LWV Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization

LWV CMAL
May 20, 2023
Joining today from Chicago (in the Mississippi River Basin)
PRESIDENT WILSON SAYS:
"This is the time to support Woman Suffrage."

VOTES FOR WOMEN
Topics today

- What is an ILO? (Some are very different from CMAL)
- Some stuff on hydrology and nutrient science
- LWV UMRR’s operation and work
  - Mission
  - Accomplishments
  - Tools
What is LWV UMRR?

To start with, it’s the League of Women Voters Upper Mississippi River Region Inter League Organization.

(LWV UMRR, for short.)
The base of League of Women Voters is comprised of local Leagues, mostly serving a given city or county. Local Leagues work on local issues, run candidate forums and register voters.
State Leagues tie together the local Leagues, and advocate on state issues.
In some cases, local Leagues band together to address particular issues or the needs of particular areas.

This is what we call an Inter League Organization, it looks like this:
League of Women Voters of the United States
LWVUS
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
LWVMN
League of Women Voters of Wisconsin
LWWVI
League of Women Voters of Illinois
LWVIL
League of Women Voters of Iowa
LWVIA
League of Women Voters of Other States
LWV
Local Leagues
Local Leagues
Local Leagues
Local Leagues
Local Leagues
Inter League Organization
There are about 20 Inter League Organizations nationwide.

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<th>Los Angeles County ILO</th>
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<td>Southeastern PA Region ILO</td>
<td>National Capitol Area ILO</td>
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Two Inter League Organizations are larger, incorporating Leagues from multiple states.

These are LWV Lake Michigan Region and LWV Upper Mississippi River Region.
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
LAKE MICHIGAN REGION

Incorporated in 1966

Lake Michigan Advocacy & Education | Leagues of Women Voters of Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and Michigan

Home  About LMLWV  Action Focus: STORMWATER  Illinois  Indiana  Michigan  Wisconsin  Additional Resources
Great Lakes Compact
LWV Upper Mississippi River Region

- Our territory is the river basin, from the Headwaters in northern Minnesota to southern Illinois, and all tributaries
- We focus on water quality and quantity

Incorporated in 2015
LWV UMRR is comprised of 64 local Leagues and four State Leagues in the Upper Mississippi basin.
League of Women Voters of the United States
LWVUS

League of Women Voters of Minnesota
LWVMN

League of Women Voters of Wisconsin
LWWI

League of Women Voters of Illinois
LWIL

League of Women Voters of Iowa
LWIA

League of Women Voters of Other States
LWV

Local Leagues
Like the State Leagues, LWV UMRR reports to LWV US.

LWV UMRR’s purpose is to educate and advocate for the Upper Mississippi.
Many common issues unite Leagues in the Upper Mississippi Watershed

• Nutrients flowing into the Gulf have created a ‘dead zone’ where anoxic conditions affect fisheries, shellfish and shrimp; poor water quality also affects wildlife along the river’s route

• Transport of hazardous materials on roadways, by rail or on the water, can threaten water supplies for thousands of people

• Aquatic invasive species, such as invasive silver and big-head carp are found along the river

• Also - commercial navigation, ecosystem restoration, water quality, flood risk management, water supply, and other water resource issues
LWV UMRR ILO Purpose (from by-laws)

The purposes of the LWV-UMRR ILO are to promote:

- public understanding and active, informed citizen participation in evidence-based decision-making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of the natural resources of the Upper Mississippi River Region;

- resource conservation, science-based stewardship, and long-range planning for managing the region’s natural resources; and

- efficient and economical government requiring competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, effective enforcement, coordination among the different agencies and levels of government and well-defined channels for citizen input and review.
# Our Board

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<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Mary Ellen Miller</td>
<td>LWV Des Moines</td>
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<td>Vice-chair</td>
<td>Nancy Porter</td>
<td>LWV Johnson County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Past Chair</td>
<td>Mary and Steve Ploesser</td>
<td>LWV Dane County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Tam Prenosil</td>
<td>LWV Dubuque</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Catherine Franczyk</td>
<td>LWV Wheaton</td>
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<td>Communications</td>
<td>Gretchen Sabel</td>
<td>LWV ABC</td>
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<td>IA Representative</td>
<td>Sue Wilson</td>
<td>LWV Dubuque</td>
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<td>IL Representative</td>
<td>Lee Ekstrom</td>
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<td>Paula Ekstrom</td>
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<td>LWV Willmar</td>
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<td>WI Representative</td>
<td>Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins</td>
<td>LWV La Crosse</td>
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<td>WI Alternate</td>
<td>Nancy Hill</td>
<td>LWV La Crosse</td>
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Board meetings all virtual

