

Empowering Voters.  
Protecting Democracy.

Newsletter for November 2023

**REACHING LWVCM**

**Voicemail:** 704-556-4600

**E-mail:**  
[communications@goleaguego.org](mailto:communications@goleaguego.org)

**Website:** [www.goleaguego.org](http://www.goleaguego.org)

**Facebook:**  
[www.facebook.com/LeagueOfWomenVotersOfCharlotteMecklenburg/](http://www.facebook.com/LeagueOfWomenVotersOfCharlotteMecklenburg/)

**Twitter and Instagram:** @lwvcm

**League in Action:** YBP438

**TikTok:** @user4970170161761

**Newsletter Editor:**  
Sara Baysinger  
[newslettereditor@goleaguego.org](mailto:newslettereditor@goleaguego.org)

1900 Queens Road, Suite A  
Charlotte, NC 28207

## Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote!

### VOTE411

[VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org)\* online voter guides for Mecklenburg, Union, Gaston, Cabarrus and Iredell counties are now live! Don't see your candidate's information? Contact them and ask if they will share their candidacy information.

More information regarding [VOTE411](http://VOTE411) can be found on our site. One-stop, in-person early voting sites and hours for the November 7 elections can be found [here](#). Voters can search for their sample ballot ahead of the election using VOTE411 or by using the Voter Lookup function on the [NCSBE website](http://NCSBE website). This will help provide voters with information about the races and referenda on their ballot. For more detailed information regarding photo ID requirements click [here](#).

### Forums

The League cosponsored the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church nonpartisan political forums in early October. President Suzanne Elsberry moderated the first forum featuring 10 of the 14 candidates for school board. LWVCM Education Action Team assisted with the preparation of questions for the forum which received coverage in The [Charlotte Observer](#). (See [CMS Board of Education](#) forum here.) LWVCM volunteers also worked to support the second forum covering candidates for the City of Charlotte races: Mayor, City Council At-Large and Districts 3 and 6. (See [City of Charlotte candidates](#) here.) Both events have had hundreds of views on Facebook Live. President Elsberry also moderated the Mint Hill Women's Club Candidate Forum on October 10.

### Vote to Honor of a Veteran

Veteran's Day is just around the corner (November 11). The North Carolina Board of Elections (NCSBE) offers a program to its residents whereby North Carolinians can vote in honor of a veteran. Consider paying tribute to those who have served our country in the Armed Forces this Election Day. Voters who opt to honor a veteran may request a pin. Pins are provided for free by the NCSBE. Each pin may be personalized with the name of the veteran the voter wishes to honor. To request a personalized pin, complete the form on the NCSBE website by [clicking here](#).

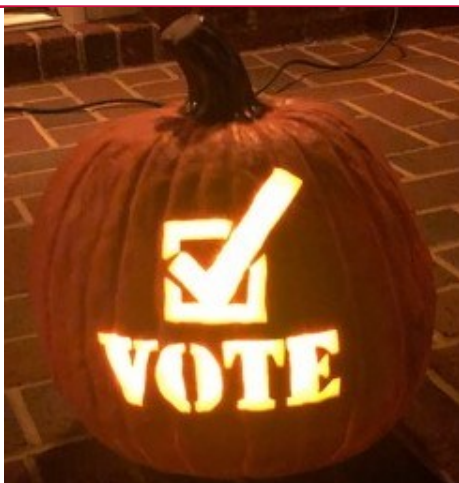
**FOR EVERY ELECTION!**



\*[VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org) just celebrated its 17th year on October 27. It was originally launched by the LWV Education Fund back in 2006.

### In This Issue:

- Page 2 Coming Events
  - Page 3-4 League Action & Happenings
  - Page 5 President's Perspective
  - Page 6 League News
  - Page 7 League Action & Happenings
- Find updates for League action and activities at [goleaguego.org](http://goleaguego.org)



