

THE VOTER

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Holly Oppelt

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY

The League of Women Voters (LWV) has a long history of advocacy for environmental protection that is described in detail in our Natural Resources positions. We have been at the forefront of the environmental protection movement for decades, supporting legislation and regulations written to preserve our nation's natural resources and protect our public health. The LWV worked hard for the passage of the expanded Safe Drinking Water Act in 1986 and the Clean Water Act of 1972.

LWV Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization (LWV UMRR-ILO) is a multi-state organization (Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin) focused on protecting and enhancing the Mississippi River. The League of Women Voters of Iowa (LWVIA) and the Upper Mississippi River Region-Inter-league Organization recognize that clean water is vital for the Upper Mississippi River Region - clean, safe water for drinking, recreation, and for habitat for birds, fish, and other wildlife to survive. Wetlands and streams are valuable resources that provide essential fish and wildlife habitats, store carbon, prevent flooding, filter out harmful pollution, and protect clean drinking water. Major rivers and lakes cannot be effectively protected from pollution if the small streams that flow into them are unprotected.

LWV UMRR ILO and the LWVIA oppose the gutting of the Clean Water Act by the PERMIT Act. The PERMIT Acts threatens the water quality of the Upper Mississippi River Region, and we urge you to vote against H.R. 3898.

The intent of the Clean Water Act is to govern water pollution. Its main purpose is to "restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." This involves setting water quality standards and regulating the discharge of pollutants into the U.S. waters.

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ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY, CONTINUED

While the PERMIT Act aims to streamline regulations, its potential impact on the future of freshwater resources in the Upper Mississippi River region and across the United States remains a grave concern.

H.R. 3898 would weaken crucial clean water protections including:

- Limiting the scope of the Clean Water Act by redefining navigable waters to exclude (1) waste treatment systems, (2) ephemeral features that flow only in direct response to precipitation, (3) prior converted cropland, (4) groundwater, or (5) any other features determined to be excluded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- H.R. 3898 guts the Clean Water Act by focusing on what the cost of cleanup would be for the potential polluters verses following a scientifically researched and accepted set of water quality standards.
- Redefining protected waters, potentially removing safeguards for small streams, wetlands, and seasonal waterways that feed into larger rivers and drinking water sources.
- Allowing political appointees at the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers to exclude waters from protection without public input, scientific basis, or oversight.
- Decimating state and Tribal authority under Section 401. Section 401 provides states and authorized Tribes to review federally permitted activities like oil and pipelines and stop or place conditions on the action if it would harm state or Tribal waters. It narrows States' and Tribes' long-standing authority to consider the impact of an entire federally permitted project or activity, so the harms upstream and downstream of the specific discharge that triggers a review could be off-limits to controls.
- Increasing the use of outdated pollution standards by extending wastewater discharge permits from 5 years to 10 years, limiting opportunities for public input and updated treatment technologies.
- Create the blanket presumption that activities filling in or destroying bodies of water less than 3 acres in size are minimally harmful, allowing for an unlimited number of 3 acres fills to occur that put together could easily harm wetlands and large waterways-causing undue flooding in places.

LWV UMRR-ILO and the LWVIA agrees with other environmental groups that have strong opposition to the PERMIT ACT. H.R. 3898 would weaken crucial clean water protections that maintain public health and welfare. Changes to the Clean Water Act will reverse decades of progress in clean water protections, jeopardize safe drinking water and harm important ecosystems. Join the sentiments of the majority of Americans that value clean water protections and vote against H.R. 3898.



LWV OF IOWA, ONE IOWA FILE BRIEF AGAINST DISCRIMINATORY ANTI-LGBTQIA+ LAW IN SCHOOLS

Here is the press release that announced that the LWVIA and One Iowa filed an amicus brief supporting a partial preliminary injunction against provisions of SF496. First signed in 2023, the law restricts books on LGBTQIA+ subjects in school libraries and the rights of LGBTQIA+ students in schools.

ST. LOUIS — The League of Women Voters of Iowa (LWVIA) and One Iowa filed an amicus brief on Friday in the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit supporting a partial preliminary injunction against provisions of SF496. First signed in 2023, the law restricts books on LGBTQIA+ subjects in school libraries and the rights of LGBTQIA+ students in schools.

LWVIA and One Iowa previously filed an amicus brief supporting challengers of SF496. The law was blocked by the United States District Court for the Southern District of Iowa. The United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit reversed that order and remanded it to the district court for further consideration. On remand, the district court partially blocked the law again, and the state appealed that decision.

LWVIA's newest brief emphasizes the harmful and discriminatory intent behind SF496 and the open access to information and discussion students need and deserve at school.

"School should be a place where every student can feel safe and be themselves," said Holly Oppelt, president of the League of Women Voters of Iowa. "Students and teachers should feel free to discuss topics that concern their lives without being chilled or punished simply because their words were negatively interpreted by the government. The League of Women Voters of Iowa is proud to fight back against this harmful law and stand up for all our students' well-being."

