

RSVP TODAY

To Join us for the (in-person)

December Giving Meeting

Presentation by local members of:

Veterans for Peace

Allen Hallmark & Rhonda Loftis

Note: for members who are comfortable doing so, please bring **pictures** for display of

YOUR own service, the service of spouses, children, or partners.

Thursday, **December 8th 2022**

11:00 -1:00

Location: Elmer's Restaurant

(2000 Biddle Rd, Medford, OR 97504)

(541) 772-2000

Pass-the-Hat donations will be taken for this tax-deductible charity. *

Meals will be available from the menu.

RSVP by providing your **NAME and number of attendees** by **December 6**

to Judith Kurinsky at kurinsky26@gmail.com or 541.499.7742

or by **texting** your NAME and attendees to Sharon Perper at 541.601.5277

PLEASE join us. Masks are welcomed if preferred.

*Veterans for Peace is a nonprofit educational & humanitarian organization that works to increase public awareness of the costs of war.



Additional Giving – Keeping with a Local League Tradition

We will be taking donations of SOCKS
(kids, women, men)
of all kinds

to be donated later in the League name.

They will be collected at the **December Giving meeting**.



*Help only in making donations with which
you are comfortable.*



Letter from Acting Chair - Wishes & Concerns

This is a holiday month for many. I wish you all a lovely season. Hopefully, everyone will join us for the Giving meeting on Dec 8th to share friendship with others during this time of the year. That'll be a nice time to revel in our past work and current members. Still, it feels like you can't take your eyes off the ball much anymore when it comes to watching policy.

This year I saw two polls that shocked me. They may have caught your attention as well. The first was a Gallup poll in July that listed the "confidence in congress" at 7%. (I'm not missing a zero there; that is a single digit 7%.) The second in November was one from the *NYTimes* and Siena College (located near my old stomping ground) that said 71% of voters see American Democracy at Risk. Also in November, the *Wall Street Journal* polled 1500 registered voters of whom 71% believe "America is going in the wrong direction."

Sadly, this isn't a feel-good article in which I turn the tables on those percentages. Instead, it is a reminder of one of the most important US Supreme Court (SCOTUS) cases in our life time – and that's saying something. I trust you have been paying attention.

The case is *Moore v. Harper* (sometimes referred to as the "Independent State Legislature Theory" case). It has far-reaching implications to say the least.

What is *Moore v. Harper* and how did it start?

It started with redistricting or 'gerrymandering' depending on your view. In 2019, residents of North Carolina (NC) challenged the 2016 congressional redistricting map drawn by the state as one that was an "unconstitutional partisan gerrymander." The Wake County, NC Superior Court agreed with them and ordered a new map. The challenges and maps were in and out of the NC courts. In late 2021, the plaintiffs challenged the newer map with the same grievances.

By February 2022, it looked like fairer maps were possible when the NC Supreme Court issued a [historic ruling](#) that partisan gerrymandering violates the NC Constitution and ordered new maps to be drawn. NC Lawmakers rebelled and appealed the ruling to SCOTUS.

They appealed the ruling based on the dangerous theory of the "independent state legislature theory," or ISLT.

How to Explain ISLT to others?

With a narrow reading of the United States Constitution, ISLT argues that state legislatures have unconditional power to legislate on election issues and cannot be reviewed as any part of checks and balances. What is this idea based upon? Article 1, Section 4 that "the times, places and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each state by the legislature thereof."

Thus, their argument is that ONLY the state Legislature has the power to regulate federal elections, unfettered, and without interference from state courts (or executive branches).

SCOTUS has agreed to consider whether this is true. Can a state's judicial branch rule on laws and regulations passed by a state governing body? Can laws or regulations regarding the manner of holding elections for senators and representatives be replaced with the court's own devised regulations? Is the court restricted from doing so even if the governing body is acting in a self-serving or partisan manner?

Where does the League Stand?

On October 26, 2022 the LWVUS and League chapters from ALL 50 states (and DC) filed an amicus brief in this case – *Moore v. Harper*. The fear for our system, and for its voters, was explained by our national CEO.

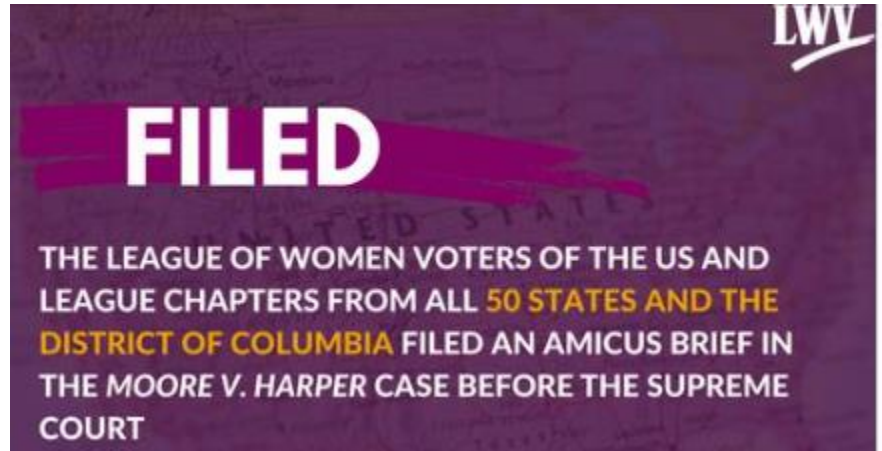
"Giving states unchecked power to set rules for federal elections is an assault
on the American voter.