## Coming Events

### Coming Up in November, December & January

- **November:** *Native American Heritage Month*
- **Nov. 1, 10am:** Education Action Team Meeting (League Office, MPBC, Suite A)
- **Nov. 2:** *Día de Los Muertos/All Saints' Day/All Souls Day*
- **Nov. 4:** Early voting ends at 3pm
- **Nov. 5, 3pm:** [Dr. Joyce Davis Waddell Center for Student Health and Wellbeing naming](#) (UNCC)
- **Nov. 6:** Election Hero Day
- **Nov. 7:** General Election
- **Nov. 8, 6:30pm:** Board Meeting
- **Nov. 9, 10am/6pm:** [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Training for Board Members/Team Leads: Module 3](#)
- **Nov. 11:** *Veterans Day*
- **Nov. 14, 6:30pm:** [League Talk: Women as Candidates for Political Office](#) by Dr. McGowan (Zoom)
- **Nov. 15, 3pm:** [Statewide League Communications Session](#) (Zoom)
- **Nov. 18, 1:30pm:** AAUW Gender Pay Equity featuring our own Cate Stadelman, Lucille Howard and Suzanne Elsberry (Southpark Regional Library)
- **Nov. 23:** *Thanksgiving*
- **Nov. 28, 7pm:** [LWVCM Book Club](#) (Zoom)/*Giving Tuesday*
- **Dec. 3:** *International Day of Persons with Disabilities*
- **Dec. 5, 6:30pm:** Board Meeting
- **Dec. 6, 10am:** Education Action Team Meeting (League Office, MPBC, Suite A)
- **Dec. 7, 4-7pm:** [LWVCM Holiday Party](#) (Olde Mecklenburg Brewing, 4150 Yancey Road)
- **Dec. 8:** *First Night of Hannukah*
- **Dec. 10:** 75th Anniversary of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- **Dec. 25:** *Christmas*
- **Dec. 26:** *Kwanzaa*
- **Dec. 31:** *New Year's Eve*
- **Jan. 1:** *New Year's Day*
- **Jan. 9:** Carrie Chapman Catt's (LWV Founder) Birthday
- **Jan. 15:** *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday*
- **Jan. 22:** *51st Anniversary of Roe v. Wade decision*
- **Jan. 27:** *International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust*

### League Announcements

**\*Coffee, Post Carding and Conversation:** Stay tuned for details on Nov. event at the LWV Office to write league advocacy postcards while sipping coffee with other League members. Postcards and stamps provided.

**\*New Member "Pre-Party":** The party before the Holiday Party! Want to meet with other new members and attend the Holiday Party together? Meet the new crew at Mary Condon's and then commute five minutes with your new colleagues to the Olde Mecklenburg Brewery. Email Mary at [membership@goleaguego.org](mailto:membership@goleaguego.org)

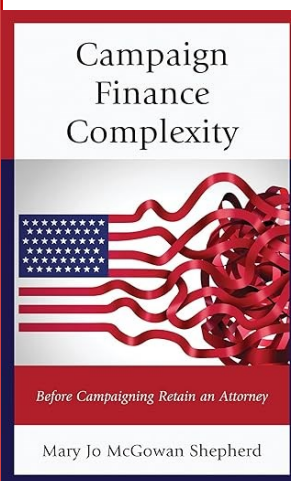
## League Action &amp; Happenings

## LWVCM November League Talk: Women as Candidates for Political Office

On November 14, the League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg is pleased to welcome Dr. Mary Jo McGowan, Teaching Professor, Undergraduate Director, Department of Political Science & Public Administration, UNC Charlotte to present her [League Talk: Women as Candidates for Political Office](#).

All are welcome! Members, non-members and guests are welcome to attend this virtual event.

Dr. Mary Jo McGowan, Dr. McGowan teaches Public Policy and Model United Nations courses at UNC Charlotte. Her book, *Campaign Finance Complexity: Before Campaigning Retain an Attorney*, was published in 2018. Among her many accomplishments, Dr. McGowan was appointed a Republican Presidential Elector in 2012. She worked as a Graduate Teaching Fellow and was Faculty advisor to UNCC GOP in 2011. In 2010 she served on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee, and in 2009 Dr. McGowan was recognized as an E.A. Morris Fellow.