"LGBTQ students should have all the same opportunities as other students, but they often struggle with harassment and being told they don't belong," said Keenan Crow, director of policy and advocacy at One Iowa. "When politicians pass laws to censor information about their lives and their families, it only results in further targeting and exclusion. No one child should receive the message that their family is so shameful that schools can't even discuss it."

"Students have a right to feel welcome and safe at their schools, and this includes the right to learn freely," said Caren Short, director of legal and research at the League of Women Voters. Schools should be places where every student is respected, not where they are subject to state-sanctioned discrimination. The League stands with the LGBTQIA+ community, especially students, who must be protected."

Learn more about the League of Women Voters' litigation work by visiting our [Legal Center](#) to review historic and active federal cases on our docket.

[Go here](#) to see the press release on the League of Women Voters website.



DIVERSITY. EQUITY. INCLUSION. LWV POLICY.

The League of Women Voters is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in principle and in practice.

Diversity, equity and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.

USE 5 CALLS TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD



5 Calls makes it easy for you to reach members of Congress and make your voice heard. They research issues, write scripts for you to use, and lead you toward the most influential policy makers. All you have to do is make the call and use your voice. Click [here](#) to visit the 5 Calls website.

GET OUT THE VOTE BILLBOARDS APPROVED

We did it! I am thrilled to announce to all our members, we have Billboards. The Board approved using the money left from a gift we received last year from Angela Vircks for a "Get Out The Vote" campaign to purchase a billboard. This year she pledged \$4000 for the billboard project. Holly Oppelt and Martha Wolf worked with a couple of companies and felt the one we picked gave us 'more bang for our buck.' Because we were working with a time constraint, some markets were not available. The billboards will be up from October 6th until November 6th! We were able to purchase 8 billboards in five cities: Des Moines, Davenport, Dubuque, Cedar Rapids and Council Bluffs.

Save your thoughts, ideas, slogans, mottos, and graphic ideas in case we decide to do this again. We did learn that if someone starts eight or nine months ahead of time chances are there are more location choices, some areas are cheaper, there is more time for input from members, and you do not get as stressed out, etc. and that leads to a more successful billboard campaign.

If you live in these towns, or are visiting, be sure and look for them. The LWVIA is hard at work representing all of our members and the hard work they are do to getting people registered and to the polls.





SAVE THE DATE- 2026 LWV NATIONAL CONVENTION

This is your official call to the 2026 LWV National Convention!

WHEN? The event will begin on Thursday, June 25, 2026, and end on Sunday, June 28, 2026.

WHERE? Convention 2026 will take place in Columbus, OH, at the Hilton Columbus Downtown.

REGISTRATION

Registration for Convention 2026 will open in January of next year. We have negotiated a special group rate at the hotel, and bookings will be open with the event's registration. Registration will be hosted on the official event website to be shared in the coming months. The event website will be the home for all event-related information, including but not limited to the agenda, hotel information, a robust FAQ page, information about the wares market, and more.

If you have any questions about Convention, feel free to reach out to the events team at events@lww.org.

We are planning an incredible Convention, and we look forward to seeing many of you in Columbus next summer!

REMINDER: NEW LWVUS DUES PAYMENT & UPDATES

The League of Women Voters sends out membership renewal reminders 60 and 30 days prior to your membership's expiration date, as well as 30 days after that date. If you don't renew within 30 days of your membership expiration date, you will be considered a new member when you renew your membership. This is inconvenient, but it is how the new national system works.

If you wish to continue with the League (and we sure hope you do), please renew your membership on our website at <https://www.lwv.org/join>. You may also renew by check but be sure to make the check payable to LWVUS and mail it to League of Women Voters US at 1233 20th Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC, 20036 (Phone: 202-429-1965). Your \$75 dues are divided among the national league, as well as the Iowa league and your local chapter.

We also greatly appreciate donations made to our State chapter. One way to donate is to go to our website and click on the [donate](#) button. We appreciate our Iowa League members! Please contact membership@lwvia.org with any questions about first-time membership, renewals or donations.

SHOW YOUR COLORS

Looking to add some LWV merch to your closet? What about a shirt to show your support. Check it out at stores.inksoft.com/league_of_women_voters

Show Your Colors!



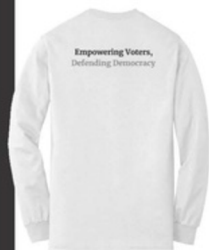
Logowear from the League of Women Voters is now available in a variety of colors and styles!

- Affordably priced
- Easy care, comfortable to wear
- Produced & sold in Iowa
- Makes a great gift
- Convenient, secure online ordering



Shop now! Visit our online store at:

https://stores.inksoft.com/league_of_women_voters/



All net proceeds from sales go to the League of Women Voters of Iowa

