



# The VOTER

Bulletin of the League of Women Voters of Lawrence-Douglas County, KS  
PO Box 1072 • Lawrence KS 66044-1072

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influencing public policy through education and advocacy.

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Voter Editor:	Ruth Lichtwardt	lightwatcher @ gmail.com	
Local League	www.lawrenceleague.com	www.facebook.com/lwvldc	www.twitter.com/lwvldc
State League:	www.lwvk.org	lwv.kansas @ gmail.com	785-234-5152
National League	www.lwv.org		202-429-1965

## League Calendar

Tuesday, January 5th	7:00 pm	LWV-Kansas Position Revision Update Q&A. <i>via Zoom.</i> Zoom links & passcode on page 2.
Wednesday, January 7th	5:30 pm	Voter Services Debrief & Planning Meeting. <i>via Zoom.</i> Zoom links & passcode on page 2.
Tuesday, January 12th	2:00 pm	LWV-L/DC Board Meeting. <i>via Zoom.</i> All interested League members are invited to attend. Zoom links & passcode on page 2.
Tuesday, January 19th	11:00 am	LWV-US Webinar on Renewable Energy. <i>via Zoom.</i> Presenter: Dr. Martin Keller, Director of the National Renewable Energy Group. Article and link to register on page 3.
Tuesday, January 21st	Noon - 1:00 pm	Hot Topic! Criminal Legal Reform, Public Defense, and the Death Penalty: It's All Basic Math. <i>via Zoom.</i> See article & link on page 3.
Tuesday, January 26th	5:30 pm	Criminal Justice Position Concurrence meeting. <i>via Zoom.</i> Presenter: Marlene Merrill. See article and link on page 4.
Sunday, January 31st	3:00 pm	Afternoon with the Legislators. <i>via Zoom.</i> Don't miss this annual opportunity to chat with our local state legislators about what's happening in the Kansas Legislature! Link will be sent by email to all League members.
Tuesday, February 9th	2:00 pm	LWV-L/DC Board Meeting. <i>via Zoom.</i> All interested League members are invited to attend. Zoom links & passcode will be sent to all members by email.

## President's Message

A brand new year! Here's to making the very best of it! Hopefully we have all had a chance to recharge and energize through the holidays. We are in a dark time for our country with Covid-19, but look forward to brighter times ahead, together as a community. As we were working on the League Calendar for this month, I was struck by how full it is! We are an active group, dedicated to civic engagement and education. I love that! I am so very grateful for you all, our dedicated volunteers. Your work helped make the 2020 election the largest and most



successful ever in Douglas County! Our citizens are better informed, equipped to make decisions, and participate in the community as a result of your efforts.

The growth of our community partnerships in 2020 is exciting and essential to reaching our goals. Let's strengthen those ties and build more in 2021.

Your involvement in the League is important. Currently, we need a webmaster and members to assist in a review of our bylaws as well as help with the Fluker Award. Contact me if you would like information on any of these.

Thank you for all you do! Moving forward in #MakingDemocracyWork!  
Wishing you good health and a happier 2021!

- Kristin

[kristinbrightstar@gmail.com](mailto:kristinbrightstar@gmail.com) 334-538-4410



**WELCOME,  
NEW MEMBERS!**

Since our last Voter we have five new members:  
**Carol Bloom, Sophie Cunningham, Marie Kail, Sandra Kramer, and Sarah Melody.**

A warm welcome to all of you and we hope to see you, at least via Zoom, at some of our activities this month. Don't miss our Afternoon with the Legislators on Sunday, January 31!  
- Marjorie Cole

**ZOOM LINKS FOR  
CALENDAR ITEMS**

#### **LWV-Kansas Position Revision Update Q & A:**

To join Zoom meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/91679812094?pwd=NmFRMk-E2UXFxdUMlcktschHNsanZLdz09>

Meeting ID: 916 7981 2094

Passcode: LWVK

One tap mobile +13462487799,,91679812094# US (Houston)

Dial by your location +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

#### **Voter Services Debrief & Planning Meeting**

To join Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81725016618?pwd=ek9BRGQ0UjZtOTFWNWlINWQ4NjYz-z09>

Meeting ID: 817 2501 6618

Passcode: 513435

#### **LWV-LDC Board Meeting**

To join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86368994704?pwd=YVcz-MEpYR2lWk04lTXc5bCtzbWNzQT09>

Meeting ID: 863 6899 4704

Passcode: 472392

### **TREASURER'S NOTICE**

Currently under consideration by the Board of Directors is an increase in dues at all levels beginning with this next fiscal year, April 1, 2021. This increase is spurred in part by the LWVK - our state League- increasing their Per-Member-Payment by \$2 for each member starting in their next fiscal year. The Board will discuss and develop a proposal for the amount of increase to be presented to the membership a month before the vote at our Annual Meeting in April. We have not had a membership increase since before 2013, and in fact I believe we are the only Kansas League that has a sliding scale of dues depending upon a member's income.

