

LWVLA Voting Rights & Elections Bills/Instruments 2023 Legislative Session (updated 4/22/2023)

Committee	Bill Number	Author, Party & District	Summary	LWVLA Position
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 159</a>	Les Farnum (R-Sulphur)	VOTING/REGISTRATION Required additional voter canvass each year.	<p><b>OPPOSE</b></p> <p>Vetoed by Governor last 2 years, and LWVLA has opposed last two years.</p> <p>LWVUS and LWVLA have supported the “For the People Act” and the “John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act”/”Freedom to Vote Act.” All of these pieces of proposed legislation work to support robust enforcement of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and its provisions against voter purges. Having an additional canvass besides the annual canvass for purposes of voter list is costly and unnecessary and increases the likelihood of unwarranted removal of voters from the roles.</p> <p>See: <a href="https://www.lwv.org/tag/voter-purging">https://www.lwv.org/tag/voter-purging</a></p>
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 165</a>	Mandie Landry (D)-New Orleans	ELECTIONS/INITIATIVE-REF (Constitutional Amendment) Provides for an initiative and referendum process	<p><b>SUPPORT</b></p> <p>While there is no specific LWVUS position on citizen ballot initiatives and referenda, leagues have educated on and supported citizen initiatives and referenda in other states on a range of issues. Citizen initiatives and referenda promote citizen engagement and are a cornerstone of direct democracy for which Leagues in many other states have fought and which they use to good effect.</p>
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 260</a>	Beau Beaulieu (R-New Iberia)	ELECTIONS: Provides relative to federal election guidance and funding	<p><b>OPPOSE</b></p> <p>This bill resembles bills that have been introduced in Oklahoma and perhaps other states this year. It seems to be a response to the federal protection of voting rights contained in the John Lewis “Freedom to Vote Act,” which are intended to address rollbacks of voting Rights under the Voting Rights Act (VRA) in recent Supreme Court decisions. The bill would allow states to evade voting rights protections in state elections, setting up a difficult to administer two-tier system of voting rights in federal and state elections and thwarting federal protections and oversight.</p> <p>See: <a href="https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/league-supports-new-senate-">https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/league-supports-new-senate-</a></p>

				<a href="#">voting-rights-bill-freedom-vote-act</a>
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 311</a>	Blake Miguez (R-Erath)	CONSTITUTION/AMENDMENT Prohibits election officials from receiving private donations for elections. Prohibits moneys from foreign sources and nongovernmental organizations.	<b>OPPOSE</b>  This bill is a buildout of earlier bills that were originally aimed at prohibiting voting and election safety grant during the COVID pandemic by Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and spouse through the Center for Tech and Civic Life. Louisiana election officials were initially encouraged to apply for these grants, before a change in policy forbad it. The Zuckerberg grant program was a one-time effort that has ended. The bill now bans foreign money in Louisiana elections when there is no evidence that this exists. It is a problem in search of a solution that encourages skepticism of election security.
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 316</a>	Tammy Phelps (D-Shreveport)	VOTING/REGISTRATION: Provides for Louisiana High School Seniors Voter Registration Day	<b>SUPPORT</b>  This bill is being reintroduced after being filed and withdrawn in 2022. It is well-motivated and tied to the work of a Louisiana congressman who sought to introduce it at the federal level on the early May date in question. There are some concerns that the day is too late in the school year, when seniors are largely off campus and school staff are busy with end-of-year activities. It also does not precede major elections, which a fall date might do. Nevertheless, it is well motivated and does draw attention to young voters.
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 396</a>	Sam Jenkins (D-Shreveport)	VOTING/REGISTRATION: Provides for the reinstatement of the voter registration of a person who is no longer under an order of imprisonment	<b>SUPPORT</b>  This bill has been supported by LWVLA in coalitions on both voting rights and criminal justice. Since its 2018 Convention, LWVUS has supported ending felony disenfranchisement.
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 449</a>	Matthew Willard (D-New Orleans)	VOTERS/VOTING: Provides relative to the rights of voters with disabilities. Provides for an Americans with Disabilities Act officer appointed by the secretary of state, a Voting Accessibility Advisory Group within the Dept. of State, and the instruction and examination of elections commissioners relative to the rights of voters with disabilities.	<b>SUPPORT</b>  This bill has been supported by LWVLA in statewide voting rights coalition. Rights of disabled voters have been an important priority for local Leagues and voting rights work around the state. There is particular concern that poll commissioners need better training on the rights of disabled voters.
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 490</a>	Rodney Lyons (D-Marrero)	VOTING/REGISTRATION: Provides for procedures and guidance regarding voter registration activities	<b>SUPPORT</b>  This bill is a direct response to the denial of permission to local League chapters to do high school voter registration in Lafayette parish. It is also a response to a problematic "guidance" issued by the

				SOS prohibiting outside groups from doing voter registration on high school campuses and requiring written parental consent to participate in voter registration programs in schools in contravention of the 26 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 494</a>	Pat Moore (D-Monroe)	ELECTIONS/POLLING PLACES: Authorizes persons and organizations engaging in lawful nonpartisan activities to remain within six hundred feet of the entrance of a polling location	<b>SUPPORT</b>  There has been a push in recent years to allow partisan poll watchers at polling places, but in some cases to prevent nonpartisan voting rights groups to conduct monitoring and voter education/assistance efforts. As a nonpartisan vote education/rights organization, LWVLA supports allowing nonpartisan groups to engage in lawful activities around elections and polling locations.
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 538</a>	Sam Jenkins (D-Shreveport)	VOTERS/VOTING: Provides relative to early voting locations. Provides standards and funding to establish a minimum number of early voting sites per parish based on population and land mass.	<b>SUPPORT</b>  Early voting increases opportunities for voter protections. Louisiana saw markedly increased early voting in the 2020 pandemic elections, and early voting may be growing in popularity with voters. Even with the opening of new early voting sites in recent years, locations remain sparse, particularly in larger and rural parishes. The Early Voting Task Force recommended increasing funding for early voting, and LWVLA supports this proposal.
House & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">HB 553</a>	Cedric Glover (D-Shreveport)	ELECTIONS: Provides for appointment of a voter with disabilities to the State Board of Election Supervisors	<b>SUPPORT</b>  This is one of two bills this session that promises to increase understanding of the needs of voters with disabilities and to improve their access to voting. Having a representative from the disabled community on the BES will further this important objective.
Senate & Governmental Affairs	<a href="#">SB23</a>	Louie Bernard (D-Natchitoches)	VOTERS/VOTING: Requires approval by the secretary of state for the use and expands permissible locations of alternative locations for early voting.	<b>SUPPORT</b>  This bill would authorize an alternate early voting location to be in an accessible and conveniently located public facility within the parish, thereby making early voting accessible to more voters.