



VOLUME 33, NUMBER 6 • APRIL 2020



### President's Final Report to Council

It's time to say farewell to all of you. It was a tough decision to step down after the first year of my 2-year term. I served 4 years in the leadership of my local League and now 3 years on the LWVCO Board. It's time to move on. I gladly came to the LWVCO board because the board was determined to develop a strategic planning foundation to change, modernize, and move our organization forward and to enhance the working relationship between the state office and local Leagues. That Plan was developed in the Spring of 2018, and still guides our work. The board vowed that the LWVCO would become a "force to be reckoned with." [READ MORE](#)



Led by Dr. Toni Larson, the Colorado League's Director of Action & Advocacy, and Legislative Liaison Andrea Wilkins, trained volunteer lobbyists of the Legislative Action Committee (LAC) work to influence the Colorado General Assembly on selected bills, based on League positions and principals. During each 120-day legislative session, you can read about each bill the Legislative Action Committee is currently following on this "Legislative Letter" web page.

The experts on the LAC would be happy to discuss any of the bills or articles you see below. If you would like to get in touch with them, please call the LWVCO office at 303-863-0427.

Due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, the General Assembly temporarily adjourned the 2020 session on March 14, pursuant to HJR20-1007. Speaker Becker identified May 18 as the target date for reconvening the General Assembly, while emphasizing this date is subject to change depending on the status of the COVID-19 crisis in Colorado and the risks to public safety.

## Current Legislative Action Report (2020 Legislative Letter #7)

### Next Steps for the General Assembly & the Joint Budget Committee

The Executive Committee of the Legislative Council met on Wednesday April 8 to discuss the session schedule. Speaker Becker identified May 18 as the target date for reconvening the General Assembly, while emphasizing this date is subject to change depending on the status of the COVID-19 crisis in Colorado and the risks to public safety. Priorities for the remainder of the session will be passage of the state budget and the school finance act.

The Joint Budget Committee (JBC) will meet on May 4 to review possible revenue scenarios and staff from the Legislative Council Service and the Office of State Planning & Budgeting will provide an updated economic forecast to the JBC on May 12. This update will take into account the economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis and will provide the JBC with the most current information as they work to revise the state budget. [\[READ MORE\]](#)

### [We Need to Sign Petitions Online](#)

The League of Women Voters of Colorado envisions a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.

But in this time of COVID-19 and social distancing, canvassing with a paper petition is next to impossible, not to mention inadvisable. The Colorado Sun reports [the clock is ticking for citizen ballot measures, but petitioning is halted due to the coronavirus](#).

Here is a partial list of affected initiatives, according to the Colorado Secretary of State's website:

#104 Approval Voting

#105 Election Day as State Holiday

#122 Limits on Local Housing Growth

#200 Expungement of Eligible Criminal Records

#271 Policy Changes Pertaining to State Income Taxes

Do we really have to have people run around collecting signatures? Is this left over from olden times and no longer necessary? Social distancing is teaching us to do things remotely – work at home, shop, play games with friends, ZOOM meetings, etc. We can also learn to sign a petition for a candidate or initiative remotely! [\[READ MORE\]](#)

## Federal Public Health Agencies Fight COVID-19

COVID-19 information overload?

For those who are finding themselves overwhelmed by print and broadcast media, press conferences with a rotating cast of faces from an alphabet soup of government sources, "talking heads," and late-night comedians— maybe this will help.

The lead federal health agency is the **Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)**. Many of the leaders and experts that we have been hearing from (and about) are from agencies of DHHS. It is their mission to enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans by providing effective health and human services and fostering advances in medicine, public health and social services. This article describes just a few of the dozens of federal public health offices and agencies: NIH, CDC, FDA, Surgeon General, and CMS. It does not describe efforts by the departments of Defense, Homeland Security (FEMA), Labor, or State.

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/hhs-agencies-and-offices/index.html>

[\[READ MORE\]](#)

## Just Transition to Clean Energy

"Colorado's power sector, and the nation's, is moving away from coal as a fuel source based on consumer demand for cleaner power and the declining cost of natural gas and renewables. There is a scientific consensus that greenhouse gas emissions, which are primarily the result of fossil fuel combustion, must be reduced in order to mitigate the worst effects of climate change." [2019 Just Transition Act] The League follows the fundamental principle of sustainability, a way of life that seeks a balance in meeting current environmental, economic, and human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet the same goal. The League supports state revenue from severance taxes for the impact of the extraction of non-renewable resources.

Colorado is encouraging transition to renewable energy, and away from fossil fuels, to mitigate climate change. Tax policy, including property tax exemptions and tax credits (e.g., electric vehicles), is a tool. Community Solar Gardens (CSG) are exempt from property taxes on the percentage of capacity that is attributed to residential, governmental, or non-profit subscribers, covering tax years 2015 through 2020. Currently, the total CSG capacity in Colorado is less than 2MW and is assessed locally.

