



PRESS RELEASE

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League of Women Voters of Ohio Honors Its Founding and Women's Voting Rights at Statehouse Feb. 12

Columbus—Today, representatives of the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO) commemorated their founding by presenting a gift of \$20,000 to Capitol Square Foundation for the Ohio's Women's Monument.

Designed by artist Brenda Council, the monument will commemorate Ohio's women's suffrage movement and honor Ohio women leaders past, present, and future. The Ohio Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission, which spearheaded the project, was established through bipartisan legislation sponsored by Senators Stephanie Kunze and Sandra Williams. Diverse stakeholders including Secretary of State Frank LaRose supported the legislation, which passed unanimously and was signed into law by Governor Mike DeWine. LWVO Executive Director, Jen Miller was appointed to serve on the Ohio Women's Suffrage Commission.

"Representation matters. We want visitors to the Ohio Statehouse - young and old - to be inspired by the women's suffrage movement, so that we never take our sacred right of voting for granted," said Executive Director Jen Miller. "We thank our members for supporting this effort and even more so, for living out the suffrage legacy everyday by registering voters, serving as poll workers, and promoting democracy so that all voices can be heard."

Even before the Commission's establishment, the League of Women Voters of Ohio hosted Rosie Rios, former U.S. Treasurer, as a keynote speaker at its state convention in 2019. During her remarks, Rios emphasized the lack of public monuments nationwide that recognize women and challenged civic leaders to correct that historical imbalance. The League also invited representatives from the Ohio Secretary of State's office, Ohio History Connection, Ohio Humanities, and Ohio Arts Council to meet privately with Rios for a discussion about the lack of representation of women in public art at the Ohio

Statehouse in hopes of getting a commitment to work together on a monument on the Statehouse lawn.

Today, LWVO continues to support the monument effort as both a steward of suffrage history and a leading voice in the ongoing work to protect and expand voting rights in Ohio.

Importance of Feb. 14 and the League of Women Voters

- February 14 marks the anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters and is often referred to as “League of Women Voters’ Day.”
- The League of Women Voters was created during the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) Convention in 1920, just months before the ratification of the 19th Amendment secured women the right to vote in August of that year. This year marks the 107th anniversary of the League of Women Voters.
- Suffragists historically sent Valentine’s Day postcards with messages promoting voting rights, such as “Love me, love my right to vote.”
- Later in 1920, the League of Women Voters of Ohio was established at the Ohio Woman Suffrage Association Convention, held at the Southern Hotel in downtown Columbus. LWVO’s founding mothers represented diverse sectors of Ohio women: nurses, teachers, letter carriers, business owners, newspaper reporters, lawyers, and even groups like the Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, National Council of Jewish Women, and Daughters of the American Revolution. LWVO’s mission was to empower voters to know how to vote and to be informed voters.

ABOUT THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OHIO:

The League of Women Voters of Ohio is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization that empowers voters and defends democracy through advocacy, education, and litigation at the local, state, and national levels. We encourage informed and active participation in government, work to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

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