Historically, state legislatures have enacted the most harmful and suppressive anti-voter laws, and pro-voter groups like the League have relied on the ability to fight them in state courts.

The Independent State Legislature Theory is a dangerous, fringe ideology that leaves voters effectively

defenseless from harmful election laws."
Virginia Kase Solomón, CEO of the League of Women Voters of the US.

The League's concerns over this case are deep and wide reaching. We fear that this seemingly "fringe" idea, if adopted, would allow state legislatures an almost "unrestricted authority" to set rules for federal elections, and may do so by prioritizing ambitions of politicians over we American voters. Further, it can undermine the role of state courts to protect those voters, by any number of nefarious means – by constructing unfair barriers to voting, invalidating "direct democracy" efforts like ballot initiatives that we prize in Oregon, or by drawing unlawful voting maps.



In our recent national newsletter, Celina Stewart (chief counsel and senior director of advocacy and litigation for LWVUS) was quoted, explaining why we beseech the court to protect voters and reject ISLT.

"In creating the US Constitution, the framers were intentional about establishing a checks and balances system to disrupt any one branch of government from becoming too powerful. Because state courts have been vested in the salient role of deciding disputes that govern our daily lives, any unraveling of this longstanding balancing would be a dangerous and historic blow to democracy as we know it.

We implore the Court to rule in favor of voters and reject the Independent State Legislature Theory."

All State Leagues Stand Together

We realize that the League "speaks with one voice." That importance is all too clear in this case, since each state can be affected by ISLF. The League supports fair elections and the structure of checks and balances – *sharing* power among the three branches of government – as a central tenet to our democracy. And accessible and fairly run elections are the cornerstone of our republic.

Fair Elections are administered by election officers, who tend to already be overburdened. ISLF could throw these systems into chaos, demanding a separation of state and federal elections, burdening tax-payer costs and efforts further, and needlessly confusing voters. The complexing could even endanger the rights of every voter.

The League voices from each state (and DC) weighed in on this case. I am sharing a few selected ones, including from my "homelands."

From Oregon:

"LWV Oregon stands with all 50 state Leagues of Women Voters to protect our elections from state government partisan gerrymandering."

Rebecca Gladstone, president LWV of Oregon

From Arizona. Sharing this one as my last residence before Oregon and because they mention a project with which I was involved. They state:

"Partisan gerrymandering has been used by both political parties to increase their power, stifle the voices of their opposition, and pass partisan legislation. The people of Arizona perceived this as an abuse of power and responded in 2000 by modifying our state Constitution to transfer responsibility for redrawing voting districts from state legislators to an independent redistricting commission. We now see that voter-supported commission threatened by *Moore v. Harper*. Separation of powers exists for a reason — to prevent abuses by one branch of government and avoid autocracy. This principle applies at all levels of government and should be protected. The implications of ISLT for Arizona and other states would be staggering."

Pinny Sheoran, president, LWV of Arizona

From New York. The state where I grew up explains:

"A decision allowing state legislatures to overrule state courts and state Constitutions would cause major disruption to our election system by potentially nullifying state constitutional provisions as applied to federal elections and damaging our democracy in the process. Election administration in the states could be thrown into chaos as state officials could have to run two elections simultaneously since only state elections would be subject to the state Constitution. The result would inevitably be detrimental to state election administration and state and federal court systems as they try to resolve disputes over election rules, and not least of all voters."

Judie Gorenstein, president, LWV of New York State

From Pennsylvania. Current home of our past LWVRV president, **Margie Peterson**, reports:

"The League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania has fought for years to ensure that redistricting is independent, impartial, and reflective of all voters. In *League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court struck down Pennsylvania's 2011 congressional map as an unconstitutional partisan gerrymander under the state Constitution. The ISLT doctrine would undo decades of progress, and remove the governmental checks and balances in our state. We will continue to fight for a redistricting process that protects our democratic process and institutions — a balanced and fair system that voters deserve."

Samantha Apgar, president, LWV of Pennsylvania

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Oral arguments for *Moore v. Harper* will be heard by SCOTUS on December 7, 2022. [Read the amicus brief here.](#) A decision will be expected in the summer of 2023.

Support the League and educate others about the threat of ISLT. Fight the “good fight.” It is the best gift you can give this season.

