
LWV Chautauqua County
PO Box 42
Fredonia, New York 14063

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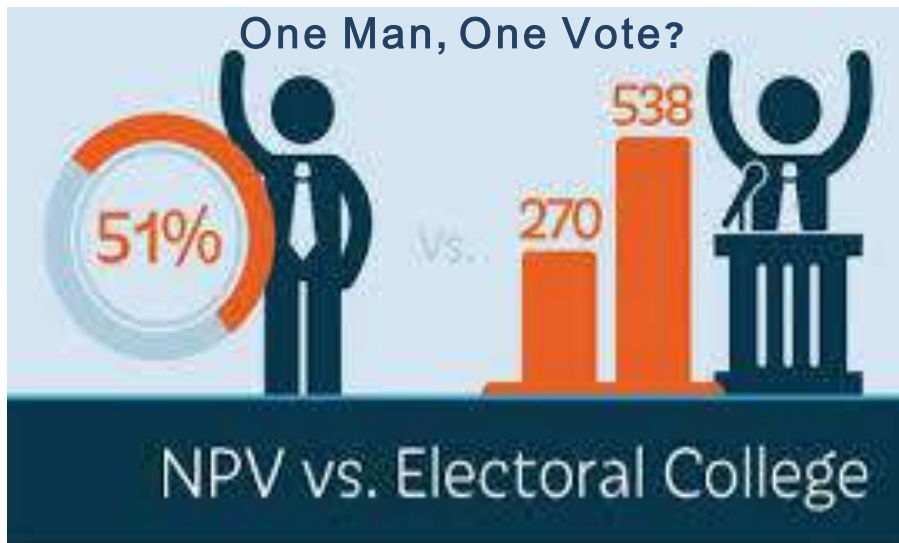


The Leaguer

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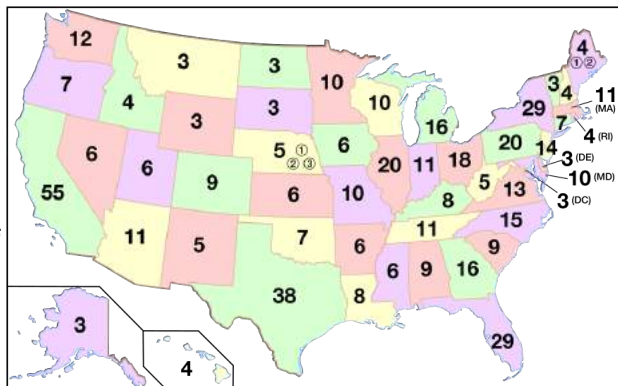
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