• First Monday of even-numbered months
• Usually start at 10am, 1-2 hours in length
• Educational session follows
  – Topics of concern in basin
  – Highlight different areas within the ILO
  – Open to the public, recorded
  – Advertised through newsletter and social media
LWV is in the right place at the right time

- Education and awareness
- Advocacy on issues
- Coalitions with partners

With the League’s century of experience lobbying and advocating, we see the chief benefit of “the Ummer” being the ability to amplify the voices of our citizens across dozens of congressional districts.
Our origin story

Followed the examples:

• LWV Lake Michigan Region
• LWV Jo Daviess County

Video shown at LWV UMRR’s 2022 Annual Meeting:

https://www.lwvumrr.org/blog/using-league-principles-to-guide-water-work
Make Your Voice Heard

Join the League of Women Voters
Of Jo Daviess County
LWV Upper Mississippi River Region

- Our territory is the river basin, from the Headwaters in northern Minnesota to southern Illinois, and all tributaries
- We focus on water quality and quantity

_Incorporated in 2015_
Our work – Basin-wide

- LWV UMRR chose nutrient loss reduction as our first focus
- That means helping people keep nutrients where they belong, not in our waters
- Excess nutrients cause algae blooms which contaminate water and use up oxygen, creating a Dead Zone
- All four UMRR states have nutrient loss strategies that they are working to implement
What is a Watershed?

The simple definition
It's the area of land that catches rain and snow and drains or seeps into a marsh, stream, river, lake or groundwater.
A watershed can be compared to a huge basin collecting all the precipitation that falls within it and carrying this to the common outlet. A watershed includes not only the land within its boundaries but also the surface water of lakes, streams and wetlands as well as the groundwater moving beneath the surface. Watersheds vary from the largest river basins to just a few acres in size.
The Mississippi River Watershed

Credit: NASA's Scientific Visualization Studio
NUTRIENT POLLUTION
&
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER DRAINAGE BASIN
Why is nutrient pollution a good issue for us as an ILO?

1. It is an issue that transcends political boundaries and affects the entire Upper Mississippi River Watershed (the region within our ILO boundaries).
2. Whether a LWV is urban, rural or suburban; their members and their communities can take actions to reduce nutrient pollution since the excess nitrogen and phosphorus comes from a myriad of sources.
3. Nutrient pollution is an issue that is not as yet well understood by the general public and needs education.
4. Each of our states has been charged with the task of developing and implementing a nutrient loss reduction strategy that we can all work to implement in our states and communities.
Causes Of Excess Nutrients* in Water

- 70% comes from farm fields.
  - Mostly through drain tiles
  - Runoff from crops planted closely to waterways
- 20-30% comes from
  - Urban residential
  - Industrial runoff
  - Water treatment plants.

*Nutrients – chemical compounds that make things grow. Found in fertilizers, animal waste, lawn clippings and leaves, etc.
The Dead Zone
We all contribute to nutrients flowing into the Gulf of Mexico.

- Nutrients flowing from farm fields, city streets and wastewater plants into the Gulf have created a ‘dead zone’ where anoxic conditions affect fisheries, shellfish and shrimp; poor water quality also affects wildlife along the river’s route.

In 2014 there were 5,052 square miles of dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico. 2018’s dead zone was the size of New Jersey. Our four states are major contributors of nutrients that cause the dead zone.
Dead Zone size varies by year

Data shown is from 1985-2021.

2022 Dead Zone was smaller than average due to the drought.
Corn for All Purposes 2021
Planted Acres by County
for Selected States

Acres
- Not Estimated
- < 10,000
- 10,000 - 24,999
- 25,000 - 49,999
- 50,000 - 99,999
- 100,000 - 149,999
- 150,000 +

U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service
Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy

The Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy is a science and technology-based framework to assess and reduce nutrients to Iowa waters and the Gulf of Mexico. It is designed to direct efforts to reduce nutrients in surface water from both point and nonpoint sources in a scientific, reasonable and cost effective manner.
The Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy guides state efforts to improve water quality at home and downstream by reducing nitrogen and phosphorus levels in our lakes, streams, and rivers. The strategy lays out a comprehensive suite of best management practices for reducing nutrient loads from wastewater treatment plants and urban and agricultural runoff. Recommended activities target the state’s most critical watersheds and are based on the latest science and best-available technology. It also calls for more collaboration between state and federal agencies, cities, non-profits, and technical experts on issues such as water quality monitoring, funding, and outreach.

