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Empowering all Washingtonians to engage in a more responsible and responsive democracy

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Celebrate Centennial Month!

So many ways to celebrate (and educate yourself) this month of the Centennial, without having to leave the comfort of your own home. Here's just a few we've come across. We'll post others on [Facebook](#) as we hear about them.



Alice Paul, chair of the National Woman's Party, unfurls the ratification banner after Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920, making women's suffrage legal in the United States. Taken in front of the National Woman's Party headquarters in Washington, D.C. (Photo from the [Library of Congress](#))

- [Ahead of the Curve](#), a Legacy Washington website dedicated to highlighting the stories of Washington State women who have impacted the history of the state.
- [Celebrate Women's Activism](#), a project collecting stories of women activists from around the world. Share your story!
- [Centennial T-shirt](#) from the LWV of Whidbey Island, designed by board member Karin Bolstad and available to purchase in two colors on the [LWV of Whidbey website](#).
- [Face the Music 4ERA](#), a national online music concert on Facebook August 26 at 5 p.m. PT, will celebrate 100 years of women's suffrage with songs of unity and action.
- [She Votes!](#) podcast, an eight-part documentary that discusses the complex history of the women's suffrage movement, presented by ABC News correspondent Lynn Sherr and Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Ellen Goodman.
- [Stephanie Coontz interview](#) with Legacy Washington recorded in July. Coontz is a noted author and historian and expert on family and marriage who influenced the U.S. Supreme Court's 2015 decision legalizing same-sex marriage.
- [Toast to Tenacity-Vision 2020](#), a virtual tribute to Women's Equality Day on August 26, 9 a.m. PT will webcast from Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia and feature well-known speakers and a ceremonial ringing of the Justice Bell.
- [Votes for Women Trail](#), a project of the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites, collecting sites from around the country related to the story of suffrage. Check out the Washington State sites!
- [Women's Suffrage Centennial Update Gazette](#) is available to download free from the National Women's History Alliance.
- [Women's Vote Centennial Initiative](#) has many more events and access to online exhibits on its website, with more being added all the time.

LWVWA to Present Forums Regarding Initiatives and Referenda in Washington State

The LWV of Washington will be presenting a series of forums with the King County Bar Association and other cosponsors regarding the role initiatives and referenda play in our democracy. The series will explore current issues impacting the process, including e-signature gathering, citizen initiative review, judicial review, quality control options, and

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The first session, on Monday, Aug. 17, 11:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m., will provide an overview of the referendum and initiative process and gathering e-signatures. Future sessions will be on Monday, Oct. 19, and Monday, Nov. 16.

The series is free to the public and will be available via webcast. CLE credit will be available for those in the legal profession. You can [register for individual sessions](#).

Attendance per session is limited to 170 attendees, and a recording of each presentation will be available within a few weeks of the presentation date.

The King County Bar Association will also be sponsoring a secretary of state candidate forum on Monday, Sept. 21, from noon to 1:30 p.m., with the two finalists from the August primary.

For questions please contact [Kathy Sakahara](#).



Looking Toward the November Ballot: Referendum 90

By Catherine Ahl, Education Issue Chair, LWV of Washington

While this November's ballot will not contain any initiatives, it will include one referendum, Ref. 90. This referendum will ask voters to approve or reject [ESSB 5395](#) (Comprehensive Sexual Health Education), which passed the legislature and was signed by Governor Jay Inslee in March 2020. The LWVWA recommends a vote to *approve* ESSB 5395 on the ballot.

The bill ensures that all students statewide receive age-appropriate information that is medically and scientifically accurate; parents have the right to opt their student out of the class. Only 18 or 19 of our 295 school districts don't provide comprehensive sexual health education. Where our students live shouldn't determine the information they receive.

The opponents of ESSB 5395 are spreading much misinformation about this bill, such as "graphic sex education and teaching sex positions in elementary school" and "sexual health will be taught in all classes (math, social studies, computer, etc.)," and that the bill "denies parents and school boards the power to decide what shall be taught." None of these statements is true, something we can see from [reading the bill](#).