lwv@lwvchautauqua.org, 672-4275

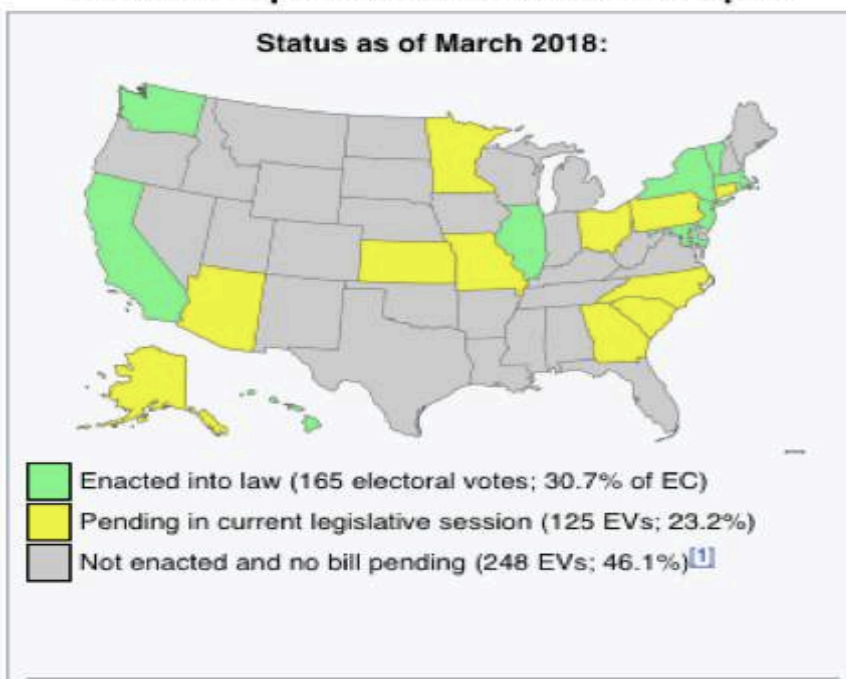


October 25
Noon
Fireside Manor

The **Electoral College** is a body of electors established by the United States Constitution, constituted every four years for the sole purpose of electing the president and vice president of the United States. The College consists of 538 electors, and an absolute majority of 270 electoral votes is required to win election. Pursuant to Article II, Section 1, Clause 2, the legislature of each state determines the manner by which its electors are chosen. Each state's number of electors is equal to the combined total of the state's membership in the Senate and House of Representatives; currently there are 100 senators and 435 representatives. Additionally, the Twenty-third Amendment provides that the District of Columbia is entitled to the number of electors no greater than that of the least populous state.



National Popular Vote Interstate Compact



RESERVATION FORM
“One Man, One Vote?: NPV vs. The Electoral College”
 Fireside Manor at Noon

\$15.00
 Coffee, Tea, Soda
 Dessert included

- Chicken Salad on Croissant
- Eggplant Parmesan on Hard Roll
- Shrimp Salad on Croissant

Name _____

Contact Info. _____

Send to: Marcia Johnson, marciajo1007@yahoo.com 116 Clinton Avenue, Fredonia, NY 14063. 716-673-5938

From the President,

I set aside today to write this missive and have been transfixed by the congressional hearing with Dr. Christine Blasey Ford. My response to this is similar to President Chris Carson's of the National League of Women Voters which was sent to our members September 15th.

Nate Drag made a wonderful presentation entitled: The Impact of Plastics on the Environment and Lake Erie. I am glad to see that PBS is doing a nightly segment on plastics and the environment. Recycling is important but we need to recognize that it is not the only solution. You can't recycle forever. Additionally, only 9% of plastics are recycled in this country. Nate Drag emphasized that not all plastics are equal. A straw can last forever in waterways. A bottle can last for 500 years. Our local League members need to voice their opinions to our elected officials. I am asking all of you to take this survey: <https://gg.gl/forms/YiRGJSMktJYcNUGW2>. We will bring the results to our local boards and legislatures.

You will be receiving a letter from our membership committee. I would ask that in addition to renewing your membership you think about asking a friend to join. You could also send us the names of three people that may want to join. We will contact them. Even if they can't be active, their membership is important. We gain credibility and clout proportionally in our lobbying efforts. Large membership organizations have an advocacy advantage. In addition, your membership dues help to provide funds that supply information to the public about voting, legislation, and more.

Our stalwart board member and leader of our League, Minda Rae Amiran, will be moving to be near family in the state of Washington. She has truly been an inspiration for all of us. She has worn two hats: voter service and advocacy. To fill her shoes, we will need people to volunteer as coordinator of debates and forums, a person in charge of "Getting out the Vote", and a chairperson for advocacy. Contact Minda Rae at 679-4636 or amiran@fredonia.edu for details.

Another long time board member and former president Perce Bernatz will be stepping down from the Treasurer position. Perce has been in the position for many years. Please contact me if you are interested and I will have Perce give you details about the position.

There will be training for all four positions.

Warmly,
Mary Croxton



LWV Chautauqua President Mary Croxton and Marcia Merrins talk about the League, voting and advocacy issues on Chautauqua Sunrise. You can see it on YouTube. Search for Chautauqua Sunrise, Sept. 22, 2018



Andrew Cuomo signed into law the National Popular Vote, making New York the 10th state — along with the District of Columbia — to support this effort, while also boosting the total numbers to 165 of the 270 electoral votes needed to make a true national popular vote a reality. Every member of Congress has one Electoral College vote, which, along with D.C.'s three votes, makes a total of 538. This bill could be the most important act of voting reform implemented in our lifetime.