### Further Background

Dr. Mary Jo McGowan received her BA from UNC-Charlotte in 1991 and went on to receive her MA from Baylor University in 1993. She had a successful career as a Business Manager with Sea-Land Service, Inc. and then Maersk Inc. working with worldwide logistics and business process development. After staying home with her



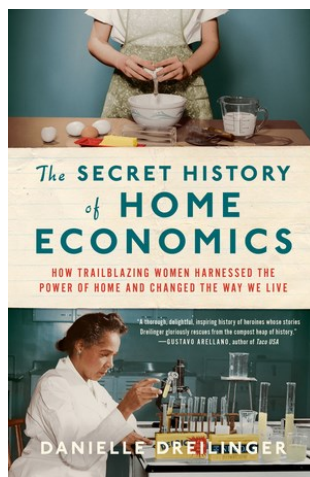
Mary Jo McGowan

three children she returned to UNC-Charlotte as a part-time instructor for several years before starting her Ph.D. in 2009. Dr. McGowan is an active member of the Charlotte community serving on numerous boards in various capacities.

Dr. McGowan's research interests are Public Policy, Elections Administration, and Women.

## LWVCM November Book Club to Feature *The Secret History of Home Economics*

On November 28, the League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg Book Club will discuss *The Secret History of Home Economics: How Trailblazing Women Harnessed the Power of Home and Changed the Way We Live* by Danielle Dreilinger.



### Goodreads description:

The term "home economics" may conjure traumatic memories of lopsided hand-sewn pillows or sunk-en muffins. But common conception obscures the story of the revolutionary science of better living. The field exploded opportunities for women in the twentieth century by reducing domestic work and providing jobs as professors, engineers, chemists, and businesspeople. And it has something to teach us today.

In the surprising, often fiercely feminist and always fascinating *The Secret History of Home Economics*, Danielle Dreilinger traces the field's history from Black colleges to Eleanor Roosevelt to Okinawa, from a Betty Crocker brigade to DIY techies. These women—and they were mostly women—became chemists and marketers, studied nutrition, health, and exercise, tested parachutes, created astronaut food, and took bold steps in childhood development and education.

*Home economics* followed the currents of American culture even as it shaped them. Dreilinger brings forward the racism within the movement along with the strides taken by women of color who were influ-



Author Danielle Dreilinger

ential leaders and innovators. She also looks at the personal lives of home economics' women, as they chose to be single, share lives with other women, or try for egalitarian marriages.

This groundbreaking and engaging history restores a denigrated subject to its rightful importance, as it reminds us that everyone should learn how to cook a meal, balance their account, and fight for a better world.

Members and nonmembers are welcome to join the discussion by registering on our [EVENTS page](#). Read about previous book selections on the [LWVCM Book Club Page](#). The Book Club meets on Zoom the last Tuesday of every other month and is registered with Park Road Books (4139 Park Rd. Charlotte, NC 28209). Mention the LWVCM Book Club at checkout to receive 20% off current book club titles.



## League Action & Happenings

### Eye on the Environment

Good News for Native Plants (and all the species who depend upon them)! This September the Native Plants Policy (Senate Bill 318) passed the North Carolina General Assembly. Native trees, shrubs and other vegetation will be required for landscaping at state parks, historic sites, and roadways, with some exemptions for crop cultivation, research, science or botanical gardens. (Native plants are the indigenous terrestrial and aquatic species that have evolved and occur naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, and habitat.)



The policy also applies to all projects funded by the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, one of our state's most important conservation funds that allocates money to protect new trails and parks.

The state also increased its budget for conservation trust funds by \$4-6 million dol-

lars for 2024 and 2025. Native plants provide habitat for native birds, butterflies, and other pollinators. Many of them are more resilient and require less fertilizer than exotic plants.

North Carolina has more than 3,900 native plant species, one of the highest in plant diversity in the Southern U.S. Invasive plant species have contributed to the decline of 42% of U.S. endangered and threatened species, but many are still available for landscape and garden use.

Look for native plants for your fall garden here:

- \* [NC Wildflower](#)
- \* [The Audubon Society](#)



#### SOURCES:

- \* [NC Audubon News](#)
- \* [National Resources Defense Council NC News](#)
- \* [US Department of Agriculture Forest Service](#)

### Environment and Sustainability Reemerges

The Environment and Sustainability had been on hiatus as members dedicated their time to registering and educating voters ahead of the current election. In preparation for post-election when members will be able to come up for a breather, the team is gearing back up its education and advocacy efforts.

