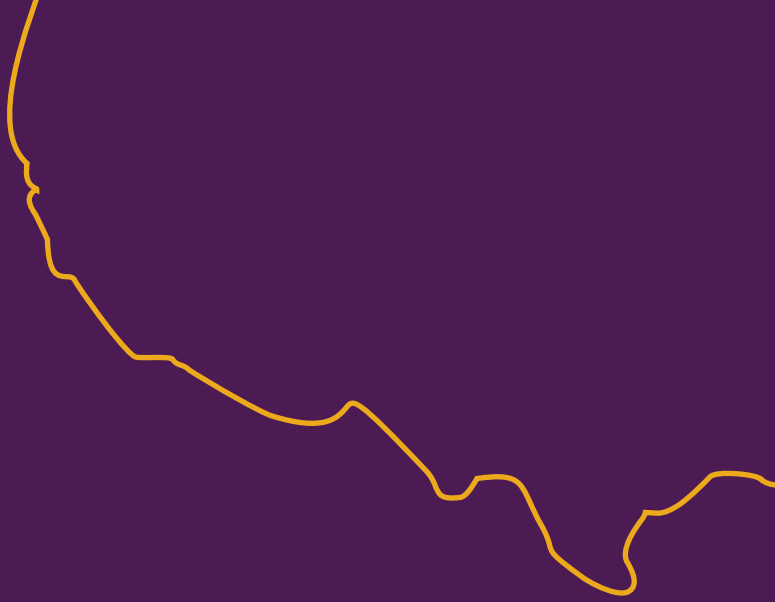




# PEOPLE POWERED FAIR MAPS







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# 1 A LETTER FROM THE CEO



In June 2019, everyone at the League of Women Voters hoped that the United States Supreme Court would hand down a ruling that would mark the end of unfair practices in drawing congressional and legislative maps. LWV, the League of Women Voters of North Carolina, the League of Women Voters of Maryland, and other voting rights groups argued in state and federal court that the North Carolina map was gerrymandered to solidify partisan advantage. State courts agreed with this position, but the lawmakers responsible for the map insisted on taking the issue to the Supreme Court. The partisan gerrymandering case *Benisek v. Lamone*, which challenged maps in Maryland’s 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, was heard by the Court along with *Rucho v. League of Women Voters of North Carolina*.

On June 27, 2019, the Court delivered a disappointing ruling that the map was gerrymandered but federal courts have no universal standard to apply to district maps. Therefore, federal courts cannot say whether gerrymandering has gone too far.

When the *Rucho* decision came down, the 2020 Census was only months away. States were preparing to draw new electoral maps that would affect voting access, representation, federal funding, and partisan power for the next decade. With no oversight from the federal courts, the process would be handled entirely at the state level.

**Luckily, the state level is where LWV does its best work.**

In September 2019, the League launched **People Powered Fair Maps™ (PPFM)**, a national program to demand greater public participation, transparency, and fairness in redistricting. This was one of only a handful of times in LWV’s century-long history that invoked nationwide action. The first was in 1920, when the League set out to educate and engage female voters in the wake of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment guaranteeing their right to vote, then in the 1940s in the push for US membership in the United Nations, and once more in the 1970s in support of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Since then, the League of Women Voters has grown into one of the nation’s strongest grassroots voting rights groups. There are Leagues in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and in more than 700 communities. With an active and engaged volunteer base, and decades of experience working on redistricting issues, LWV was ideally positioned to take on the challenge of ensuring people — especially individuals from traditionally marginalized communities — were at the center of the redistricting process in every state.

**Over the past two and a half years, PPFM volunteers have engaged at every step of the redistricting process.** Being an organizer myself, I knew that infusing this campaign with strong organizing and mobilizing strategies would only strengthen our work on the ground. From fighting for a complete and accurate census to presenting draft maps to state legislatures, League leaders and volunteers have worked tirelessly to ensure all Americans get the representation they deserve and find ways to coordinate ground swell alongside of the legislative processes happening in states. The result is significant victories in this fight — though there have been setbacks — as well as valuable lessons learned that will inform plans for the next phase of election reforms. Most of all, LWV has proved once again that the people can and should hold representative power.

I offer my pride and gratitude to everyone who participated in People Powered Fair Maps.

