

# 2025 - 2026 Local Program

## League of Women Voters of Manatee County

### **VOTER SERVICES**

#### **Voting Rights**

- Expanding Voter Access
  - Increase voters' access to the polls, including expanding early voting, Vote-by-Mail and automatic and online voter registration.
- Money in Politics
  - Advocating for Financial Transparency and Ethics.
- Redistricting – People Powered Fair Maps.
- Fighting Voter Suppression.

#### **Elections/Improving Elections**

- Increasing voter registration
  - Conduct voter registration drives and encourage citizens to register.
  - Engage and support Returning Citizens in registering.
  - Engage and support Disable Citizens in registering.
  - Engage and support Youth in registering.
- Educating Voters
  - Empower voters with VOTE411, providing trustworthy, nonpartisan information about local elections, including voter guides, candidate information, polling rules and locations.
    - Distribute Voter Guides and provide website information during elections.
    - Inform voters by holding or collaborating in holding Candidate Forums.
    - Provide the Citizen's Guide to Elected Official on our League's website.
    - Sponsor programs to educate the public about government and elections.

### **EDUCATION**

- Promote adequate funding, exemplary instructional practices, and wide range of support services for students in Manatee County's public schools, that result in grade-level literacy and other indicators of improved student outcomes.
- Monitor and encourage citizen engagement in matters of Manatee District School Board's governance.
- Convene programs on educational issues and take part in collaborative efforts.
- Monitor the impact of state legislation on teaching and learning locally.

### **GOVERNMENT**

- Familiarize citizens with the workings of local Manatee County and Florida state government and encourage participation.
- Promote ethics in local government.
- Promote transparency, good governance practices, and adherence to Florida State Sunshine Laws.
- Encourage government decisions that avoid negative impacts of residential and commercial growth on existing neighborhoods, infrastructure and the environment.
- Promote citizen participation through elected office.

- Support local criminal justice reform and common-sense gun safety measures.
- Encourage local action to prevent and prosecute human trafficking.
- Collaborate with LWV Manatee Action Teams to monitor and share information in pending legislation that impacts our 2025 priority areas of interest.

#### **Support and Promote National Popular Vote (NPV) Interstate Compact**

- Educate voters by presentation on Zoom and in-person.
- Educate Legislators in-person, at delegation meetings, and in Tallahassee.
- Lobby Legislators to support NPV.
- File a House and Senate Bill through a legislator.
- Solicit multiple co-sponsors.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

- Promote protection for Manatee County’s ecosystems and natural resources.
- Conduct educational programs and advocate to address climate change and other environmental issues.
- Encourage conservation land acquisition in Manatee County and monitor implementation of the successful county referendum.
- Encourage the local use of clean energy, energy conservation, and carbon neutrality.
- Participate in environmental collaborations and Florida LWV initiatives.

### **REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**

- Conduct educational programs on health care issues addressing reproductive health care.
- Support health care affordability and availability for low-income and other uninsured citizens.
- Promote citizen awareness of available local resources for health care services.
- Encourage legislative and local initiatives to improve access to reproductive and maternal health services
- Collaborate with the Florida LWV, other LWV of Manatee County Action Teams and local community organizations to share information and support activities to advance reproductive health care in our county and the state.

### **SOCIAL ISSUES**

- Provide education and encourage legislative and local initiatives to help children and families and older adults.
- Support solutions that ensure a strong and stable pathway to affordable housing and dynamic support services and structures that provide options instead of obstacles to community members who are experiencing poverty or homelessness.
- Support rehabilitation programs for drug and alcohol abuse.
- Encourage and support sound local policies for immigrants in the community.

#### **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)**

- Promote a philosophy of inclusion that reflects the diverse composition of the community.
- Support equal rights for all citizens in our community and actively seek the voices of residents and their needs.
- Hold or participate in local programs that provide education on bias and promote a healing in the community.