Please give us your thoughts for consideration on dues increase or before March 1, 2021 by replying to our treasurer:

Melissa A. Wick  
[LawrenceLeagueTreas@gmail.com](mailto:LawrenceLeagueTreas@gmail.com)  
Or by phone 785-550-6160 or talk



## INVITATION FROM LWV-US

The League of Women Voters U.S. Climate Team, Renewable Energy Group, invites you to attend a presentation by [Dr. Martin Keller](#), director of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and president of the Alliance for Sustainable Energy. Dr. Keller will speak on the state of renewable energy research and capacity in the United States, followed by a Q&A session.

**Date:** January 19, 2021  
**Time:** 9:00 am PST, 11:00 am CST, 12:00 noon EST  
[REGISTER](#)

Also, visit the [LWV US Climate Team website](#) to learn more about the League of Women Voter's national effort on climate.

## HOT TOPICS! Criminal Legal Reform, Public Defense, & the Death Penalty: It's All Basic Math

Tuesday, January 21st, Noon - 1:00 pm

Just as  $1 + 1 = 2$ , there are mathematical realities to what our criminal legal system can deal with. Please

join us as Meryl Carver-Allmond, public defender and Kansas Coalition Against the Death Penalty board member, takes us through the resources our criminal legal system takes to function and what that means for policy on public defense and the death penalty in Kansas.

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84630531602?pwd=YVWdpMnlWdHYzMFVIM3VNdWpDMzIX-QT09>

Meeting ID: 846 3053 1602  
Passcode: 900154



## UPCOMING LAWRENCE MEETING FOR CONCURRENCE

At the May 2020 LWVK Council virtual meeting, the membership voted to update the long-outdated 1972 position on Criminal Justice. The position will be studied, new wording proposed, and voted on during the April 24, 2021 virtual LWVK Convention. The 2021 Convention will also be virtual.

The Position Update Committee has met regularly for several months gathering information on other state Leagues' positions on criminal justice and has chosen those positions most applicable to Kansas. The committee's proposed position update is will be considered for concurrence by LWV-L/DC on Zoom, Tuesday, January 26 at 7 PM. The link will be sent by email to all LWV-L/DC League members.

At this meeting we will examine the proposed position. We will look at each section and consider the ideas presented with an eye toward what we are glad is included and what we think it is missing. Since it is a concurrence document, we cannot add new information, but we could suggest it for a future study. Concurrence means the local league votes to agree with the entire position or not. In Concurrence the study committee have developed the revised public policy positions by concurring with one already studied and established by another state league or leagues.

Since the Criminal Justice position has several sections, we might discuss each section separately. The discussion might include sharing ideas and broaden viewpoints, to identify its problems and solutions, or to clarify ideas. We need to discuss/decide if the position is specific enough to provide sufficient detail to allow action. An example would be to use the position to encourage legislative action and for member involvement.

Upon receiving the feedback input from Lawrence, the statewide committee so that final edits may be made, and a final report presented to the State Board.

- Marlene Merrill



# CONCURRENCE CRIMINAL JUSTICE POSITION

Edit date: November 30, 2020

## BACKGROUND:

At **LWVK** State Council in April 1972, the statement of position from the Adult Corrections study was ap-

proved. An update of that position was requested by the State Board in June 1973 enabling the League to respond to state priorities. The updated position was completed in December 1976. *Legislation supported by the LWVUS position, "Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2017, (which did not pass), would have reduced federal sentences for non-violent drug offenders. This legislation aimed to give judges discretion to reduce juvenile life-without-parole sentences after 20 years, allow compassionate release of more people over the age of 60, and essentially ban juvenile solitary confinement in the federal system. Proposed change: The LWVUS position "Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2017, has been used to advocate for legislation in Kansas. At Council 2020 a committee began the work of updating the LWVK position. The committee utilized a list of issues, examined position of other states as well as National to write the currently proposed position for Convention 2021.*

## STATEMENT OF POSITION IN BRIEF

The LWVK supports all governmental units of the State of Kansas in their responsibility to provide a humane program of rehabilitation for adult offenders that would integrate them back into society as productive and successful citizens and thus protect the total community. *The community is engaged in the progress of re-entry. (see bullet 2 below)* The program would include adequate funding for diagnosis and treatment; work opportunities that are meaningful and reimbursed; vocational training; and a full range of educational opportunities. The LWVK opposes capital punishment.