The bill has now passed in 33 legislative chambers in 22 states and has been introduced in all 50 states. Ten states — Rhode Island, Utah, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, Washington, New Jersey, Illinois, New York and California — and the District of Columbia have embraced this interstate compact giving states the authority to reform our presidential voting system. The presidential election — where we choose the person who will hold the highest office in the land — is the only one not determined by the popular vote. In our early history, the Founding Fathers were right to create this system, as we only had those original thirteen states and the technological limitations and large distances made it necessary to streamline what could have been a cumbersome and lengthy process.

But now, with the technological advancements we have made, one has to wonder if the Electoral College has indeed outlived its time. The current system is a winner-take-all contest that awards all of the electoral votes in a state to the presidential candidate that receives the most popular votes in that state, so even if one candidate wins 51 percent and one wins 49 percent, all of that state's votes go to a candidate that really only won the votes of half of the state's voters. Also, with states like California and New York holding such huge numbers of votes, presidential campaigns have been reduced to intense fights over a few "swing" states that can flip the election either way, while much of the rest of the nation is left on the sidelines, wondering if their votes even matter.

Of course, there are pros and cons to this issue. States with smaller populations, like New Hampshire and South Carolina, have great clout as so-called "battleground" states during the primaries, and would want to maintain their national importance, along with the perks that come from Congress due to their exalted position. These states receive 7 percent more federal grants than so-called "spectator" states, twice as many presidential disaster declarations, more superfund enforcement exemptions and more No Child Left Behind law exemptions.

In 2012, four out of five states were virtually ignored by the candidates. Two-thirds of the general election campaign events (176 of 253) were held in just four states — Ohio, Florida, Virginia and Iowa. The visits, polling, advertising, mailed literature, phone calls, organizers that pour into the battleground states pumps millions of dollars in campaign funding into these states, expanding their economies — at least once every four years.

Another flaw in the current system is that it pits urban states against more rural states, and even divides sections within states that vote mostly for one party or another, further dividing our nation's citizens ethnically, socially and economically.

An election cannot be considered fair and representative of the interests of our country if candidates are focusing their campaigns on only a few battleground states that, while producing riches in delegate votes, are only a small fragment of America's population, while states like New York, with a population of 19.6 million, and California, with a population of over 38 million, are left to the wayside. It is a given that these states vote heavily Democratic, so both parties generally ignore them, except when the Democrats — and Republicans, to a lesser extent — use them to raise money for presidential candidates and their parties. Much of the rest of the country, however, are left to be spectators, with their voices and needs ignored.

The National Popular Vote Plan would guarantee that the presidency would be won by the candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and D.C. This issue has legs, as at least one senator or representative in each of the 50 states has sponsored a bill for nationwide popular elections, or has voted for a nationwide, popular election of the president in a Roll Call vote in Congress. Presidents Nixon, Carter, Ford and George H.W. Bush have all supported a popular vote election of the president, so this is an issue that should have bipartisan support. We must stop being the only democracy that indirectly elects its chief executive. Every voice and vote must matter. After all, isn't that what democracy is all about?

Should the United States Use the Electoral College in Presidential Elections?

