



The Anchorage VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ANCHORAGE
PO Box 101345
Anchorage, AK 99510-1345
907-274-8477

March 2021

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Vacant
Vice-President	Cari Zawodny
Secretary	Carol Dickason
Treasurer	Tina DeLapp
Directors	
Editor	Joyce Anderson
	Jasmine Carter
	Keri Clark
	Margaret McDonagh
	Beth Nordlund
	Shirley Pittz
	Pat Redmond
	Schawna Thoma

Email: league@lwvanchorage.org

Visit us at: www.lwvanchorage.org

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/LWVAnchorage

Alaska information:
www.lwvalaska.org

National information: www.lwv.org

Hi League Members:

Well, it looks winter is here to stay for awhile. Snow, snow and more snow! Winter white. . .



At least we have more daylight!!

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- ♦ Alaska Common Ground - Thursday, March 25th, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. **FOOD SYSTEMS**. Representatives from the local food projects will discuss their efforts and how people can get involved or start similar projects in their community. Registration and additional information at [Alaska Common Ground \(akcommonground.org\)](http://AlaskaCommonGround.akcommonground.org).
- ♦ LWVAK Annual State Convention
Saturday, April 17, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- ♦ LWV Anchorage Annual Meeting
Tuesday, May 4, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Reminder: Time to Renew Your Annual Membership

Thank you for your continued support of the League of Women Voters of Anchorage. Membership renewal is easy and available through our website at lwvanchorage.org with the use of PayPal. (OR) You may mail a check to LWV Anchorage, P.O. Box 101345, Anchorage, AK 99510. Membership levels are listed on the website.

THANK YOU Ballot Review Committee

We would like to thank Keri Clark, coordinator of the Ballot Review project, and her team - Carol Dickason, Patty Ginsburg and Pat Redmond - for their exceptional work in creating, producing and distributing the Ballot Review pamphlet for the Anchorage Municipal Election on Tuesday, April 6th. Keri and her team worked tirelessly in January and February, under complex time frames, coordinating the content and wording of the pamphlet with multiple Muni officials and staff to make sure all components of the ballot were included and the wording was accurate and understandable. Great Job!!!

Keri was featured on the Channel 2 evening news, Friday, March 12, and explained the Ballot Review. She did a wonderful job! We received some great press and recognition.

Ballot Review pamphlets were delivered to all Muni households last week.
You can view the pamphlet online at lwvanchorage.org

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.
Any person 16 years of age and older, male or female, may become a League member.

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE ELECTION Tuesday, April 6, 2021

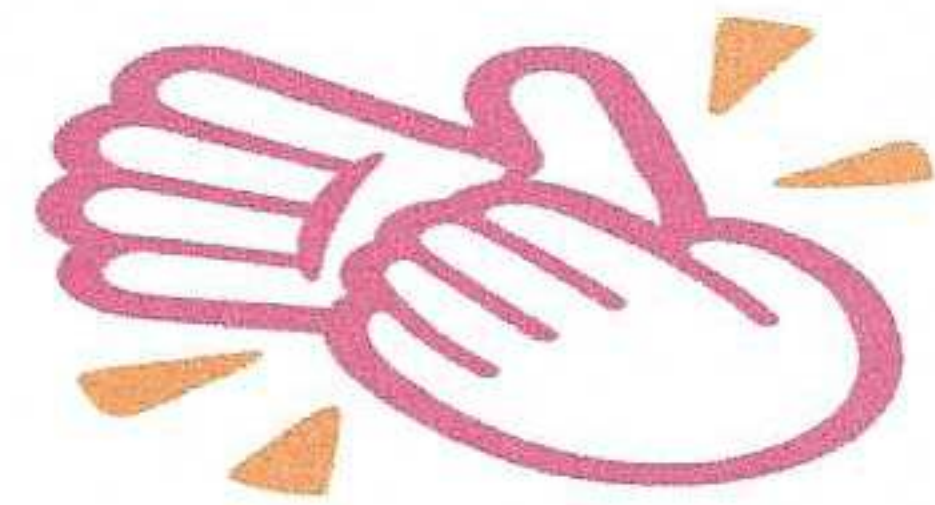
<u>Ballot Review</u> pamphlet mailed to all MOA households (You should have received yours by now. Go to lwvanchorage.org to view the pamphlet.)	Wed, March 10
Ballot Packages mailed to registered voters (The Ballot package should be arriving soon or you may have already received it.)	Mon, March 15
Election Day - Last acceptable postmark date for mailed ballots	Tues, April 6
Last date for accepting mailed ballots for counting	Fri, April 16

- ◆ Check MOA election website [Elections \(muni.org\)](http://Elections(muni.org)) for additional election information.
- ◆ Check your voter registration status at Alaska My Voter Information.

