

NH VOTER, newsletter of the League of Women Voters New Hampshire **November 2024**

Thank you to our members and supporters who called Congressman Pappas recently urging him to **oppose HR 9495**. On Nov. 21 Congressman Pappas voted NAY in response to your calls & emails, changing his vote from a few weeks ago. (Congresswoman Kuster opposed the bill all along.) Unfortunately the bill passed anyway, 219-184, mostly along partisan lines, with Republicans in support and 15 Democrats opposing. We sent out a call to action to some people in CD1 very late in the process. Took us a while to get national League permission to act on this well-intentioned but ultimately bad bill that could be used to squelch voices like League of Women Voters. ACLU and Common Cause also sent out calls for action to oppose the bill. If you're on Facebook, check our post from Nov. 20. (*Now I need someone smarter than me about Congressional protocols to let us know if we need to oppose this in the Senate next.*)

News from the NH Legislature: Two new committees have been formed to hear bills that fall under League's areas of interest. One is a **Housing Committee** (last year's committee was a "special" committee; now the committee becomes a standing committee). Lack of housing choice affects us all. So do follow that committee if you are interested in learning how NH hopes to create enough housing for people of all incomes.

The other is an **Education Finance committee**. This is in addition to the existing Education committee, which can now be relieved of some of its dozens of bill and focus on policy and other issues. The Education Finance committee has its work cut out for it. Likely there will be less federal money coming for special education, but the need and the mandate for local districts to provide special ed have not gone away. State has to figure this out.

Of course the big item in 2025 in the NH Legislature will be creating a **two-year balanced budget** by June. We're looking for a few League members to follow this work and give us a heads up when action is needed. If interested, [let us know](#). The NH Fiscal Policy Institute provides an e-newsletter and very helpful webinars on this too. Anyone may sign up via their [website](#).

As always, one of the biggest items in the budget is **education funding**. Legislators will have to comply with court orders to increase the state's share of local school district expenses. At the same time, some legislators want to expand the Education Freedom accounts (school vouchers for private, religious, and home schooling) by raising or eliminating the family income threshold for participation. [NH School Funding Fairness Project](#) is one of the groups that is tracking this and publicizing the issue and relevant bills. Subscribe at their website for emails, or follow on FB.

Other potential major issues in NH will be **energy**, **siting of landfills**, maybe changes to **reproductive rights** legislation, and of course **protecting voting rights**. *More on our voting rights lawsuits in a future newsletter.* Coming as a bit of surprise is the possibility of **redistricting our two congressional districts** well ahead of the expected 2030 redistricting. Why? Because the current CD maps were not drawn by the Legislature as called for in our state constitution; they were court-ordered following a "least change" principle when the Governor vetoed the Legislature's proposal. I'll dust off our "FAIR MAPS" stickers if needed. We don't want partisan districting of congressional maps!

In December or January we'll be sending more information on **two interesting League initiatives**. The first will include suggestions for **making our state legislators more accountable**, put them in closer contact with their constituents (that's us, the voters.)

The other is a **national League study of the federal judiciary**. Work has already started to help us participate in this first national study in about 10 years. *(note from Liz T: last night's opening webinar was terrific, informative, inspirational, and attended by 605 Leagues members from across the country.)*

Only League members may participate in the study, so if you haven't paid dues in 2024, please do so now so your voice can be heard. You may join and pay dues online with a credit card at our website until mid January. <https://lwvnh.org/membership-donations/> Not sure you're a current member? Just reply to this email and we'll check it out for you.

Ending on a different note, this photo was taken at the August meeting of the **League of Women Voters NH Education Fund** board, our 501(c)3 arm that funds most of our voter education work. Seated is **outgoing chair Lillian Nelligan**, who was honored for her decades of League work, including as state board president in the late 1990s and then on the Ed Fund. Lillian doesn't let the wheelchair or the oxygen tank keep her from being active in League! Also leaving the board after years of service is Sue Capano. Next meeting will welcome two new members to the Education Fund, Betty Ann Trought and Mindy Atwood, who will replace Lillian and Sue. New chair is Pat Tivnan, second from right.

