

**NH Voter**, the newsletter of the **League of Women Voters NH - March 2025**

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**National Study of the Federal Judiciary:**

It has been a number of years since the League of Women Voters did a national study and consensus. For those new to League, a bit of explanation:

Since the League's founding in 1920, the study of issues has been central to our work. By **studying** issues and then discussing them, we reach a **consensus**. From that consensus, the national League develops a **position**. Our positions form the basis of our advocacy and activist work. It enables Leagues across the country to speak with one voice on an issue. The same process can happen at the state League level, and even at the local level. But right now, we are all invited to **join this national study of the federal judiciary**. The study was approved at LWVUS convention last June, and will result in a position by June 2025.

I doubt it was luck that led the convention to agree to tackle the topic of federal courts. What we've seen in the first two months of the new administration has included a court ruling of one kind or another on nearly every executive action. The time is now; we need this study done so we can support action to protect our democracy.

***Here are the steps you can each take:***

**1) Read the SCOPE of the study here:**

To develop a LWV position on the Federal Judiciary as an essential component of US democracy. The study's purpose includes, but is not limited to, addressing concerns and clarifying judicial accountability, transparency, independence, and ethics. The scope addresses the Supreme Court as well as the other Article III federal courts.

**2) Go to the study webpage of LWV.org.** All the materials are here.

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/advocacy-litigation/2024-2025-federal-judiciary-study-process-committee-and>

**No one is expected to read everything the committee has put together, but please do read** some or all of the **Policy Briefs** (there are 10) that the national committee in charge of this study has put together. Make notes on your thoughts as you read them.

If you have knowledge or experience relevant to the federal courts, be prepared to share information and viewpoints.

**3) Think about Consensus.** Here is how the study committee explains it:

*Consensus is the sense of the room. It is not a vote. Ideally, consensus should be reached through discussion, with a full exploration of all the qualifying factors, to identify broad areas of agreement. That said, at times a show of hands may become necessary. A show of hands can be important in recording substantial minority opinion, or it may show that there is no*

*consensus. Look at the consensus questions.* The consensus questions will form the basis of our discussion.

#### **4) Pick ONE meeting to attend:**

(via Zoom) on Thursday, April 10, 7 to 9 pm *or*

(in-person) on Saturday, April 12 (10 am to noon, at Hilltop in New London, hosted by LWV Kearsarge/Sunapee.

The respective boards will submit the consensus results to the national study committee, along with those of Leagues across the country. The national board will assess the total results and draft a position.

*Please note...*

**Only League MEMBERS may participate in this study**, though anyone may read the materials. *We realize some people getting this newsletter are no longer members. We are happy to keep you on our email list, for newsletters and for NH legislative alerts. But to participate in the consensus, you must be a current member.*

When you sign up for either the zoom call or the New London in-person meeting, we will check your membership status against the current database and let you know if your membership has lapsed.

You may, of course, rejoin the League at any time. See the next article for how to renew your League membership.

Please, ask for the zoom link only if you plan to take part in the discussion. Our zoom plan allows for up to 100 people; we don't have space for those who are merely curious. [Email us for the zoom link](#). It will be sent a day or two ahead of the meeting. Specify "zoom consensus" in the subject line.

If you plan to attend the in-person consensus meeting in New London, the local League would appreciate hearing from you in advance. [Email LWVNH](#) and we'll forward your information. Specify "Kearsarge/Sunapee consensus" in the subject line.

### **Joining or renewing your League of Women Voters membership: A new system in place, eventually easier for you and for us.**

You will no longer get a mailed "time to renew" notice from the state or local League. Now you'll get an email from the national League, with a link to join or renew at a "members portal." You'll be asked to update your information and to pay dues with a credit card or bank card online. Those renewal emails will mostly be sent about 45 days before your membership term expires (June 30 for many of us in NH, but not all.)

Local and state Leagues are no longer setting the **dues rate**: it is now set the same nationwide, as a "**pay what you can**" model. There is a minimum dues of \$20 and a suggested dues rate of \$75. Of course amounts above that are happily accepted and make up for those who can't afford the full amount!

Dues of every amount are divided among the national and the state Leagues, and in the case of New Hampshire, the state's share also covers the local units' expenses. ... except if you are a member of the **Kearsarge/Sunapee League**, which manages its own finances. Their payment portal will be set up by early May. Dues are the same, and are divided among the three levels.

If you wish to join the LWV New Hampshire, you may do so at our state website, on the ["membership and donations" page](#). Click the [blue](#) button.

If you live in the Kearsarge/Sunapee area, please wait until May to join, or email us for further instructions.

About those pesky "**donation**" requests: If you have been a member, past or present, or a previous donor to the national League, you likely have been getting email or print requests for

“donations” to support the work of League. Donations do not confer membership, though they do help with national initiatives and the staff to support them. We regret that donation requests are sometimes seen as dues; they are not.

**Events on April 5: National “Hands Off!” Day protests.** *LWVUS has authorized participation in these events to protest executive overreach. They will all be peaceful demonstrations. Make your own “hands off...” signs.*

**Littleton**, noon to 3 in Littleton. [Click the link to see details.](#)

**New London**, time and place TBA. Likely on the Green, near the bandstand (Main St). Ladies Left of Center and other organizers. Check our website for time.

**Keene**, Central Square, noon to 2 pm

**Concord** in front of the State House. Organized by 50-50-1 and Common Cause. noon to 5 pm. Bring signs!

**Portsmouth**, 10 am. 2454 Lafayette Rd. (Portsmouth Green) Organized by Occupy NH Seacoast.

***Later events – save the dates:***

**Thursday, May 8**, 7 pm via zoom. **For League members in the Seacoast area**, a zoom meeting to discuss forming a regional unit, what activities to do, find tabling events, etc. You’ll be getting email invitations in April.

**Saturday, June 14**, at Hopkinton Library. **LWV NH state convention**, for members and their personally invited guests. More details to come in late April, but save the date to get together with other members, hear panelists on important issues, elect officers and board, pass a budget, and give direction to the board. Lunch included. And if you would like to be more involved, we are looking for new board and off-board people. Email us soon and we’ll talk about how you can help us make our state League an even better and more effective League.

***In remembrance of Lillian Nelligan, 1926-2025***

Lillian passed away Feb. 7, at the age of 98. She was an active member of the League of Women Voters for well over 50 years, dedicating much energy to important issues and “Get Out The Vote” efforts to educate voters. She was instrumental in the planning and execution of several nationally televised presidential debates hosted by the LWVNH.

Lillian served as the state president of LWVNH for eight years (1993-2001), then as chair of the LWVNH Education Fund for 23 years. During this time, she attended numerous national conventions around the country and the National Council events in Washington, DC. She brought three of her daughters and a granddaughter into the League, who were inspired by her commitment.

Lillian’s obituary can be viewed [here](#). If you knew Lillian and would like to attend her memorial service in Milford in May, please [send us an email](#) and we’ll give you details.



*This photo was taken last summer, when Lillian chaired her final meeting with the LWVNH Education Fund.*