



# THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

*LWV-LL Voter*

January 2024

President:	Cynthia Peterson
VP for Action:	Jean McGuire
Secretary:	Terri Rittenburg
Treasurer:	Dorothy Ramsey
Voter Services:	Jane Witte, Kate Borchman
Lunch & Learn Chair:	Tari Hendrickson
Membership Chair:	Sandy Blankenship
Voter Editor:	Jim Johnson
Facebook Manager:	Kristen Anderson

## Calendar of Events

### **Jan 3 (Wednesday):**

Day 1, 108th Nebraska Legislature,  
2nd Session

### **Jan 4 (Thursday): Noon – 1:00 pm**

#### **Lunch & Learn**

Dr David Meyer and  
Tom Hoegemeyer  
*Regenerative Agriculture*  
*See article at right.*

### **Jan 4 (Thursday): 6:00 pm**

#### **LWVLL Board Meeting**

Dino's Storage Conference Room  
1945 N. 84<sup>th</sup> St., Lincoln

### **Feb 1 (Thursday): Noon – 1:00 pm**

#### **Lunch & Learn**

Todd Wiltgen,  
Lancaster County Election Comm.  
*Voter ID Law, Mail-In Ballots*

### **Feb 1 (Thursday): 6:00 pm**

#### **LWVLL Board Meeting**

Dino's Storage Conference Room  
1945 N. 84<sup>th</sup> St., Lincoln

### **Feb 10 (Saturday): 9:00 am**

#### **LWVLL Meeting – Program Planning**

*See article on page 2.*

## **January Lunch & Learn: Regenerative Agriculture – Barriers and Opportunities**

Have you ever wondered if there was an approach to agriculture that was better for the farmer, the planet, and society? The January League of Women Voters Lunch & Learn takes on the challenge of Regenerative Agriculture with speakers David Meyer and Tom Hoegemeyer, representing the Nebraska Soil Health Coalition. Regenerative Agriculture is a way of farming with nature that increases soil and environmental health, which is gaining momentum and adoption across the United States and the world. Both speakers were raised on Nebraska farms and have advanced degrees in the agriculture sector.

The event is Thursday, January 4, from noon to 1:00 PM CST, and is free and open to the public throughout Nebraska via Zoom. Membership is not required.

For over 100 years, the League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, has encouraged informed and active participation in government, worked to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influenced public policy through education and advocacy. Membership is open to all. For further information regarding the League, go to [www.lincolnleague.org](http://www.lincolnleague.org).

Those wishing to attend, use this Zoom link:  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89137424915>.

## **SAVE THE DATE:**

**February 10, 2024**

**Start time 9:00 AM**

**Place to be announced later**

## **LWVLL Member Meeting - Programing Planning**

What is Program Planning?

Program Planning is where our local League members review the positions our local League has agreed upon over the years (located on our website at [LWVLL Impact on Issues](#) Do any positions need to be updated? Are there positions that are missing that are not covered by the [LWVUS](#) or [LWVNE](#) positions? If so, is there a need for a study to establish a position? Or a position developed by another local League that we could adopt through concurrence?



In addition, we want to take the time to discuss and decide where our areas of focus should be for the coming 12-24 months as it relates to education and advocacy. Member input and participation is critical to setting the direction, priorities, and time commitments of our league for the coming year and beyond.

Lastly, we will formulate our feedback to the proposed LWVUS Program the League membership adopts at each biennial LWV National Convention. The goal of the LWVUS Program Planning process is to achieve collective agreement around how LWV will move our mission forward for the next two years nationally.

**Volunteers are needed to be scribes, bring snacks, or for other tasks. Please contact [Jean McGuire](#), [Cynthia Peterson](#) or [Terri Rittenburg](#) if you'd like to help.**

## **Summer Food Program – Follow-up Action**

In November, the LWVLL sent an action alert asking you to send letters of support for a new national child nutrition program poised to launch nationwide which would deliver an estimated \$18 million in grocery-buying benefits to approximately 150,000 Nebraska children starting next summer. Many of you contacted Governor Pillen encouraging him to opt into the program to support families and children who experience food insecurity in Nebraska.

Unfortunately, the Governor has decided he would not implement the electronic benefit transfer program (EBT) for Summer 2024 in spite of overwhelming support for the proposal from food banks and other advocates. In addition, a group of 15 senators sent a letter to the Department of Health and Human Services asking the administration to rethink the decision.

The decision not to apply for the grocery aid prompted Nebraska Appleseed, a justice nonprofit that focuses in part on child welfare and a partner of the League, to launch a petition urging Pillen to reconsider.

Please take time to sign the petition and/or send a letter to the Governor asking him to rethink his decision.

[https://ujoin.co/campaigns/2666/actions/public?action\\_id=3014](https://ujoin.co/campaigns/2666/actions/public?action_id=3014)

Please send a letter or email or call the Governor's office to let him know that this is a food program that we must participate in to support families and children who experience food insecurity in Nebraska:

Governor Jim Pillen  
Capitol Building  
PO Box 94848  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848  
402-471-2244  
<http://governor.nebraska.gov>

To learn more, below are links to articles in the Lincoln Journal-Star and the Nebraska Examiner

[https://journalstar.com/news/state-regional/government-politics/nebraska-governor-pillen-dislikes-welfare-grocery-aid/article\\_350afc90-a0f7-11ee-a773-670bec26c1eb.html](https://journalstar.com/news/state-regional/government-politics/nebraska-governor-pillen-dislikes-welfare-grocery-aid/article_350afc90-a0f7-11ee-a773-670bec26c1eb.html)

<https://nebraskaexaminer.com/2023/12/20/gov-pillen-decides-ne-wont-opt-into-new-18-million-child-nutrition-program/?emci=83db702a-759f-ee11-bea1-002248223f36&emdi=9f48b974-f89f-ee11-bea1-002248223f36&ceid=393806>

Signed,  
Jean McGuire  
LWVLL VP of Action  
[llvp\\_action@lincolnleague.org](mailto:llvp_action@lincolnleague.org)

## Lincoln Coalition Wants to End Source of Income-Based Discrimination Faced by Many Renters

The League of Women Voters of Lincoln/Lancaster County, alongside 13 community organizations and 514 individuals, strongly advocates for the introduction and passing of a Lincoln city ordinance. This ordinance aims to prevent source-of-income discrimination against potential renters relying on housing vouchers, disability benefits, etc., to contribute to their rent payments.

