Go (tune of ‘Let it Snow’)

Oh, the COVID outside is frightful
I find patterns on masks delightful,
And since we’re on lock down low
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

Covid, it’s just not stopping
But the vaccines will soon be dropping.
Waiting so long just blows
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

When we finally say good night
How we hate going out in the storm.
But if we keep on fighting for rights.
Here let me help you with that form

Somedays they got me crying
Last year has us all just sighing
2020 put on quite a show
Let it go, let it go, let it go.

PROGRAM NOTES

By Sheila McGinnis, LWVOR Program Chair

In preparation for the 2021 LWVOR State Convention, local Leagues completed their review of current state positions on issues to assess whether LWVOR positions are sufficient for advocacy on critical issues. The Program Review Committee—Alice Bartelt, Marge Easley, Barbara Klein, Betsy Pratt, and Sheila McGinnis—reviewed local League’s materials to develop program recommendations for the next two years, and their recommendations were reviewed by the state Board.

Thank you! to the many members who worked on local recommendations and developing proposals—you are helping to chart LWVOR’s future path. Several topics were identified related to voting methods, nuclear energy, forest management, and childcare, and will serve to inform potential studies, position adoption by concurrence, and position amendments.

The state Board considered the Committee’s report at its March meeting and will submit their final 2021-2023 Program recommendation for member approval at the May convention. Watch for more information in upcoming convention updates.

The two study teams are continuing their work on the 2019-2021 Program. The Pesticides Study team has finalized its report and is preparing consensus questions for state Board approval. The next step is to plan the consensus process, including how to handle the still-present coronavirus contingencies. The Cybersecurity Study team is continuing its work towards national concurrence. With advice from LWVUS program staff, they are developing plans to engage other states.

PESTICIDES AND OTHER BIOCIDES

PRODUCED BY
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OREGON

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DEI LENS

By Kathleen Hersh, LWVOR Membership Chair

A DEI lens is a way of examining a program, a process, a product, etc., with regards to how it is perceived by a variety of communities, voices, and perspectives, and what, if any, barriers may exist that is preventing it from being equitable or inclusive of everyone.

What To Ask When Examining Your Work Through a DEI Lens

Who is involved in the process?

- o Are key stakeholders meaningfully included?
- o Is this work that impacts a group or community? If so, is their voice represented?
- o How diverse is the group of decision makers? Is it diverse enough?

Who will be impacted?

- o Who benefits from this?
- o Who is burdened by this?
- o Does this help us meet the needs of underserved voters?
- o Have we considered various, specific marginalized groups and how they might be impacted?

What are the intended and unintended outcomes?

- o What issue are we trying to solve?
- o What do we hope will happen?
- o What are the potential negative impacts? Who could be hurt by this?
- o What data or evidence supports this?
- o How might this be perceived by others?

Does this align with our vision for an equitable and inclusive organization?

- o How is equity addressed?
- o What barriers might this place in the way of achieving equity?
- o How does this impact the League's culture?

What changes could be made to make this more equitable?

- o What are the short term goals?
- o *What are the long term goals?*
- o *What, if any, policies or bylaws need to be added or amended?*
- o *What are the benefits for members?*
- o *What are the benefits for partners and/or members of the community?*

Announcing: LWVOR's New Website!

Dear members,

We are pleased to announce that we have launched the League of Women Voters of Oregon's brand new website! This includes a new layout, new page organization, and, we hope, easier site navigation. A few non-essential things are still in progress, so check back if you can't find something.

Visit the website at lwvor.org. New features include an improved Testimony page and archive, new Legislative Report, searchable Member Resources and more.

We have implemented a new, secure login and sign up page. Unfortunately, this means you will have to make a new website account to get into the member resources. Your old username/email and password won't work on the new site. There is a Login link at the top right of the home page where you can register your new account. We will have to approve your registration before you can access member resources, but we'll try to approve them as soon as possible.

Please let me or Sarah Andrews (s.andrews@lwvor.org) know if you have suggestions or comments about the new site (or to let us know if things are broken)! We hope this will be a positive update for everyone.

Stay safe and healthy,

Amanda Crittenden
Office Support Specialist
a.crittenden@lwvor.org



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