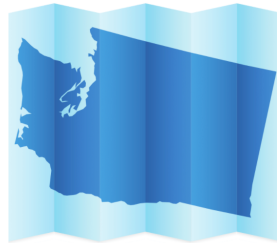
ESSB 5395 requires that comprehensive sexual health education be provided twice in grades 6-8 and 9-12, starting with the 2021-22 school year, and once in K-3 and 4-5, starting with the 2022-23 school year. The bill states that K-3 instruction must be in social-emotional learning. This could include stranger danger, good touch/bad touch, and using your words instead of your hands.

The LWVWA will be joining the [Safe and Healthy Youth Washington](#) campaign, so please go to its website and volunteer or donate. Draft letters to the editor, which can be used to promote this issue, will be sent to local Leagues in mid-September. If you have questions or concerns, contact Catherine Ahl at cahl@lwvwa.org or 360-697-7924.

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Census and Redistricting Workshop with Alison McCaffree

Alison McCaffree, LWV of Washington Census and Redistricting Issue Chair, will be presenting an online workshop Thursday, Aug. 13, 6-8 p.m., on the importance of the census. The workshop will discuss how Washington's five-member redistricting commission will use census results to redraw our congressional and legislative voting districts for the next 10 years and how you can be a part of the process. The Washington State Redistricting Commission will be taking public input June through September 2021, once the census is complete.



The free online workshop is hosted by the LWV of Clark County and the Fort Vancouver Regional Libraries, and will be conducted via videoconferencing. It will feature break-out rooms, polling, and a PowerPoint presentation and is open to both teens and adults. Register on the [FVRL website](#). For more information, contact [Judy Zeider](#) or [Mary Abler](#).

New Play Discusses Race Relations in the Women's Suffrage Movement

Azeotrope and Brownbox Theatre are presenting a free online play reading of *Ain't (Y)Our History*, a new play about race relations in the women's suffrage movement, on Tuesday, Aug. 25, at 5 p.m., followed by a live panel discussion that will include Alyssa Weed, LWV of Seattle-King County president.

Written by award-winning playwright Rachel Atkins and directed by Shermona Mitchell, the play features original suffrage songs and poems. The play was written to encourage and inspire civic and community engagement around equity and voting rights and is being presented as part of Washington's [Votes for Women Centennial 2020](#).

For more information, visit the [Azeotrope](#) website and the [Facebook](#) page. [Registration](#) required.



African American women gathered for the Banner State Woman's National Baptist Convention in 1915. Nannie Burroughs, an educator, religious leader, suffragist, and business woman, holds the banner. (Photo from the [Library of Congress](#))

LWV of the Spokane Area Produces Spokane Youth Votes Video

The LWV of the Spokane Area recently produced a *Voter FYI* video in which students had an opportunity to ask Spokane County Auditor Vicky Dalton questions about voting and the 2020 elections. The two student ambassadors, Rosie Zhou and Summer Sandstrom, created the original questions to ask Dalton, with script development help from members of the LWV of Spokane. The video was produced by Dawn Bayman.



You can [view the entire video](#) on YouTube or through the [Spokane Youth Votes Facebook page](#). The video is also broken up into short separate videos focused on each question, which are also available on the [LWV Spokane YouTube channel](#).



What Lies Ahead for Democracy: A Discussion

As the anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment nears, the LWVUS will meet to talk about the work we need to do over the next 100 years to ensure fair elections and participation by all, particularly those who have been marginalized in the past.

On Wednesday, Aug. 12, at 10 a.m. PT, LWVUS CEO Virginia Kase and LWVUS President Deborah Turner will sit down to discuss what lies ahead for democracy in America and how women can participate. The one-hour session will examine how women voters can better elevate the voices and perspectives of women of color, how we can protect current voting rights while continuing to expand access, and what role we all play in the racial justice movement.