THANK YOU LEAGUE MEMBERS – HELPING WITH COVID-19 VACCINE CLINICS

We would like to thank several League members for offering their services and time commitment to ensure the residents of Anchorage are vaccinated against corona virus. Tina DeLapp, Elizabeth O'Malley and Jackie Pflaum are busy vaccinating Anchorage residents while Joan Diamond is monitoring those vaccinated for adverse reactions. Without the help of our LWV nurse members and other community members, the vaccination rate would most likely not be as high as it is today. Kudos and thanks just don't seem to be enough. **A standing ovation seems appropriate!!!!**

Please take a moment to read the Anchorage Daily News March 9, 2021, article titled, [‘If they need help, I will go’](#): [Retired nurses are a force in Anchorage’s vaccination push - Anchorage Daily News \(adn.com\)](#)



LEGISLATION UPDATE

ALASKA - Senate Bill 39, Elections: A brief synopsis was included in the February newsletter. Section 22 would remove the option to have local elections conducted using Vote-by-Mail. We are in opposition to any statutory language removing the flexibility for local governments to conduct elections that best meet the needs of their residents. A letter was sent to Senator Mike Shower, the sponsor, on March 8th. Attached is a copy of our letter. Senator Shower replied Section 22 had already been deleted and “was meant to get the debate going and include various inputs from the AML (Alaska Municipal League) and communities.” However, we will monitor SB 39 as final draft language is not available and there are other concerning aspects of the bill.

FEDERAL - Equal Rights Amendment Update (ERA): On March 17, 2021, the U.S. House voted to advance the Equal Rights Amendment. The final bill did not have the arbitrary ratification deadline. The ERA was created to ensure that all women are protected from discrimination under the law. Since its 1972 passage in Congress, the League has campaigned to make it an official part of our Constitution. The LWVUS celebrated the House’s vote, but now our fight moves to the U.S. Senate.

View our [Youth Vote PSA](#) on the ERA and the Voting Right Advancement Act (VRAA). (The VRAA was passed by the U.S. House on December 6, 2019 and now has moved to the U.S. Senate.) <https://vimeo.com/522551283>

March is Women's History Month

Let's look at a few women who have changed history.



Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG)

A larger-than-life bronze statue of the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is on display in her hometown of Brooklyn. Ginsburg became only the second female associate justice on the Supreme Court when then-President Bill Clinton appointed her in 1993. She served on the court for 27 years. March 15th would have been Ginsburg's 88th birthday and city officials renamed the Brooklyn Municipal Building, which houses many city offices, the Justice Ginsburg Municipal Building in her honor. In 1972, Ginsburg co-founded the Women's Rights Project at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and in 1973, she became the Project's general counsel. The Women's Rights Project and related ACLU projects participated in more than 300 gender discrimination cases by 1974. As the director of the ACLU's Women's Rights Project, she argued six gender discrimination cases before the Supreme Court between 1973 and 1976, winning five.

Elizabeth Peratrovich

An American civil rights activist, Grand President of the Alaska Native Sisterhood, and member of the Tlingit nation who worked for equality on behalf of Alaska Natives. In the 1940s, her advocacy was credited as being instrumental in passing of Alaska's Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945, the first state/territorial anti-discrimination law enacted in the U.S. In 1988, the Alaska Legislature established February 16 as Elizabeth Peratrovich Day "for her courageous, unceasing efforts to eliminate discrimination and bring about equal rights in Alaska." In 2020, the U.S. Mint released a \$1 gold coin inscribed with Elizabeth's likeness in honor of her historic achievements. The Peratrovich family papers are currently held at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian.

Carrie Chapman Catt Founded the League of Women Voters in 1920. At the age of 26 she became San Francisco's first female newspaper reporter. She began her career as a political activist at the age of 27 when she joined the Iowa Woman Suffrage Association. She served as president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association from 1900-1904 and 1915-1920. Catt campaigned for passage of the 19th Amendment which gave women the right to vote in 1920. She led an army of voteless women in 1919 to pressure Congress to pass the constitutional amendment giving them the right to vote and convinced state legislatures to ratify it in 1920. Catt remarked at the League's 1921 National Convention that the League began as "a mighty experiment." "... [N]o one could tell ... in which direction its evolution would go." She was one of the best known women in the U.S. in the first half of the 20th century.