**Virginia Kase Solomón**  
CEO



## 2 A LETTER FROM THE CAMPAIGN MANAGER

Working on **People Powered Fair Maps (PPFM)** has been the experience of a lifetime. I was honored to join the League in 2020 to lead this work, collaborating with staff and volunteers from state and local Leagues as they tirelessly advocated for an accurate census and fair district maps.

In the aftermath of the disappointing Supreme Court decision, PPFM was designed to protect and promote fairness in all 50 states. However, LWV staff quickly realized that this initiative was also an opportunity for the national team to observe and learn from state and local Leagues working toward a common goal.

Program evaluation was a key component of PPFM, but evaluating efforts wasn't just about reaching metrics and milestones. LWV asked state and local Leagues to participate in a monthly reporting process that provided answers to questions like "What success did you have this month?" and "What support do you need moving forward?"

The result was a real-time understanding of the environment in each state. State and local League leaders informed LWV staff about their lawmakers, partner groups, volunteers, and advocacy tactics. With this communication and knowledge sharing, LWV staff could react swiftly when local and state Leagues needed resources, and all Leagues could contribute ideas across communities so states could replicate one another's successes.

LWV bolstered the efforts with technical tools. COVID-19 drove volunteers and staff alike to become experts on Zoom and Basecamp – a project management tool – which were invaluable in this process. In addition, the national office organizing team used OutreachCircle, a relational organizing tool, for communicating and sharing information and materials. All campaign staff took advantage of incredible software to analyze and develop maps that met PPFM standards of fairness. The tools supported the production of newsletters, online hubs, and social media accounts to push out information to the wider public.

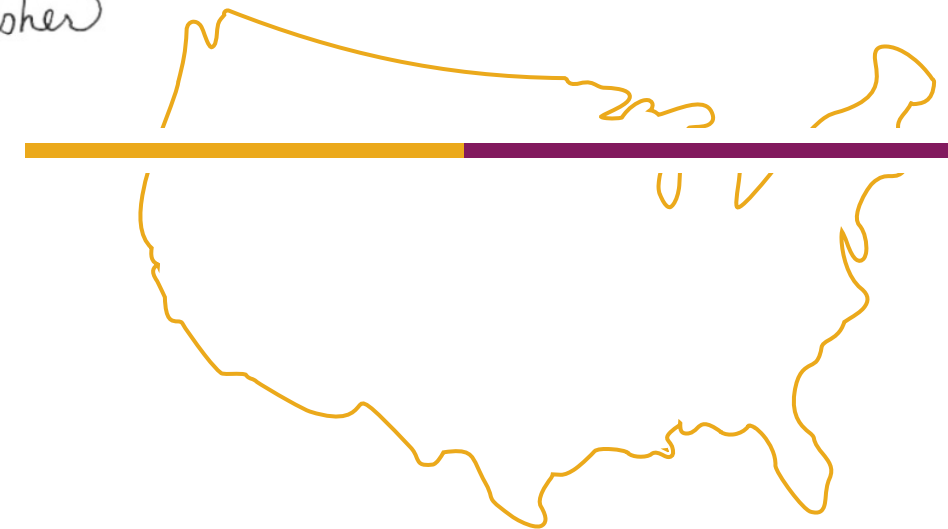
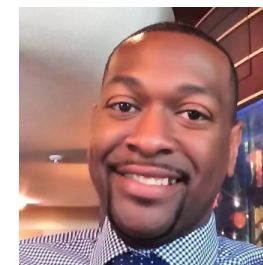
Keeping track of the granular details of 50+ advocacy efforts was valuable because the micro informed the macro. The League's detailed knowledge of what was happening on the ground informed campaign advocacy strategy and litigation efforts. It was the first time LWV worked at the grassroots level this way since our founding.

In addition to advocacy and education building, regular communication across the League and with partners built a sense of community. Everyone working on PPFM had the opportunity to learn from each other. As states experienced setbacks, staff and volunteers from across the country tackled them together, and everyone got to celebrate with each other as one League. Each state's experiences became the root of collective learning and success.