The strategy was developed by a policy working group led by the Illinois Water Resource Center—University of Illinois, Chicago and the Illinois farmer community. The working group brought together experts from the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Illinois State Water Survey and the Illinois Water Resources Center, as well as various Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy partners.
The Minnesota Nutrient Reduction Strategy (NRS) will guide the state in reducing excess nutrients in waters so that in-state and downstream water quality goals are ultimately met.
Wisconsin’s Nutrient Reduction Strategy is a broad overview of nutrient management activities for both point sources and nonpoint sources in Wisconsin. This strategy documents ongoing activities whether they are implemented by federal, state or local agencies. It identifies areas where further progress is needed.

Lead Authors:
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources:
   Jim Baumann, Brian Weigel, Amy Callis, Corinne Billings and Mark Binder (GIS maps)

University of Wisconsin Extension
   Ken Genetkow, Chad Cook, John Eitz and Aemid Neuenhouse
Progress

- Strategies adopted 2013-2015
- Goal set to reduce dead zone to 5000 acres*
  Originally to be met in 2015
- New goal is 2035
- Funding increased in 2022 through Inflation Reduction Act
- States must also take actions...

*About 8 square miles
Education and Advocacy

• Education on nutrient solutions
• Education on bills in Congress
  – Farm Bill
  – MRRRI
• Partnering with like-minded non-partisan organizations
  – Mississippi River Network
  – Clean Water for All
  – Izaak Walton League
  – Land Stewardship Project
  – Minnesota Environmental Partnership
Workshops for Absentee Farmland Owners

FARM LANDOWNER WORKSHOP SERIES: MANAGING RENTAL AGREEMENTS FOR STEWARDSHIP

Join us on Friday, April 12th for a hands on day to learn how to improve the health of your land.

WHEN: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Lunch and treats provided!
This event is free and open to all!

📍 Albert F. Reding Environmental Education Center, 1546 SW 58th St, Owatonna, MN 55060
Water Advocating for Protection
Put Your League on the Map!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
Benefits of Living Plant Cover

- Diversify farming operations-increase economic opportunities
- Reduced erosion
- Reduce runoff and nutrient leaching
- Builds organic matter-sequesters carbon
- Increases water storage on the landscape
- Increase habitat for bees, beneficial insects and wildlife
The League takes on this challenge committed to expanding the knowledge of river basin residents about the watershed they live in. The resulting ripple effect should be development of a robust stewardship ethic.

We all know our zip code, our area code and all should know our watershed!
WATER is LIFE
LWV UMRR Website: lwvumrr.org

Who we are

Recognizing the value of inter-league cooperation, the boards of the Dubuque, Jo Daviess County, Cedar Rapids and La Crosse Leagues began meeting to develop and organize an Upper Mississippi River Region ILO to deal with Mississippi River Region issues. From this work, the UMRR ILO was born, incorporated on October 24, 2015. For more information, check our “About Us” page here.

Our focus

Our work focuses on nutrient pollution reduction and impacting the rate of climate change. We are concerned about both surface and ground water in the Upper Mississippi Basin, both for the environment and human health.
Mining in Minnesota - Impacts on the Mississippi
4/30/2023

Arne Carlson was governor of Minnesota from 1991 to 1999. He continues to speak out on issues, especially those affecting Minnesota’s environment. In a recent interview with Minneapolis Star Tribune columnist Dennis Anderson, Carlson talked about his concern regarding the proposed PolyMet and Tamarac mines. In this interview, Carlson restates his long-held concerns about the ownership of these proposed mines and their past performance in other settings. The PolyMet copper mine would be located in the Boundary Waters watershed. The Tamarac mine in the headwaters of the Mississippi, and would be a source of nickel, cobalt and copper. This report on the Minnesota Legislature’s website provides deeper information on these two projects.

Another mining project proposed in Minnesota is a manganese mine near Emily, Minnesota, in the heart of our
Membership Page

Who can be a member of the LWV Upper Mississippi River Region ILO? We are an organization built of member Leagues, not individuals. To support our work as an individual, please visit our Donate Today page, or click the button below.

Donate Today!