<p>Pro 1</p> <p>The Founding Fathers enshrined the Electoral College in the US Constitution because they thought it was the best method to choose the president. Using electors instead of the popular vote was intended to safeguard against uninformed or uneducated voters by putting the final decision in the hands of electors most likely to possess the information necessary to make the best decision; to prevent states with larger populations from having undue influence; and to compromise between electing the president by popular vote and letting Congress choose the president. According to Alexander Hamilton, the Electoral College is if "not perfect, it is at least excellent," because it ensured "that the office of President will never fall to the lot of any man who is not in an eminent degree endowed with the requisite qualifications." The Founders wanted to balance the will of the populace against the risk of "tyranny of the majority".</p>	<p>Con 1</p> <p>The reasons for which the Founding Fathers created the Electoral College are no longer relevant. Modern technology allows voters to get necessary information to make informed decisions in a way that could not have been foreseen by the Founding Fathers. Also, while Alexander Hamilton in 1788 saw the electors as being "free from any sinister bias," members of the Electoral College are now selected by the political parties and they are expected to vote along party lines regardless of their own opinions about the candidates. Just as several voting laws that limited direct democracy in the Constitution have been modified or discarded throughout history, so should the Electoral College. As a result of Constitutional amendments, women and former slaves were given the right to vote, and Senators, once appointed by state legislatures, are now elected directly by popular vote. The vice presidency was once awarded to the runner up in electoral votes, but the procedure was changed over time to reflect the reality of elections.</p>
<p>Pro 2</p> <p>The Electoral College ensures that all parts of the country are involved in selecting the President of the United States. If the election depended solely on the popular vote, then candidates could limit campaigning to heavily-populated areas or specific regions. To win the election, presidential candidates need electoral votes from multiple regions and therefore they build campaign platforms with a national focus, meaning that the winner will actually be serving the needs of the entire country. Without the electoral college, groups such as Iowa farmers and Ohio factory workers would be ignored in favor of pandering to metropolitan areas with higher population densities, leaving rural areas and small towns marginalized.</p>	<p>Con 2</p> <p>The Electoral College gives too much power to "swing states" and allows the presidential election to be decided by a handful of states. The two main political parties can count on winning the electoral votes in certain states, such as California for the Democratic Party and Indiana for the Republican Party, without worrying about the actual popular vote totals. Because of the Electoral College, presidential candidates only need to pay attention to a limited number of states that can swing one way or the other. A Nov. 6, 2016 episode of PBS NewsHour revealed that "Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton have made more than 90% of their campaign stops in just 11 so-called battleground states. Of those visits, nearly two-thirds took place in the four battlegrounds with the most electoral votes — Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and North Carolina."</p>
<p>Pro 3</p> <p>The Electoral College guarantees certainty to the outcome of the presidential election. If the election were based on popular vote, it would be possible for a candidate to receive the highest number of popular votes without actually obtaining a majority. This happened with President Nixon in 1968 and President Clinton in 1992, when both men won the most electoral votes while receiving just 43% of the popular vote. The existence of the Electoral College precluded calls for recounts or demands for run-off elections. The electoral process can also create a larger mandate to give the president more credibility; for example, President Obama received 51.3% of the popular vote in 2012 but 61.7% of the electoral votes. In 227 years, the winner of the popular vote has lost the electoral vote only five times. This proves the system is working.</p>	<p>Con 3</p> <p>The Electoral College ignores the will of the people. There are over 300 million people in the United States, but just 538 people decide who will be president. In 2016, Hillary Clinton won the popular vote by more than one million votes, yet still lost the election on electoral votes. Even President-elect Donald Trump, who benefitted from the system, stated after the 2016 election that he believes presidents should be chosen by popular vote: "I would rather see it where you went with simple votes. You know, you get 100 million votes and somebody else gets 90 million votes and you win." Just as in 2000 when George W. Bush received fewer nationwide popular votes than Al Gore, Donald Trump will serve as the President of the United States despite being supported by fewer Americans than his opponent.</p> <p style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">www.procon.org</p>

LWV Chautauqua Letter To The Editor

"Many of your readers may be looking forward to participating in a League of Women Voters-sponsored debate between Congressman Tom Reed and his opponent, Tracy Mitrano, in Chautauqua County. I'm sorry to say that there will be no such debate. Instead, as in 2012 and 2014, the two candidates will respond to pre-submitted questions from the editors of The Observer and the Post-Journal. The exchange of views will take place in the offices of the Post-Journal on October 24 and, if precedent holds, the public will not be invited.