LWVK supports a "Bill of Rights" for offenders. These rights include:

- Human dignity
- Personal security
- Decent living conditions including nutritious meals
- Legal Counsel
- Work
- Exercise
- Adequate medical care

LWVK supports the development of alternatives to incarceration. These include:

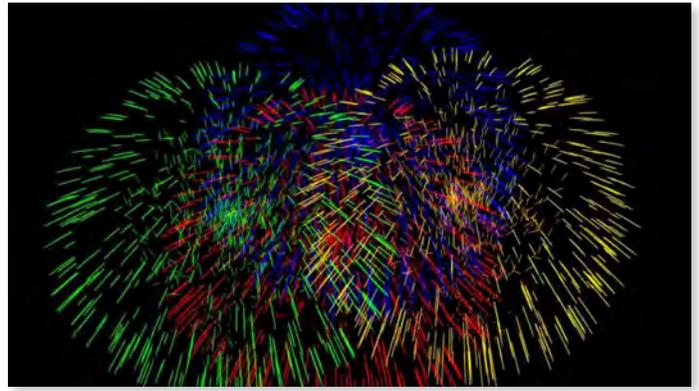
- Community based corrections and rehabilitation programs within existing institutions before new prison construction is approved. LWVK opposes private prisons.

- A criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and that fosters public trust and community engagement at all stages, including policing practices, pre-trial procedures, sentencing, incarceration, and re-entry.
- The elimination of systemic bias, including the disproportionate arrest and incarceration of marginalized communities.
- Practices that promote safety for both public safety officers and the communities they serve.
- Collaboration is the goal among judicial systems, citizens, and law enforcement agencies throughout every stage of the criminal justice system.
- Collaboration is encouraged with community based social and mental health agencies.
- Reliance on evidence-based research in decision-making about public safety programs and policies (including scheduled, periodic audits of program and policy effectiveness) is the standard.
- *Encourage elimination of the stigma of arrest / incarceration.*
- Emphasis on restorative justice is the goal.

## PUBLIC SAFETY PRACTICES

LWVK supports improvements in the present system such as:

- Ensure that crime prevention and promotion of public safety are the primary roles of state and local law enforcement agencies.
- Training to identify mental health conditions, disabilities, or substance abuse/addiction in accused persons, and support treatment from appropriate medical and mental health professionals with the goal of diverting those indi-



viduals into treatment instead of jail. (see bullet 3 in resources)

- *Ensure active recruitment and employment of qualified women and minority personnel for prison staffs, probation, and parole staffs.*
- Ensure transparency and accountability of arresting practices using technology and cameras.
- Require all officers to render first aid to people who have been injured as a result of police action.
- Establish de-escalation protocols (the use of time, distance, communications and available resources whenever it is safe to do so) and anti-bias training and ensure that all staff are provided with this training.
- Authorize minimal use of force during police encounters with the public and consider deadly force only when necessary to prevent imminent death or serious bodily injury.
- *Mandatory pre-sentence investigations conducted by probation and parole staff, or by contracts with local agencies for all felon and misdemeanants,*
- No state prison incarcerations for misdemeanants.
- Ensure alternative non-discriminatory programs and family-friendly facilities for women.
- Provide accountability via independent citizen oversight of practices and publicly available data on officer conduct.
- Disseminate information to the public which would encourage community confidence about policies, recruitment, procedures for complaint/commendation, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens and officers in interactions with each other.
- Conduct comprehensive background checks to include such history as PTSD, domestic violence, sex offenses and affiliations with domes-



tic terrorist groups, for all applicants to law enforcement positions.

- Provide sufficient psychological services and counseling to meet stress-related needs of personnel.
- Establish recruitment efforts and staffing that reflects the diversity of the community served.
- Encourage use of volunteer assistance such as counseling, support, help with family contact, to probationers, inmates, parolees, and their families.

#### PROVISION OF ADEQUATE RESOURCES

- Provide funding for adequate numbers of public defenders to ethically represent indigent defendants.
- Provide prosecutors, defense attorneys, court counselors and judges with regular training on alternatives to incarceration including community-based treatment, pre-trial diversion programs and restorative justice practices.
- Recognize that mental health conditions and substance abuse/addictions are public health issues, not criminal in nature, and develop systems to respond accordingly, including drug courts, mental health evaluations and court-ordered treatment procedures and other methods of ensuring public safety without penal incarceration of such individuals.
- *Revise probation and parole guidelines to eliminate systemic bias based upon race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and economic status.*
- *Develop programs supporting successful re-entry into the community of individuals leaving correctional institutions.*

#### PRE-TRIAL PROCEDURE

- Ensure that no person suffers discrimination due to race, religion, ability, ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation, or economic status through development of risk assessment tools to prevent biased outcomes.
- Ensure no person suffers discrimination through development of risk assessment tools to prevent biased outcomes for any person awaiting trial.
- Follow a presumption of Own Recognizance bonds for nonviolent, non-person offenses.