Payment Information for LWV Member Leagues:
Annual Meeting Page

LWV UMRR ANNUAL MEETING
MAY 22, 2023

United, We Stand Stronger!
LWV UMRR Annual Meeting
May 22, 2023 via Zoom

Business Meeting  May 22 at 5:30 pm

Click this button to join the meeting on May 22 at 5:30!
Bi-monthly Educational Meetings

Groundwater: Critical and Vulnerable
LWV UMRR Webinar - April 3 Video here
2/24/2023

Groundwater and surface water in the Driftless Area are inextricably linked, and what happens on the land affects both. LWV UMRR presented a webinar on April 3 via Zoom. Click here to see the video of this webinar. If you’d like to follow up with the speakers: Jeff Broberg (brobergmnw@gmail.com), Paul Wotzka (paul.wotzka@mnwoo.org), and Larry Stone (lstone@alpinecom.net) will all be happy to email with you. And you can always reach LWV Upper Mississippi River Region at lwvumrr@lwvmn.org.

Our speakers are ardent and knowledgeable people who know hydrology and are passionate about the rugged terrain and wild waters of the Driftless area. The video starts with the basics - how groundwater works, interconnections to surface water, land use impacts and drinking water impairment. Jeff Broberg led us through this with humor and grace. Jeff's home in rural Winona doesn't have a safe water supply, so he has a personal stake in the water quality of the area.

Next up, our panel addressed two examples of waterbody damage in Minnesota and one in Iowa. The video...
Monthly Newsletter

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION

This is the May 2023 Newsletter for the League of Women Voters Upper Mississippi River Region. Visit our website to learn more about our work.

Visit our website to learn more about our work.
Annual Meeting  LWV Upper Mississippi River Region
May 22, 2023 – 6pm business meeting; 7pm program

United, We Stand Stronger!
Guest speakers:
• Jessica Rolhoff, LWV Midwest Regional Organizer
• Joy Guscott-Mueller, LWV US Climate Interest Group

This year’s LWV UMRR Annual Meeting will be on a Monday evening. Email notices for the Annual Meeting were sent to member Leagues on March 20 and April 24. Agenda and meeting materials are posted on the LWV UMRR webpage. Member Leagues can each send one delegate to the business meeting; the program is open to all League members. We ask that delegates pre-register at this link.

The business part of the meeting will go from 6pm to 7. Our program, United, We Stand Stronger, will begin at 7 with Jessica Rolhoff (on left, above) from LWV US will talk about the upcoming Transformation, followed by E Joy Guscott-Mueller (right) from LWV US Climate Interest Group. Even if you’re not a delegate, join us at 7pm for this discussion and see how League works.

SNIPPETS:

Minnesota legislation on PFAS is proceeding - read about it in this post from Matt Doll of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership. We should note here that the invention of PFAS chemicals happened here in Minnesota. It perhaps makes it fitting that Minnesota is now poised to lead the way to try to fix this mess.

Food waste is a significant part of the solid waste stream in the US, and one that is readily addressed than other, thornier problems. LWV US’s Climate Interest Group has developed a tool kit that local Leagues can use to develop their own action plans for reducing food waste. Find the tool kit on the LWV UMRR blog at this link.

Mining projects are proposed in Minnesota that have the potential to impact both the Mississippi River and Lake Superior. In this post on the LWV UMRR blog, we provide an introduction to the issues with links for more information.

PARTNER PRESENTATION:

Thinking Like a Watershed:
2023 Series on Soil and Water Conservation
Tuesday – May 9th @ 7 pm CT

The Mississippi today, and do we send it away?
How a 5-state alliance is preparing for water diversion challenges and the surprising news in 25-year trends

Erin Spry, hydrologist—
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Facebook - @LWVUMRRIL0

League of Women Voters of Roselle / Bloomingdale
April 10 at 10:20 AM

FLOODING PREVENTION THROUGH STORM WATER MANAGEMENT
Virtual Presentation
Tuesday, April 25
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District
May 3 at 10:02 AM

These samples are the same soil type and have been in a corn-bean rotation for the past 20+ years. However, their treatment has been substantially different. See more...

League of Women Voters of Roselle / Bloomingdale
April 17 at 8:06 PM

Flooding on the Mississippi... Three major rivers have joined the Mississippi by the time it gets to Anoka. The Sauk, the Cloe and the Rain. This multiplies the flooding.

League of Women Voters of Roselle / Bloomingdale
April 20 at 11:02 PM

We got some pretty striking images of the flooding at Mississippi Point Park in the City of Champlin and the high water at Rum River Dam in the City of Anoka. See more...
Google – lwvumrr@lwvmn.org
Google tools – like Forms
Responses are tabulated...