The conversation will be streamed live on the [LWVUS Facebook page](#) and will include a live question and answer portion.

Defunding—What Does It Really Mean?

LWVUS President Deborah Turner recently clarified where the League stands on the issue of defunding the police. Her comments appeared recently in the national newsletter and are important to reiterate here (edited for clarity):

This [is] an important conversation that many people are having about defunding the police in light of the continued violence against Black communities. We have heard from several Leagues looking for guidance around the issue of defunding the police and wanting to be good allies to Black Lives Matter and other organizations on the issue of racial justice. **This movement and message mean very different things for communities across the country, and even the phrase “defund the police” has different meanings for people inside and outside the racial justice movement.**

Because police budgets are localized and the cry to “defund the police” means different things in different communities, it would not be appropriate for the national office to take a position on this issue. State and local Leagues can use existing League positions to formulate a localized stance on the subject. **Our positions** on militarization of federal forces, human rights, and civil rights can be applied to issues like police brutality or the militarization of cities with the presence of federal troops we have seen. For some communities, the desire to remove police officers from schools could relate to our positions on education and mental health.

Supreme Court of Washington Pens Letter

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The Supreme Court

State of Washington



In early June, the nine justices of the Supreme Court of Washington sent an open letter to members of the judiciary and the legal community regarding ongoing and systemic racial injustices faced by Black Americans and asking everyone to work together to eradicate racism.

You can read a copy of the [justices' letter](#) on the Washington Courts website.

Calendar

2020 is the Centennial of the 19th Amendment, which granted women in the United States the right to vote. It's also the 100th anniversary of the League of Women Voters. Events and celebrations are planned across Washington to mark the occasions. You will find Washington League history and events [here](#). For additional suffrage events across the state see the [Washington Suffrage Centennial website](#).

Note: In-person events have been canceled across Washington in response to the coronavirus pandemic. For more information about these restrictions, see the [Washington State Department of Health](#) website.

August 2020

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, August 10, 11, 12—LWV of Washington Board Retreat and Business Meeting, noon–4 p.m. daily (tentative)

Wednesday, August 12—Discussion with LWVUS CEO Virginia Kase and LWVUS President Deborah Turner on “Defining the Next 100 Years,” 10 a.m. PT on the [LWVUS Facebook page](#).

Thursday, August 13—Census and redistricting workshop with Alison McCaffree, 6-8 p.m., free online. [Registration](#) required.

Monday, August 17-Friday, August 21—LWVWA Seattle office closed

Monday, August 17—Forum with the Washington State Bar Association on the initiative and

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Thursday, August 20—LWVUS DEI webinar, 4 p.m. PT, [register](#). Recordings later available on the [LWVUS website](#).

Tuesday, August 25—*Ain't (Y)Our History* play presentation and panel discussion, online, 5 p.m. [Registration](#) required.

No August LWVWA Board Meeting—Executive Committee will be available for action.

September 2020

Monday, September 21—LWV of Washington Board Meeting.

Monday, September 21—Secretary of State Candidate Forum, noon-1:30 p.m. [Registration](#).

Tuesday, September 22—[National Voter Registration Day](#).

Thursday, September 24—LWVUS DEI webinar, 4 p.m. PT, [register](#). Recordings later available on the [LWVUS website](#).

October 2020

Friday, October 16—Start of 18-day general voting period (through Election Day). Ballots are mailed out and Accessible Voting Units are available at voting centers.

Monday, October 19—LWV of Washington Board Meeting.

Monday, October 19—Forum with the Washington State Bar Association on citizen initiative review, judicial review, and quality control, 11:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m. [Registration](#) required.

November 2020

Tuesday, November 3— General Election

Monday, November 16—Forum with the Washington State Bar Association on legislative reforms, noon-1:30 p.m. [Registration](#) required.

Joining the League is a great way to get involved in your community and play an active role in our democracy.



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