- Provide safety for detained individuals through segregation of detainees based upon severity of charge and nature of offense charged.
- Implement work-release and home visitation procedures whenever appropriate to avoid loss of employment, housing, and family relationships.
- *Provide necessary medical, mental health and substance use treatment to detainees with known conditions requiring the same.*
- Develop additional alternatives to cash bail bonds to minimize disruption of employment, housing, and family relationships whenever possible.

#### SENTENCING

- LWVK believes that alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime.
- LWVK opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses. Consider the individual circumstances of the person charged and the nature of the crime, rather than mandatory minimum sentences.
- First time offenders could be placed on probation or in a drug treatment program.
- Rehabilitation - educational development opportunities, vocational training, job skills and living skills should be embedded in corrections programs so that offenders have the skills to be successful upon release from prison.
- Establishing a nation-wide database of sentencing practices will enable judges to evaluate their own consistency with 'minimal community standards and will assist in identifying outliers who are overly punitive.

#### DEATH PENALTY

The LWVK supports the abolition of the death penalty in Kansas.



## DEI COMMITTEE

Ten enthusiastic members attended the second meeting of the **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)** committee on December 16.

We discussed various surveys that might be used to understand where our membership is on the continuum of understanding DEI. Several surveys are available and we will develop one for our League, based on parts of some of the others.

Actions we might take included expanding our list of community partners, educational programs on housing disparity and housing discrimination in Lawrence, health disparities, examining DEI statements from the Governor of Kansas and our District 497, viewing a documentary film at a joint meeting with the NAACP, and including links in the Voter to useful information.

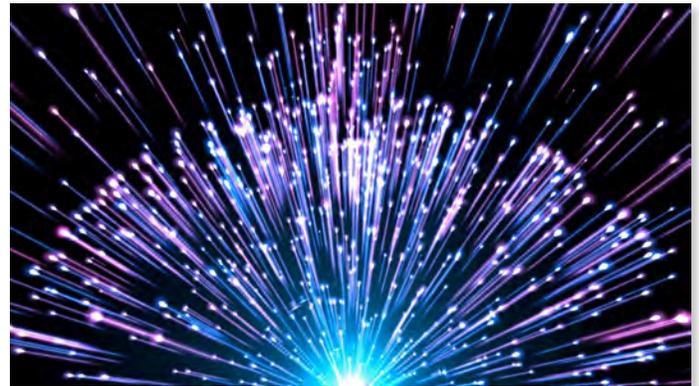
At the next meeting we will view and contribute to two Google docs, one on a survey for our membership and the other on our goals. We will also set a time for a standing DEI meeting on a regular basis.

Look for informative links on DEI in our Library of Links, page 8.

If you are interested in joining this important committee, please reach out to the committee chair, [Tracy-Matthews@kw.com](mailto:Tracy-Matthews@kw.com) or 785-727-8342.

## RECOMMENDED DEI BOOKS FOR SELF-EDUCATION

- How To Be an Anti-Racist by Ibram X. Kendi
  - Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson
  - We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy by Ta-Nehisi Coates
  - Slavery's Descendants: Shared Legacies of Race & Reconciliation, edited by Dionne Ford & Jill Strauss
- Jeanne Klein



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MINUTES LWV-LDC BOARD MEETING

October 13, 2020, via Zoom

**Present:** Kristin Salmans (President), Marjorie Cole (Vice President), Melissa Wick (Treasurer), Sharon Brown (Secretary), Cille King, Tracy Matthews, Emily Riner, Martha Silks, MTTP Coordinator Ma'Ko'Quah Jones

**Absent:** Tamara Cash, Charley Crabtree, Sonja Czarnecki, Denise Pettengill, Becky Plate

**Guests:** Catherine Magana, Connie Stoker, Kay Johnson, Meredith O'Neil

**TREASURER:** Melissa reported income of \$1,124.81 in September (dues \$435.61, contributions \$650.20, scholarship \$39) and expenses of \$1,437.94 (PO box rent \$106, MTTP \$1,000, #10 envelopes \$201.11, VOTER printing \$26.23, VS printing and supplies \$104.60).

