



December 15, 2023

Hello State League Presidents and Leaders,

I am delighted to tell you that the League of Women Voters of Washington (LWVWA) will be submitting its recently adopted positions on Local News and Democracy as a concurrence item for consideration at National Convention in June. We would very much appreciate your support for this item.

Our study, [The Decline of Local News and Its Impact on Democracy](#), describes an alarming loss of access to local news in Washington state. See page 6 for an executive summary. This loss impacts our democracy, including: (1) fewer candidates running for office; (2) lower voter turnout; (3) increased political divisiveness; (4) decreased civic engagement; (5) increased cost for government; and (6) public health challenges. Here is a [seven-minute video](#) that describes the problem.

We believe the decline of local news is a national issue and expect that you have seen it in your state as well. When there is no local news to keep people up to date about what's happening with their local governments, democracy is at risk. Our study lays this out and provides supporting data. Our positions are based on the result of member discussion and consensus. We ask you to submit our positions for concurrence in your LWVUS program planning. See attached.

We believe these positions are a tool Leagues of Women Voters across the country can use in their communities to empower voters and defend democracy. It will also make it possible for the League to lobby on federal legislation. Possibilities include rebuilding local news, broadening access and growing media literacy, with a special emphasis on young people.

Here is more information about how LWVWA is using these positions. Scroll down to see [Local News - Legislation we're following](#).

You have now received the [2024 Program Planning Survey \(lwv.org\)](#) for program planning. If you agree that local news positions will offer a critical tool for defending democracy, please submit the LWVWA Local News position as a concurrence item from your League; please share this information with your local Leagues so they can submit it too. LWV of Colorado has already adopted these positions by concurrence and other Leagues have also shown interest. Adopting them at National Convention will make the positions immediately available to all Leagues.

If you have any questions about LWVWA's Local News study, our positions or our process for arriving at them, please contact us. Can you let us know what your League decides to do, and ask

your local Leagues to do likewise. LWVWA would very much like to coordinate with those who support this idea, and hear concerns from those who have questions about it.

All are invited to a caucus at the National Convention, time and place to be determined. The deadline for submission of the survey to LWVUS is **March 10, 2024**. Thank you for your consideration.

In League and with kind regards,



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cc
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Links:
[The Decline of Local News and Its Impact on Democracy seven-minute video](#)
[Local News - Legislation we're following](#)
[2024 Program Planning Survey \(lwv.org\)](#)

Attachment:
LWVUS Survey Instructions