The Chautauqua County LWV regrets this situation. We have been in touch with the Reed campaign since January and with the Mitrano campaign since the Democratic primary. Mitrano's people quickly responded to our invitation and reserved several possible Mayville or Jamestown debate dates at our request. However, Reed's campaign manager put us off time after time, never returned our calls, and let us understand by default that there would be no debate of the kind we have always sponsored, a debate in which the questions come from the audience. Then on September 17, the manager suddenly e-mailed inviting us to co-sponsor a debate in Olean with questions to be supplied by the Olean newspaper. Olean is not in our county and not a convenient location for many of our citizens, and a live audience that cannot ask its own questions does not meet our requirements for public participation.

Unlike some of his peers, Reed has held many a town meeting in his district when citizens could ask him questions. We applaud him for that, and for his talks to Chambers of Commerce. However, we believe that the debate we sponsored in Mayville in 2016 was well-received on all sides, and are sorry it will not be renewed this year.

Minda Rae Amiran



October 23 7 p.m. Weeks Room, JCC Jamestown
October 30 7 p.m. Dunkirk City Hall Courtroom

NYS Assembly Candidates
Ms. Judith S. Einach
Mr. Andrew W. Goodell

Chautauqua County Sheriff Candidates
Mr. Joseph A. Gerace
Mr. James B. Quattrone

GENERAL ELECTION DAY: NOV. 6

- Oct. 12 last day to postmark voter registration form or register in person at BOE
- Oct. 12 last day to change party enrollment for 2019 primaries
- Oct. 30 last day to postmark application for absentee ballot
- Nov 5 last day to apply in person for absentee ballot
- Nov. 5 last day to postmark ballot for general election
- Nov. 6 last day to deliver absentee ballot in person to BOE

Getting Out the Vote

Our Election Commissioners have often told us that almost all eligible citizens in Chautauqua County are registered to vote, but the dreadful fact is that they don't vote. In 2014, in the towns of Arkwright, Dunkirk, Hanover, Pomfret, and Portland, turnout ranged from 59% to 27% for registered Republicans, from 50% to 26% for registered Democrats, and from 48% to 5% for unaffiliated voters, who outnumber party-affiliated voters in every (or almost every) election district.

In an effort to get people to vote, the League is planning a door-to-door campaign. Since we cannot be everywhere, we have chosen the three districts where the turnout has been consistently lower than average: they are District 1 in Wards 1, 3, and 4 in Dunkirk. During the month of October and up until the November 6 elections, we are signing up volunteers to ring doorbells telling people where their polling place is and that their votes will make a difference. The volunteers will be able to choose their hours and streets.

If you are interested in being one of those volunteers, please e-mail Minda Rae Amiran (amiran@fredonia.edu) or call her at 679-4636 and leave a message.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

October 17	1:30 p.m.	Board Meeting, 22 Gillis St., Fredonia
October 23	7 p.m.	Meet the Candidates, Weeks Room, JCC Jamestown
October 25	Noon	Hot Topic Luncheon (See page 1)
October 30	7 p.m.	Meet the Candidates Dunkirk City Hall Courtroom
November 6	6 a.m. – 9 p.m.	GENERAL ELECTIONS
November 16	Noon	Hot Topic Luncheon, “White Privelege”, Rianna Moore, Speaker

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

lww@lwwchautauqa.org, 672-4275



The League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

Invite a Friend to Join or Give the Gift Of League Membership!!

Make Your Voice Heard!
Join Us Today!

League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County

Mary Croxton, President
Minda Rae Amiran
Priscilla Bernatz
Gen Ludemann
Marcia Merrins
Lisa Mertz
Judy Reynolds
Linda Warner

Membership Form

Mail to:

LWV Chautauqua

P.O. Box 42 Fredonia, NY 14063

Membership Dues: through December 31, 2019 Individual: \$60; Family: \$90; Student: \$25 (Check payable to LWV Chautauqua County)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

I would like to get involved with:

_____ Local Issues _____ Voter Service _____ State/National Issues

_____ Local Newsletter

_____ Assisting with minor tasks occasionally

Other: _____