BALANCE SHEET 10/01/2020

MMA	\$27,901.80
CHECKING (09/30/2020)	\$9,827.72
NAT'L EDUC FUND	\$3,218.30
L/DC SCHOLARSHIP FUND	\$4,638.33
CHECKING (10/01/2020)	\$9,617.12

Cille moved and Martha seconded that the treasurer's report be accepted and filed for audit. Motion carried.

Melissa moved that we open up our scholarship application process to all seniors who attend accredited high schools within Douglas County. Sharon seconded the motion and after discussion it was carried.

**KU CO-PRESIDENT:** Catherine reported that the KU student league is holding monthly meetings and now has 20-30 on an email list. They are encouraging the use of Sign-Up Genius in all communications and will add all new members to the email list.

**STATE CO-PRESIDENT:** Cille announced that the 2021 State Convention has been scheduled as a virtual meeting on Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup>. Plans include utilizing break-out rooms.

**STATE CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM POSITION COMMITTEE:** Kristin reported that the committee is



looking at what other states have done. Their task will be completed by early January so local leagues can schedule consensus meetings in late January or February.

- Sharon Brown, Secretary



## LIBRARY OF LINKS

### DEI Relevant:

For better understanding structural racism and housing discrimination, link to <https://www.racepowerofanillusion.org/videos/how-racial-wealth-gap-was-created>

Harvard Implicit Bias Test, link to <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

Housing discrimination in Kansas City video Land of Opportunity, link to [https://youtu.be/t7WMxPI\\_WPI](https://youtu.be/t7WMxPI_WPI)

Lawrence Health Equity report, 2018, link to <https://ldchealth.org/DocumentCenter/View/2408/Health-Equity-Report>

### From LWV-US:

[www.lwv.org/blog/20-ways-LWV-Empowered-Voters-and-Protected-Democracy-in-2020](http://www.lwv.org/blog/20-ways-LWV-Empowered-Voters-and-Protected-Democracy-in-2020)

### LWV-US on Climate Change:

Visit the [LWV US Climate Team website](http://www.lwv.org/climate) to learn more about the League of Women Voter's national effort on climate.

Coming to the Table, link <https://comingtothetable.org/>



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF LAWRENCE/DOUGLAS COUNTY

Make a Difference - Join/Support the League!

Return this form with a check made out to LWV/DC, and mail to the address below.
Membership is open to any person who is sixteen years of age or older.
New or renewed memberships received now will expire March 31, 2022

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Renewing Member \_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_

I heard about the League via (Facebook, website, friend, other): \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Dues:\*

Table with 3 columns: Approximate Household Income, Individual Membership, Household Membership. Rows include Student, Under \$25,000, \$25,000 to \$50,000, Over \$50,000, Sustaining member, Life member.

\* Our membership assessment supports the National & State Leagues at \$50/member (\$32 National and \$18 State).
\*\* High school or postsecondary student enrolled at least part time in an accredited institution.

I am not a member, but would like to support the League with my contribution as indicated below.

I have enclosed a contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the League General Fund.
I have enclosed a contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the League Education Fund.\*\*\*

\*\*\* this contribution is tax-deductible. Write check to "LWV Education Fund."

PLEASE PRINT

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_
Address \_\_\_\_\_ (ZIP) \_\_\_\_\_
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ (each member)

As a League member or supporter, I would like to help support League activities by participating in:

- General Membership Meetings:
Set up and/or tear down
Hospitality (provide coffee/tea/dessert)
Taking notes/writing report of meeting
Membership
Recruitment
Mentor/follow-up with new members
Provide a ride to a member
Phone members without internet access
Voter Services
Register voters
Help with voter education

- Contribute to the League by:
Researching for League studies on issues
Participating in fund-raising activities
Attending/reporting on government meetings
Representing the League at community events
Serving on the Board of Directors
I have the following skills:
Editing articles/reports
Database management
Microsoft Word / Excel / Quickbooks
Website/Social Media design/management
My interests include:

# JANUARY 2021

Calendar .....	1
President's Message .....	1
Welcome, New Members! .....	2
Zoom Links from Calendar .....	2
Treasurer's Notice .....	2
LWV-US Renewable Energy Presentation ..	3
Hot Topic! Criminal Legal Reform .....	3
Upcoming Meeting for Concurrence .....	3
Concurrence Criminal Justice Position .....	4
DEI Committee .....	7
Recommended DEI Books .....	7
Highlights of the Board Meeting .....	7
Library of Links .....	8
Membership Form .....	9

