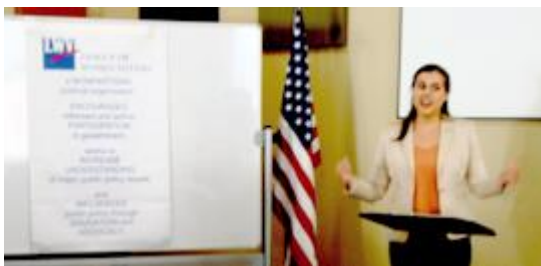




LOCAL LEAGUE HIGHLIGHT: LWV MONTROSE HOSTS SECRETARY OF STATE JENA GRISWOLD



The Montrose League was fortunate and honored to host Colorado Secretary of State Jena Griswold for what was an obviously much-appreciated town hall meeting. By way of note, Ms. Griswold is Colorado's 39th Secretary of State, the youngest Secretary of State in the United States and the first Democratic woman

to be elected to the position.

Ms. Griswold worked with the legislature in its last session toward the passage of the new laws that will increase disclosure of political spending, expand automatic voter registration, increase voting access for all eligible Coloradans-- including increased polling locations and drop boxes in the days leading up to and on Election Day -- and guarantee polling locations or drop boxes on public universities and tribal lands. Our S.O.S. made the point several times that Colorado is a national leader in election access and campaign finance transparency, as well as strongly stating that the passage of these laws most probably would not have happened without the avid work and support of the League of Women Voters.

The bills below taken from a May 29 news release are the ones about which Ms. Griswold animatedly spoke:

- The Clean Campaign Act of 2019 (HB19-1318): This legislation helps stop dark money and adds transparency to secret political spending by requiring organizations that give money to Colorado SuperPACs to disclose their funding sources. It also prevents all foreign nationals, foreign corporations, and foreign countries from spending money on any type of political communication in Colorado; ensures that corporations that spend money on ballot initiatives disclose that they paid for the communication; and requires "paid for by" disclaimers on communications to voters from any committee.
- Campaign Finance Enforcement (SB19-232: This legislation codifies existing rules that the Secretary of State's office enacted in 2018 in response to a Federal

District Court ruling. This legislation puts enforcement mechanisms into law and modernizes Colorado's enforcement process.

- Automatic Voter Registration (SB19-235): This legislation streamlines automatic voter registration at drivers' license offices and expands the program to eligible Coloradans applying for Medicaid. Expanding automatic voter registration will increase access to voter registration for eligible Coloradans and help make our voter rolls more accurate.
- Modifications to Uniform Election Code (HB19-1278): This legislation increases access to Voter Service & Polling Centers (VSPCs) and ballot drop boxes across Colorado, and gives county clerks the tools they need to run efficient elections in their communities. This legislation also improves access to voting for college students by guaranteeing ballot drop boxes on higher education institutions and VSPCs on large public higher education institutions. It also expands access to voters living on Colorado's tribal lands. In addition to expanding access for voters, the legislation includes needed technical modifications to ballot access and other election laws.

The question asked by the League was about cybersecurity now that several government departments will be interfacing in the automatic voter registration process. Ms. Griswold answered that her office has a large, talented and proficient IT team that now is able to act as "white hat hackers", that the process is not connected to the Internet, and that, needless to say, cybersecurity is and will be a constant battle.

Several questions from the audience focused on Colorado's electoral systems and its nine electors---how and by whom are they are elected, how are they required to vote---referencing the August decision by a U.S. Federal Court of Appeals in the Baca case that determined it is unconstitutional to remove a "faithless elector" for not casting their vote for the presidential candidate that receives the most votes in Colorado. Thus, the nine people who are picked to cast Colorado's electoral votes don't have to choose the candidate who wins the state of Colorado.

Ms. Griswold explained that Electoral College electors are selected by political parties at party's national conventions. Democrats and Republicans select nine people to act as electors if their candidate receives the most votes in Colorado. "A few non-elected people should not be able to decide who the President is, and potentially in disregard of the majority vote," said Griswold. "I support Wayne's (Williams) decision and, I think, it's really important to note that the idea of one person, one vote isn't a partisan issue." Ms. Griswold reminded us that although earlier this year our CO governor signed into law the National Popular Vote bill that would tie Colorado's nine electoral college votes to the presidential candidate that receives the most votes nationwide, and not just the most votes in Colorado, this wouldn't take effect until states equaling 270 electoral college votes agree to be part of the compact. So, until that happens, our current system will prevail.

Many thanks to our Secretary of State and her aide, Alex Goddard, for traveling to Montrose and giving us the opportunity to host a town hall to become better educated on the “democracy package” recently passed by the CO legislature and to personally meet her! And a special thanks to our own Caroline Evans who coordinated the event!