If I had to do PPFM all over again, the only change I would make would be to expand it – more staff, more project management tools, more community outreach, and a longer timeline. **The fight for fair maps isn't over, and the League's ability to keep fighting is stronger than ever.**

*Demetrius Fisher*

**Demetrius Fisher**  
LWV Campaign Manager





# 3 OVERVIEW

At the start of People Powered Fair Maps™ (PPFM), the League identified avenues through which advocates could achieve redistricting reform and equitable maps for the 2021 redistricting cycle and beyond. These included the following five focus areas:

The League centered its work on civic engagement and education, aiming to empower all communities to get involved in the 2021 redistricting process. **Through three years of PPFM, the League engaged more than 1.4 million individuals through in-person and online activities, held 3,669 educational events and trainings, and held 4,699 meetings with key stakeholders to advance redistricting efforts in their communities.**

The League also expanded its reach to diverse communities by collaborating with organizations to create educational materials, trainings, and events to inform the public of their role in redistricting with the intention to give underrepresented communities a chance to elect candidates of their choice. The League collaborated with more than 2,400 partner organizations across the country to work toward substantive change. The League was a founding member of the Coalition Hub for Advancing Redistricting and Grassroots Engagement (CHARGE) and contributed resources to help prepare community members to be a voice for their communities.

Additionally, as an official part of the Census Counts Campaign, the League worked to ensure a complete census count ahead of the 2021 redistricting cycle.

PPFM’s work led to the implementation of a new **bipartisan redistricting commission in Virginia** and achieved **fairer maps in a dozen states** in the 2021 redistricting cycle – and the number is still growing as battles in the courts continue. This report will demonstrate how the League leveraged civic engagement and education to create fairer redistricting processes and maps, and outline plans to continue advocating for redistricting reform.

## FIVE FOCUS AREAS

- 1 Ballot initiative/independent redistricting commission
- 2 State legislative fix
- 3 State constitution fix
- 4 Federal legislative fix
- 5 Civic engagement and education

## BY THE NUMBERS

**1,496,747**  
Number of people engaged

**2,446**  
Number of partners engaged

**24**  
Number of underrepresented communities engaged

**24**  
Number of redistricting related lawsuits

**5**  
Number of maps submitted and implemented

**6**  
Number of states with greater transparency





# 4 MOVEMENT BUILDING

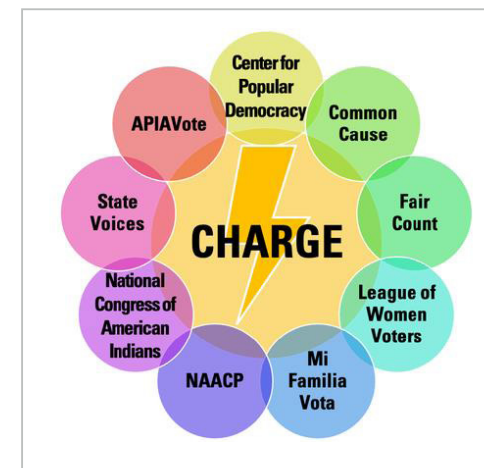
Through PPFM, Leagues engaged **more than 1.4 million people** in the redistricting process through civic education and outreach. Leagues held **over 3,600 redistricting events** including educational forums, trainings, and public hearings for the 2021 redistricting cycle. Additionally, Leagues throughout the country held **over 4,600 meetings** with stakeholders. (Stakeholders are individuals or groups in your state that are critical to achieving fair maps, including elected officials, legislative staff, committee staff, nonprofit organizational leaders, coalitions, faith-based leaders, and labor leaders.)

**“By educating someone on how gerrymandering suppresses voter rights and showing them how it affects them on a personal level, we empower them to get involved. Drawing these connections can influence people to really care and take action. Educated people are agitated people, and agitated people change the world.”**

— Redistricting Champion, Dixie Sampson of LWV of Rhode Island



## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS



The League engaged voices from a multitude of communities through partnerships and the **Coalition Hub for Advancing Redistricting and Grassroots Engagement (CHARGE)**.

Throughout PPFM, the League worked with **2,446 partners** to help educate and empower communities to get involved in redistricting. Partnerships helped LWV to connect with members from communities that are most vulnerable to gerrymandering.

In February 2021, the League joined CHARGE, **partnering with nine diverse organizations** to build capacity with volunteers and provide educational materials about the redistricting process. We joined Asian Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAVote), Center for Popular Democracy, Common Cause,

Fair Count, Mi Familia Vota, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Congress of American Indians, and State Voices in this coordinated effort. The League’s work on CHARGE **empowered 2 million individuals** from communities who are often left out of the map-drawing process to get involved, deepening and increasing community engagement in the 2021 redistricting cycle.

