

## Voter Services News

The League of Women Voters across the nation is working on a redistricting campaign called *People Powered Fair Maps™* (PPFM) to encourage every state to create fair representative districts during this round of redistricting. Over the course of the next year or so, every state and most local units of government will draw new districts from which representatives are elected. Redistricting is a process undertaken every 10 years after the U.S. Census. District boundaries are changed based on new population figures to ensure that each person is represented equally.

In Kansas, new Congressional and legislative districts will be created by the Legislature. Likewise, local units of government, cities, counties and USD boards will redraw their districting to facilitate equal representation. Of course, beyond equal population, fairness is always a matter of perspective, but the League is most interested in its core value of being sure that every voice is heard in the democratic process. Since redistricting occurs only once every 10 years, it is relatively easy to forget how important it is. If districts are ‘gerrymandered’, *i.e.*, drawn to favor one group over another, residents can be disenfranchised before they even get registered to vote.

The League is adamant that redistricting be fair and open to public input. So, during the week of April 26, Leagues across the state will kick off their redistricting campaigns creating the #KansansDeserveFairMaps Week of Action. The Topeka event, “Fair Votes Fair Maps” scheduled for April 27 at 6 p.m., will focus on educating League members on the state redistricting process and communicating with other community organizations regarding plans for the upcoming year of map-making. Registration is required for the Topeka League event. Be sure to RSVP when you receive your email invitation or register [here](#). You will be able to learn a great deal during all the activities in the Week of Action so, take advantage of these opportunities. The Week of Action list of events can be accessed on the State League’s [website](#).

In Kansas, PPFM this year and next is a two-pronged effort. First, education to be sure that Kansans know what redistricting is, who does it, what the process involves, and the

impact of new districts on their representation in governing bodies. Second, engaging Kansans in opportunities to let their elected officials know how they would like their districts to be drawn. As with all the League's work, we urge our members to collaborate with other community organizations and to stay engaged with their elected representatives at all levels.

Longer-term League goals include creation of a non-partisan commission to increase fairness in redistricting and setting redistricting criteria and processes in statute or in the Constitution. While there is no time for those efforts to bear fruit in 2022, the education effort this year will lay the groundwork for the years ahead. Making changes in redistricting processes is not for the faint of heart – we must persist!

*Jeanne Vawter and Mary Galligan, Co-chairs*