LWVCM members wishing to be part of the team should indicate their interest by contacting Margaret Howe-Soper at: [mhowesoper2014@gmail.com](mailto:mhowesoper2014@gmail.com).

### Civics 101 Program Planning Gets Underway

On October 21, the Civics 101 Action Team held its first meeting to begin planning the 2024 Program. Nine League members got together for lunch, conversation, and a robust exchange of ideas. Most of the attendees did not know each other prior to the lunch, so it was a wonderful way to get to know fellow Leaguers. Many new ideas surfaced that will be incorporated into the 2024 Program. An additional eight League members who have expressed interest in helping with the Program will be encouraged to join one of the planning subcommittees: Budget/Registration; Session Planning; Promotions; and Logistics. More planning sessions will be scheduled in the coming weeks.

The team has tentatively decided to offer six-weeks of sessions on Wednesday evenings from February 21 through March 27. The session will cover the Board of Elections, Mecklenburg County Government, City of Charlotte and the surrounding towns, CMS Board of Education, NC Courts, and a Media Panel Discussion. The Program will be offered at no cost to attendees, with both in-person and virtual options. The sessions will be open, not just to League members, but also to friends, family and the general public. Email: [LWVCMCivics101@gmail.com](mailto:LWVCMCivics101@gmail.com) to join the waitlist. Registration will open in December.

### November Is Native American History Month

Famous Native American political activist Zitkála-Šá fought for voting rights for indigenous women and will be honored by being featured by the US Mint on a quarter in 2024 as part of their American Women quarters initiative. The Zitkála-Šá is the 15th coin in the series.

For more information about Zitkála-Šá, visit the [National Women's History Museum site](#).

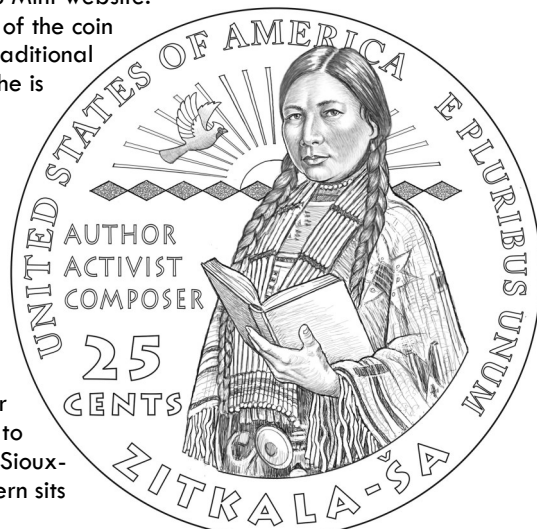
For more about the American Women Quarters initiative, visit the [United States Mint site](#).

#### The 2024 Zitkála-Šá Quarter

As described on the US Mint website:

The reverse (tails) side of the coin depicts Zitkala-Ša in traditional Yankton Sioux dress. She is holding a book, which represents her work as an author as well as her successful activism for Native American rights.

Behind her, a stylized sun represents her work on *The Sun Dance Opera*, while a cardinal symbolizes her name, which translates to "Red Bird." A Yankton Sioux-inspired diamond pattern sits underneath the sun.



## LWVCM President's Perspective



If possible, October for LWVCM was an even busier month than September as we prepared for the election. Curious to know why election day in the U.S. is held in November, I found that in 1845 our government's choice was based on agricultural and religious considerations. The month of November was chosen as it would neither hinder early spring planting, fall's early harvest nor subject voters to the perils of wintry weather. Monday was eliminated as a voting day as rural voters needed about a day's travel to reach urban polls, thus requiring Sunday travel. Wednesday, as the traditional market day, was also eliminated. So, the first Tuesday in November was chosen as the day on which to hold nationwide elections.

In last month's message, I wrote about LWVCM's leadership of a statewide initiative to determine the needs and issues surrounding public education by holding listening sessions at Mountain, Piedmont, Coastal and Eastern Leagues of our state. I attended three sessions (Moore, Carteret-including Craven and Onslow, and Wake counties) and was impressed by the valuable information and ideas gathered. Kudos to Co-Leads Jeanne Smith and Linda Traum, and members Mary Klenz and Louise Woods.