Barbara Klein,
LWVRV Acting Chair

2022 polls	Gallup Poll	Siena / NYTimes	Wall Street Journal
“Confidence in Congress”	7%	--	--
“American Democracy at Risk”	--	71%	--
“America is going in the wrong direction.”	--	--	71%

Help the League Turn the Tide

Welcome New Members

Deb Price

Anna Werblow



Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the access, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.

Health Care News

By Shirley Weathers

We now know that Oregon Ballot Measure 111, Right to Health Care Amendment, passed! It states, “It is the obligation of the state to ensure that every resident of Oregon has access to cost-effective, clinically appropriate and affordable health care as a fundamental right.” We think passage was due in part to focus LWVOR put on budgetary concerns in years prior to the passage of SJR12 (The HOPE Amendment, 2021) that it goes on to require that state funding for health care be balanced against funding for public schools and other essential public services.

Like many victories, this one was a long time in coming. Representative Mitch Greenlick (HD33) introduced resolutions to make access to affordable health care a constitutional right eight times during his tenure (2005-2020). He didn’t live to see his goal accomplished, but the year after his death, Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward (SD17) and Representative Rob Nosse (HD42) got it done. Despite national’s long-standing position in support of universal health care, LWVOR had consistently declined to support Greenlick’s efforts out of budgetary concerns. But the funding caveat added by Hayward’s resolution resulted in a positive assessment of SJR12’s alignment with the League’s position by LWVUS and [LWVOR](#) support for SJR12. SJR12 also had the support of a goodly number of LWVOR members. Passage was Bill Walsh’s major goal in the last Oregon Legislative Session he worked. He would be cheering the will of the voters on November 8 and so pleased that LWVOR joined [61 other organizations](#) in supporting Measure 111.

The story is not over yet. The now-passed constitutional amendment will require the state to balance affordable care with other “essential public services,” including public schools. It will require lawmakers and policy makers to craft policies that would put some sort of universal health care coverage in place. And that is on the path to happen. The Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care, established by [Senate Bill 770](#) (2019) and championed by Senator Manning (SD7), has been working ever since to fulfill its charge to “[design] a single-payer health care financing system that is equitable, affordable, and available to all residents; a system that recognizes health care as a fundamental element of a just society” and produce a report by September 30, 2022. The Task Force has completed its work and submitted that [report](#). After declaring that “Our current health care system is financially unsustainable, harmfully complex, and socially unjust,” the Task Force stated:

To address that, the Task Force’s plan provides a universal set of health care benefits to all Oregonians that includes behavioral, vision, hearing, and dental care. It eliminates the need for premiums and out-of-pocket costs such as deductibles and co-pays and allows providers to bill only one entity thereby dramatically reducing administrative costs. Under the Task Force’s plan, Oregonians can seek services from any provider in the state. And by establishing a single-payment system, it promotes equitable access to care by putting an end to a structurally inequitable payment system in which provider payments were based on the source of payment. Finally, an independent actuarial firm estimated that the total cost of the plan will be less than our current structure.

Now it’s up to the Oregon Legislature.



In Memorial

Eileen Adee, 1932-11/20/2022

Recently, a long-term member of our local League passed away in Eugene where she had relocated to be with her family. Eileen Adee was a local teacher in Medford from 1974-2002.

I had the privilege of being mentored by Eileen when I joined our League in 1993. Eileen told me she joined our League as a young mother because the group met in a place that had childcare and she could have some adult conversations about local, state & national politics. She was a great mentor because she was active in both Voter Service and Action.

Eileen was our local League president from 2001-2005. Her family wrote that she wore a big LWV button on her jacket at Hospice House in Eugene. She valued her family, music, social justice, and nature. Eileen always lived her values. I will remember her sense of humor, dedication to the League, and her love of hiking, biking, and our environment.

Submitted by Normary Barrett



LWVRV Calendar

December

- Thursday 8 Annual Giving Meeting, 11-1, Elmer's Restaurant (Medford)
- Thursday 15 Board meeting, 10:00
- Tuesday 27 Newsletter submissions due

January

- Thursday 19 Board meeting, 10:00
- Friday 27 Newsletter submissions due

- The League of Women Voters Rogue Valley welcomes submissions to the newsletter, *The Voters' Voice*. Editor Jim Buck can be reached at newsletter@lwwroguvalley.org and 541-830-0602.
- LWVRV
P.O. Box 8555
Medford, OR 97501
- Contact the webmaster:
webadmin@lwwroguvalley.org
- Website: <https://lwwroguvalley.org/wp>
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/lwvrv/>
- Email: pres@lwwroguvalley.org
- If you must have a mailed paper copy of this newsletter, please call Jim at 541-830-0602 or email newsletter@lwwroguvalley.org
- You should also be receiving newsletters by email from State and National.
- **For a membership application**, go [here](#)