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<td>Marlene Halder</td>
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<td>Peggy Aman</td>
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<td>Mary Miller</td>
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<td>Mary Miller</td>
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<td>Sue Johansen</td>
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<td>LWV Muscatine County, Iowa</td>
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<td>Muscatine County, Iowa</td>
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<td>Sherry Hood</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sherrychood@cloud.com">sherrychood@cloud.com</a></td>
<td>LWV Roseville Area, Minnesota</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:evstrage12@gmail.com">evstrage12@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Elaine Savage</td>
<td><a href="mailto:evstrage12@gmail.com">evstrage12@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>LWV of Palos Orchard, IL</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:cathfranzyk1@gmail.com">cathfranzyk1@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Catherine Franzky</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cathfranzyk1@gmail.com">cathfranzyk1@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Wheaton, IL, IL</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:cathfranzyk1@gmail.com">cathfranzyk1@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:kinights2@gmail.com">kinights2@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Susan Knight</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kinights2@gmail.com">kinights2@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Northwoods</td>
<td>Susan Knight</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kinights2@gmail.com">kinights2@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Shari Kochman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:skochman81@gmail.com">skochman81@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Jo Daviess County, IL</td>
<td>Bonnie Cox</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bonniekaycox@gmail.com">bonniekaycox@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>JOAN KLRICH</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jklirich18@gmail.com">jklirich18@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>LWV Palos Orchard, IL</td>
<td>JOAN KLRICH</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jklirich18@gmail.com">jklirich18@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Claudia Hackney</td>
<td><a href="mailto:claudia.hackney@bigcap.bigoLeague.org">claudia.hackney@bigcap.bigoLeague.org</a></td>
<td>League of Women Voters of Naperville, Illinois</td>
<td>Claudia Hackney</td>
<td><a href="mailto:claudia.hackney@bigcap.bigoLeague.org">claudia.hackney@bigcap.bigoLeague.org</a></td>
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<td>Tamara Prins</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tamaranprewns@gmail.com">tamaranprewns@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>League of Women Voters of Dubuque, Iowa</td>
<td>Tamara Prins</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tamaranprewns@gmail.com">tamaranprewns@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:seclair612@comcast.net">seclair612@comcast.net</a></td>
<td>Susan Clark</td>
<td><a href="mailto:seclair612@comcast.net">seclair612@comcast.net</a></td>
<td>LWV Edina, MN</td>
<td>Susan Clark</td>
<td><a href="mailto:seclair612@comcast.net">seclair612@comcast.net</a></td>
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<td>Carol Barclay</td>
<td><a href="mailto:barclay6@comcast.net">barclay6@comcast.net</a></td>
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<td>Carol Barclay</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:brlrights@gmail.com">brlrights@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Beverly Graham</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brlrights@gmail.com">brlrights@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:mmmanonlon@gmail.com">mmmanonlon@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Mary Ann Nelson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mmmanonlon@gmail.com">mmmanonlon@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>LWV ULC Joliet, IL</td>
<td>Mary Ann Nelson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mmmanonlon@gmail.com">mmmanonlon@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Mary Ann Nelson</td>
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<td>Laura Davis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Lauramudrovski@gmail.com">Lauramudrovski@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>LWV Palestine Area and LWV Issues Specialist</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Lauramudrovski@gmail.com">Lauramudrovski@gmail.com</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Lauramudrovski@gmail.com">Lauramudrovski@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Lynn Theuer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dtheuer@charter.net">dtheuer@charter.net</a></td>
<td>LWV Winona, MN</td>
<td>Lynn M Theuer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dtheuer@charter.net">dtheuer@charter.net</a></td>
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<td>Abigail Nichols</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abigail_nichols@hotmail.com">abigail_nichols@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Abigail Nichols</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abigail_nichols@hotmail.com">abigail_nichols@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Grow What You Eat</td>
<td>Mickey Croye</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:tamaranprewns@gmail.com">tamaranprewns@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>League of Women Voters of Dubuque, Iowa</td>
<td>Tamara Prins</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:susanjohnson72@gmail.com">susanjohnson72@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Susan Johnson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:susanjohnson72@gmail.com">susanjohnson72@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>League of Women Voters-Janesville, Wisconsin</td>
<td>Susan Johnson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:susanjohnson72@gmail.com">susanjohnson72@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>608-758-9973</td>
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Action Committee

• Members monitor legislative activity in states
• Text to ‘activate’ committee
• Email communications to approve or deny
• Mostly sign-on letters, occasional action alerts through email to members in targeted areas