Our Education Team has spent many volunteer hours in the schools, at the polls and partnering with the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance supporting the CMS School Bond referendum. The Bond is designed to help our state's largest school district (143,244 students) relieve overcrowding, increase safety, and assure spaces conducive to learning. Many thanks to our volunteers! (For more on the Bond, see page 7 of the October Voter.)

The well-attended October Lunch with the League, featuring selected social justice poetry readings by NC poets, David Radavich and Barbara Conrad (see page 3 of the October Voter), received much positive feedback. Look for details on a second event to be scheduled during the evening to allow more people to attend.

The nonpartisan candidate forums co-sponsored by LWVCM in October at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church and at the Mint Hill Town Hall were the first in-person events since COVID. These forums served to deliver essential information to voters and inspired a new level of community engagement.

League policy supports firearms regulation for consumer safety, including limiting access to and regulating ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. According to the BBC News Service, the majority (57%) of our citizens favor gun control and stricter gun laws. Despite this fact, so far in 2023 there have been more mass shootings than the number of days. The Gun Violence Archives defines a mass shooting as an "incident in which four or more people are injured or killed" and the tragic truth is that over the past three years there have been 565 of these incidents, averaging almost 2 a day! The latest mass shooting in Lewiston, ME has been described as one of the deadliest, not only of the year, but in recent decades. The question remains: when will our politicians finally listen to the citizenry and enact protective firearm legislation?

In yet another unnecessary barrier to voters, Senate Bill 747 eliminated same-day registration for NC elections. The bill passed on October 10 after its veto by Governor Cooper was overridden by the NC House and Senate. On October 26 LWVNC, represented by the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, joined Democracy North Carolina and North Carolina Black Alliance in filing a lawsuit charging that Senate Bill 747 presents "an unconstitutional burden on the fundamental right to vote of young North Carolinians." The suit asserts that young people's right to register to vote and have their ballot count using same-day registration is impeded by SB747. LWVNC President Jennifer Rubin stated the bill "is a direct assault on the voters who use same-day registration the most, and the League is committed to dismantling any such barriers to the ballot." In agreement, Celina Steward, LWVUS Chief Counsel and Senior Director of Advocacy and Litigation said: "Laws like SB747 throttle young voters' opportunities, threatening their fundamental right to make their voices heard." Similar lawsuits opposing SB747 were filed, and it is expected that there will be a consolidation of all these cases going forward.

Please remember to vote early or on November 7 in the Municipal election and encourage others to do the same. Voter information for what's on the ballot, voting options and requirements and more is available at VOTE411.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Elsbury". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

**President, League of Women Voters  
of Charlotte Mecklenburg**



## League News

### Welcome to New League Members

#### New Members in October

Patricia Goeden  
Janice Valder (rejoined!)



Halloween Fun! Back row from left: Mary Condon, Sylvia Ross, Kim Dehler, Cate Stadelman, Lucille Howard, Donna Armbrister Front row from left: Delores Johnson Hurt, Linda Traum, Margaret Howe-Soper, President Suzanne Elsberry

#### Support the LWVCM with LWV Brand Gifts

Long sleeve apparel for colder temperatures and other holiday gifts can be found right now on our [CafePress online shop](#).



#### Remember the League of Women Voters on Giving Tuesday!

Mark your calendars for November 28 (#GivingTuesday)! This is the perfect opportunity to support the League's work of empowering voters and defending democracy. Generous contributions from supporters who believe in our mission help sustain us. If you are interested in donating to the Charlotte Mecklenburg League (one time only, recurring amount, Will & Estate Planning, etc.), please visit our [Donations page](#).

#### LWV Completes Guided Organizational Assessment

After four months of diligent work, the League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg has completed an organizational assessment guided by an advisor from the Executive Services Corps of the Triangle (ESC). Recommendations for strategic improvements were made in the areas of:

1. Running the Business-Annual Budget & Operating Plan
2. Board of Directors-Roles and Responsibilities
3. Membership-Member-Survey; Membership-Drive; Member Roles & Responsibilities
4. Communications-Comprehensive Annual Communications Plan
5. Fundraising-Train Board & Members; Develop Fundraising Plan

Sincere thanks are extended to League members Sara Baysinger, Margaret Fritze, Jane Hoffmann, Meg Rodgers, and Lauren Voorhees and to ESC Advisor Susan Henricks for volunteering considerable time and expertise to determine initiatives to enhance our League's strengths and effectiveness as we progress into the future. As implementation of these respective initiatives begins, I hope our members will volunteer their participation. A strong, dynamic League is essential to achieving our mission to empower the vote and defend democracy.