On December 18, 2023, member organizations and community advocates gathered outside the City/County building at 5 PM in a show of support for the proposed ordinance during a news conference. Jean McGuire, VP for Action, and Cynthia Peterson, President represented LWVLL (fourth and third from the right in the photo below).



During the news conference, Kasey Ogle, senior staff attorney for Collective Impact, highlighted the damaging impact of source-of-income discrimination on Lincoln's housing crisis and its contribution to racial inequalities within our community. Ogle emphasized, 'Rental assistance is a vital resource for low-income families striving for stability and an escape from poverty's cycle. Unfortunately, Lincoln lacks safeguards, enabling landlords to reject tenants solely

based on their rent payment method. Ending source-of-income discrimination is crucial to provide a baseline protection for those diligently working to improve their lives.

While 23 states and 134 cities have successfully implemented legislation prohibiting source-of-income discrimination, Nebraska has yet to follow suit.

After the press conference, supporters reconvened in the City Council chambers. In the council's public comment session, a petition endorsing the new ordinance, signed by over 500 individuals, was formally presented. Multiple advocates voiced strong support for this ordinance, sharing poignant stories of individuals enduring housing struggles.

The City Council holds the next course of action, with their next meeting scheduled after January 1, 2024. LWVLL members are encouraged to express their opinions to their City Council representatives about the proposed ordinance. See <https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/City/City-Council/Council-Members>.



More photos from the December 18 press conference and City Council public comment session:



## League of Women Voters Membership Renewal

*Sandy Blankenship, Membership Chair*

Please renew your membership SOON with the League of Women Voters Lincoln and Lancaster County! Our membership year runs from April 1 to March 31. The 2023-2024 memberships expire March 31<sup>st</sup>.

The League is non-partisan and does not support or oppose candidates or political parties. We strive to increase understanding of public policy issues and to increase voter participation in elections.

Check our site for more details: <https://lincolnleague.org>

There are two ways you can renew your membership:

- 1) You can quickly renew your membership online at <https://lincolnleague.org/join-us>
- 2) OR download the form from the web site, print it, add your information, and send with a check to: League of Women Voters Lincoln Lancaster County, P. O. Box 5054, Lincoln, NE 68505



In November, a coalition of advocacy groups named [Protect Our Rights](#) announced a ballot initiative to make the right to an abortion a constitutional amendment in Nebraska.

Since then, the League of Women Voters of Nebraska has carefully considered its role in protecting individual freedom to make medical decisions and access to reproductive health care in our state. This careful consideration included a study of the League’s national stance regarding reproductive health care ([pp. 57-61](#)); a review of the long history of advocacy by the LWVNE and LWV of Greater Omaha ([pp. 111-113](#)); input from our members; exploration of [medical provider expertise](#); and evaluation of [data on the physical, social, mental and economic impact](#) of restricting access to care.

Based on the culmination of all these factors, the LWVNE board of directors voted to officially join the Protect Our Rights coalition at its meeting on Dec. 9. As part of this coalition, the LWVNE will take an active role to ensure that Nebraskans will be able to vote on the constitutional amendment during the 2024 election. Some of the ways we will engage include:

- Facilitating signature collection through trainings and coordination of petition collection.
- Providing educational sessions about the medical, legal and social impact of access to reproductive health care.
- Engaging with the media through official statements, letters to the editor, etc.
- Supporting Protect Our Rights coalition rallies and events.

As with any issue, not all of our members may agree with this stance. Members are not obligated to participate or endorse the League’s stance as an individual. Our role is to work collectively based on the best data and input from the majority of our members to pursue work that aligns with our ultimate mission to empower voters and protect democracy. Support of an initiative that puts the question of reproductive rights directly to the people is exactly that kind of work.

The issue of abortion has been contentious long before the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* in 2022 and even before its decision in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. Many of us may feel that we determined our “stance” long ago and may even identify as “pro-life” or “pro-choice.” But now is a time for all Nebraskans to step back and reconsider our stance. It is a time to set aside preconceived notions and listen, learn and consider what this will mean for everyday Nebraskans – our families, friends, neighbors, ourselves.

We know many of you are eager to join the effort to protect bodily autonomy in our state and we hope that everyone will take this opportunity to pause and thoughtfully consider where we stand on the issue, how we talk to others about it, and how we can take meaningful action.

The LWVNE looks forward to working on this effort. We will hold an official kick-off event after the holidays. In the meantime, check out the [Protect Our Rights](#) site for upcoming training and events. As always, I am grateful for this community of thoughtful, dedicated folks who are working to make a better Nebraska where every voice is heard.

Best,  
Rachel M. Gibson  
Action Vice President  
League of Women Voters of Nebraska

**Note: The LWVLL Board of Directors will discuss and potentially vote on a motion to officially join the Protect Our Rights coalition during Jan. 4 meeting.**

**The Lincoln Lancaster *Voter***

League of Women Voters - Lincoln/Lancaster County

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<http://www.LincolnLeague.org>



Time Dated Material  
Please Do Not Delay