PLEASE VISIT the Anchorage Museum Alaskan Women's Exhibit

The museum launched a new exhibit in November 2020 celebrating the contributions, legacies and strength of women in Alaska called "Extra Tough." With colonization and the arrival of Western cultures, the North became seen as a masculine testing ground, a place to be explored, exploited and developed. However, Alaska and the Circumpolar North have been shaped for centuries by Indigenous women's creativity, labor and love. Artists, mothers, scientists and makers included in this exhibition testify to the vital role that both Indigenous and newcomer women have held, and continue to hold, in Northern communities. Women's voices and visions provide rich ground for imagining a future guided by principles of gender equity, sustainability and strength.

The exhibit is an eyeopener to the strength of the women who shaped Alaska!!
[Extra Tough: Women of the North - Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center](#)



P.O. Box 101345, Anchorage, AK 99510-1345

March 8, 2021

The Honorable Mike Shower
Chair, Senate State Affairs
Vice Chair, Senate Judiciary
State Capitol, Room 429
Juneau, AK 997801

RE: SB 39 An Act relating to elections, Section 22
Referred to the Senate State Affairs and Senate Judiciary Committees

Senator Shower:

The League of Women Voters of Anchorage is writing to express our opposition to Section 22 of Senate Bill 39.

*Sec 22. AS 29.26.010 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:
(c) A municipality may not mail a general or special election ballot to a voter unless the voter affirmatively requests to vote by mail in that election.*

The Municipality of Anchorage (Muni) has conducted vote-by-mail elections since 2018. Vote-by-mail has proved to be safe, secure, convenient and accessible to the voters of Anchorage. The Muni and other governmental bodies have had increasing difficulty in achieving the number of election workers needed to staff polling places on election day. Vote-by-mail removes this component of the election process. Most importantly, vote-by-mail has increased voter turnout which is a basic principle of our electoral process. Statistics for the 2016 through 2020 Muni elections confirm an increase in voter turnout.

April 2016	24.77% - 51,999 out of 209,909 traditional voting method
April 2017	23.20% - 49,370 out of 212,782 traditional voting method
April 2018	36.31% - 79,295 out of 218,388 vote-by-mail
April 2019	28.65% - 65,100 out of 227,210 vote-by-mail
April 2020	30.77% - 71,382 out of 232,009 vote-by-mail

The Muni's move to vote-by-mail was a well thought out process over several years. The League was very involved with the Muni during this process. League members served on the Anchorage Elections Stakeholder Group and on several specific task forces; additionally, one

member served on the RFP committee to evaluate voting equipment as well. We also partnered with the Muni on a concentrated education and outreach program by giving presentations throughout the community on vote-by-mail. The concept of vote-by-mail was well received by the community.

The Muni has continually improved procedures and processes after each election. The pandemic added multiple considerations related to public safety. Flexibility to conduct elections (April 2020 and April 2021) best suited to the residents of the Muni under these circumstances would be lost if local control were taken away by Section 22.

We strongly recommend Section 22 be removed from Senate Bill 39. Vote-by-mail has proved to be an accurate and convenient method of voting for the voters of Anchorage. Requiring voters to apply for their ballot would amount to voter suppression.

The Muni has safeguards in place to verify voter information and track ballots received to determine any duplicate ballots. Please view the [Virtual](#) tour of the Muni vote-by mail process and operation at [Introduction to Vote by Mail \(viebit.com\)](#). Additionally, the Muni has a non-partisan commission review all pending rejected ballot envelopes. The municipal code sets out the membership and responsibilities of the five-member Anchorage Municipal Election Commission. The commission makes the final determination of accepting or rejecting a ballot envelope based on state and Muni approved reject codes. We applaud the Muni for having such a commission which is not directly involved in conducting the election. The commission also regularly reviews the Anchorage code and recommends changes when appropriate.

Local governments should have the flexibility to conduct elections that best meet the needs of their residents. Thank you for listening to our concerns. As chair of the State Affairs Committee and vice chair of the Judiciary Committee we urge your reconsideration of Section 22. We are available to testify at committee meetings.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Cari Zawodny in cursive script.

Cari Zawodny
Vice President,
League of Women Voters of Anchorage
P.O. Box 101345, Anchorage, AK 99510
907-223-0477
cariboltz@gmail.com

cc: Senate State Affairs Committee Members
Senate Judiciary Committee Members
Senate President Peter Micciche
Lieutenant Governor Kevin Meyer