—Suzanne Elsberry, President, League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg

#### League in Action Relational Organizing Is Here

**ORGANIZE WITH US!**

Scan to download League In Action



**LWV** LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS

Look no further for up-to-date LWV information and virtual volunteer opportunities; you need not be a member to follow us! Join LWVUS and LWVCM League in Action today!

## League Action & Happenings

### LWV Engages in Politics without Partisanship

The League works to empower voters, defend democracy, and take a stand on issues. Our time-honored tradition of encouraging informed and active participation in government walks hand in hand with our commitment to nonpartisan voter education.

The League does not endorse nor fund candidates for office. Neither do we ask our members about their political affiliation. We register voters of any, all, or no party. Our Vote411 guide offers the opportunity to all candidates to explain their platforms to all voters.

We strive to increase public understanding of major policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy on topics like women's rights, healthcare reform, and funding for public education. Our positions are established after careful study and national or state member consensus.

Historically, one political party's platform has aligned with one or more of our positions. A decade later, it may swing the other way. Party platforms are not considered in the formation of LWV positions.

All members are entitled to have their own opinions, political affiliations, and partisan ideas. This is a part of the democratic experience. We are prohibited from showing bias toward party affiliations or candidates when speaking on behalf of the League or representing LWV.

The Board of Directors of LWVCM is grateful for your membership and proud of our work informing and empowering voters. We are asking you to please, when representing LWV in the Charlotte Mecklenburg area, remember to walk and talk the "nonpartisan line".



### Senator Waddell to Be Honored at UNCC Ceremony

Senator Joyce Waddell will be celebrated during a naming ceremony for the Dr. Joyce Waddell Center for Student Health and Wellbeing at the University of North Carolina Charlotte on November 5 at 3:00 PM. In addition to being an alumna of the University and endowing the support fund that will bear her name, the senator has devoted herself to championing student health, mental health and wellness throughout her 14-year public service career, first as a school board member and now as a senator. To attend the ceremony honoring Senator Waddell, please [register using this link](#).



### "If It Does Not End..." by Harry Taylor

On October 24, the final votes were taken on new congressional and legislative maps for North Carolina. Barring a court order to redraw them, these maps will be in place through the 2030 election. After the newly-minted North Carolina Supreme Court (5-2 GOP majority) overturned the previous court's November decision and ruled that partisan gerrymandering is now legal, these maps were drawn for maximum partisan advantage, extreme as possible. And they were drawn in secret—compliments of an add-on provision to the [just-adopted budget bill](#).



Three hastily-conducted public hearings (speakers were given a rigid 2-minute limit), and an open comment portal on the legislative website, but—and this should not surprise—a Senate leader admitted that public comments did not influence the maps. So much for *We the People* instructing those who pledge to represent us!

So, with the stroke of a pen, the seats of Congressmen Jeff Jackson, Wiley Nichols, and Debra Ross were wiped out. NC Senator Natasha Marcus was "double-bunked" in an impossibly-uncompetitive district, sabotaging any opportunity to win re-election. North Carolina's Congressional delegation will shift from an appropriate 7-7 split to 10-4 or 11-3. No campaigns, no elections, no opportunities for candidates to present themselves as viable and experienced legislators. ...with the stroke of a pen.

Legal challenges have already been filed based on racial gerrymandering in certain districts, but we won't learn outcomes—good or bad—for several years, almost certainly not prior to the close of the current election.

The most frustrating part of this tragedy, this assault on democratic principles, is that it has been explicitly predicted for years. Challenging to communicate to voters, gerrymandering continues because so few take it seriously and will fight to take away legislator's license to draw themselves into public office. It should be crystal clear that this odious political tactic has our democracy at the very edge of survival.

If it does not end, democracy will.





**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

1900 Queens Road, Suite A  
Charlotte, NC 28207

**Dated Material**

**Forwarding Service Requested**