The principal objective of [SB20-168 Sustainable Severance & Property Tax Policies](#) is to further encourage the development of CSG by extending the renewable energy property tax exemption until 2026. The exemption is currently due to expire in 2021. The initial loss of revenue to local jurisdictions due to extension of renewable energy tax exemptions will be recovered by **discontinuing exemptions from severance tax on coal production**.

Severance tax is imposed on extraction of metallic minerals, molybdenum, oil and gas, oil shale, and coal. [\[READ MORE\]](#)

## Legislative Action Committee Issues

[ELECTIONS & VOTING](#)

[ENERGY](#)

[HOUSING](#)

[TRANSPORTATION](#)

[WATER](#)

[HEALTH CARE](#)

[ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY](#)

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Be an informed voter! Simply click on the link below for district election and ballot information:

- [Arvada Fire Protection District Directors \(2-Year & 3-Year terms\)](#).
- [Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District Director](#)
- [Estes Valley Recreation and Parks District Board May 2020](#)
- [Evergreen Fire/Rescue District](#)
- [Golden Gate Fire Protection District May 2020](#)
- [Health Services District of Northern Larimer County](#)
- [Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District Director](#)
- [Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District Title A Mill Levy Extension](#)
- [Indian Hills Fire and Rescue District](#)
- [Indy Oak TOD Metropolitan District](#)
- [Ken Caryl Metropolitan District](#)
- [La Plata Electric Association Board District 2](#)
- [La Plata Electric Association Board District 3](#)
- [La Plata Electric Association Board District 4](#)
- [Loveland Rural Fire District Director](#)
- [Park Hospital District Board May 2020](#)
- [Platte Valley Fire Protection District Director](#)
- [Pueblo City 2A Electric Utility Municipalization](#)
- [Pueblo West Metro Board](#)
- [South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District 1](#)
- [South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District 3](#)
- [South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District 4](#)
- [South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District 5](#)
- [Southgate Sanitation District](#)
- [South Suburban Parks & Recreation District](#)

The League of Women Voters has been empowering voters and defending democracy since 1920. [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org) is the latest step in this important work. The League is strictly nonpartisan; it neither supports nor opposes candidates for office at any level of government. Need more? Visit [www.lwvcolorado.org](http://www.lwvcolorado.org)



**Alternative Voting Methods - More than one way to make your voice heard!**

The League of Women Voters of Colorado supports implementing alternative voting methods but does not support or oppose one alternative voting method over another. Local Leagues are encouraged to use the above position and choose for themselves which form of an alternative method to use as long as there is member understanding and agreement. Local Leagues will need to study the alternatives to determine which is best for their jurisdictions.

[READ MORE...](#)

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**2020 MARKS 100 YEARS SINCE WOMEN CITIZENS EARNED THE VOTE**

## **HONOR YOUR MOTHER WITH AN INSPIRATION DONATION THIS MOTHER'S DAY**

With a donation of \$75 or more, we'll send your **inspiration** (your mother, daughter, sister, friend -- whoever inspires you with her courage) a baseball cap with the LWV logo and a personalized certificate naming her (or him!) a MODERN SUFFRAGIST.

Donations must be received by May 4 to allow sufficient time for mailing.

**Go to [lwvcolorado.org](http://lwvcolorado.org) to honor your modern suffragist!**

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF COLORADO

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[Make your inspiration donation here!](#)



**National  
Popular  
Vote!**

## **EDUCATIONAL WEBINAR**

**MAY 13  
6:30pm**

<https://app.livestorm.co/yes-on-national-popular-vote/colorado-lwv-national-popular-vote-virtual-town-hall>

and via Facebook Live

**FREE OF CHARGE**

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**WOMEN BREAKING BARRIERS**

# 2020 COUNCIL

LEARN - SHARE - VOTE

2 DELEGATES & 2 OBSERVERS PER LEAGUE

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 2020

10AM - 12:30PM

VIA WEBINAR



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®**  
OF COLORADO





# LEADERS OF DEMOCRACY 2020

**AUGUST 19, 2020**

*(Alternative date: Nov. 5, 2020)*

**5pm VIP Reception**

**6pm Awards Celebration**

CELEBRATING BARRIER-BREAKING WOMEN  
AND 100 YEARS OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT

HONORING SEN. POLLY BACA, LAUREN  
CASTEEL, AND ELIZABETH PIPER ENSLEY



DaVita World Headquarters  
2001 16th Street Mall, Denver

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**2020**



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REFUND CAN GIVE  
LWVCO  
A BIG BOOST!  
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