## REDISTRICTING REFORM ON THE BALLOT

Redistricting reform appeared on the ballot for voters in Missouri and Virginia in the 2020 election. The League ran a “Vote NO on Amendment 3” marketing campaign in Missouri in **attempt to block changes** that would change the criteria for newly changed redistricting criteria. Unfortunately, Amendment 3 was passed in Missouri by 51%. The amendment requires that new maps be drawn by a commission appointed by the governor, which means that opportunities for citizens to challenge unfair maps will be severely limited.

In Virginia, the League ran a “Vote Yes on Amendment 1” campaign encouraging Virginians to vote to implement a bipartisan redistricting commission. The amendment won with **66% support** among voters. As a result, Virginia’s new maps were drawn by the newly formed bipartisan commission, who implemented fairer maps in 2021 than in 2011.



## PEOPLE POWER IN A PANDEMIC

Changes to the 2020 Census data count delayed the release of census data needed to draw new maps. The League saw this as an opportunity to continue to educate and prepare the public to participate in the 2021 redistricting cycle. To keep the public engaged leading up to the census data release, LWV hosted several virtual events.

On April 29, 2021, the League hosted a People Powered Day of Action to increase public awareness and engagement around the redistricting process and make sure the public's voice is heard. **More than 300 Leagues** hosted events **across 45 states and Washington, DC**. More people joined in training, social media actions, and community events to drive awareness about fair redistricting.

The League kicked off the day of action with a pep rally on YouTube Live hosted by CEO Virginia Kase Solomón featuring partners from FIRM, Greenpeace, and NAACP. **Nearly 1,000 people** watched the rally on YouTube and IGTV, which also featured live music from singer Elena Lacayo.

Additionally, the League and partners held a series of events in the summer of 2021 leading up to the census data release, kicking off by raising awareness on prison gerrymandering with a training hosted by the League of Women Voters of Connecticut, who have been advocating against prison gerrymandering.

**“Prison gerrymandering is an extension of racist policies . . . The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment says that all people should have equal representation in voting; prison gerrymandering violates the Constitution’s one person, one vote standard by diluting the voting power of the incarcerated person for the benefit of the prison district.”**

— Redistricting Champion  
Patricia Rossi of LWV of Connecticut

In August 2021, the League leveraged social media to inform the public about the release of the 2020 Census data and educate people on how to participate in the fair maps process. In partnership with Campaign Legal Center, the League hosted a tweet storm using **#FairMapsForAll**. State and local Leagues and other partner organizations joined the conversation advocating for a fair and transparent redistricting cycle.

This online action helped the League reach and engaged many new voices. More than **5,100 tweets** used **#FairMapsForAll** on the date of the tweet storm, earning a **total engagement of 10,100** and a potential reach of **5.6 million Twitter users**.

In September 2021, the League hosted a Twitter town hall using **#OurMapsOurVoices**, which was moderated by CEO Virginia Kase Solomón. The League also hosted a Reddit Ask Me Anything (AMA), with partners from APIAVote, Black Voters Matter, and Mi Familia Vota joining LWV staff to answer questions about the ongoing redistricting process and how the public could get involved. During the event, the hashtag **#OurMapsOurVoices** was **mentioned around 141 times** and **retweeted 1,700 times**, reaching an estimated **748,000 Twitter users**. The League earned **110,000 impressions** and **1,800 views** on the Reddit AMA.

The series wrapped up at the end of September with a virtual panel moderated by LWVUS President Dr. Deborah Ann Turner titled “Our Voice, Our Communities: Addressing Local Districting” in partnership with CHARGE coalition partners APIAVote, NAACP, and National Congress of American Indians, as well as with state League leaders in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Kentucky. The discussion on the importance of fair local redistricting was held on Facebook Live and reached **1,341 viewers**.

League outreach and education helped draw the connection between the redistricting process, gerrymandering, and other social justice issues to demonstrate how redistricting impacts people’s livelihoods. These actions, done with partners, helped the League **reach and engage 12 communities** whose voices are traditionally underrepresented, including Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Arab Americans, Black people, Latinos, and Native Americans, as well as those who live in rural and low-income communities.

## SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

### #FairMapsForAll

**5,100+**

Number of tweets using the hashtag

**10,100**

Total engagement

**5,600,000**

Number of Twitter users reached

### #OurMapsOurVoices

**141**

Number of hashtag mentions

**1,700**

Number of retweets

**748,000**

Number of Twitter users reached

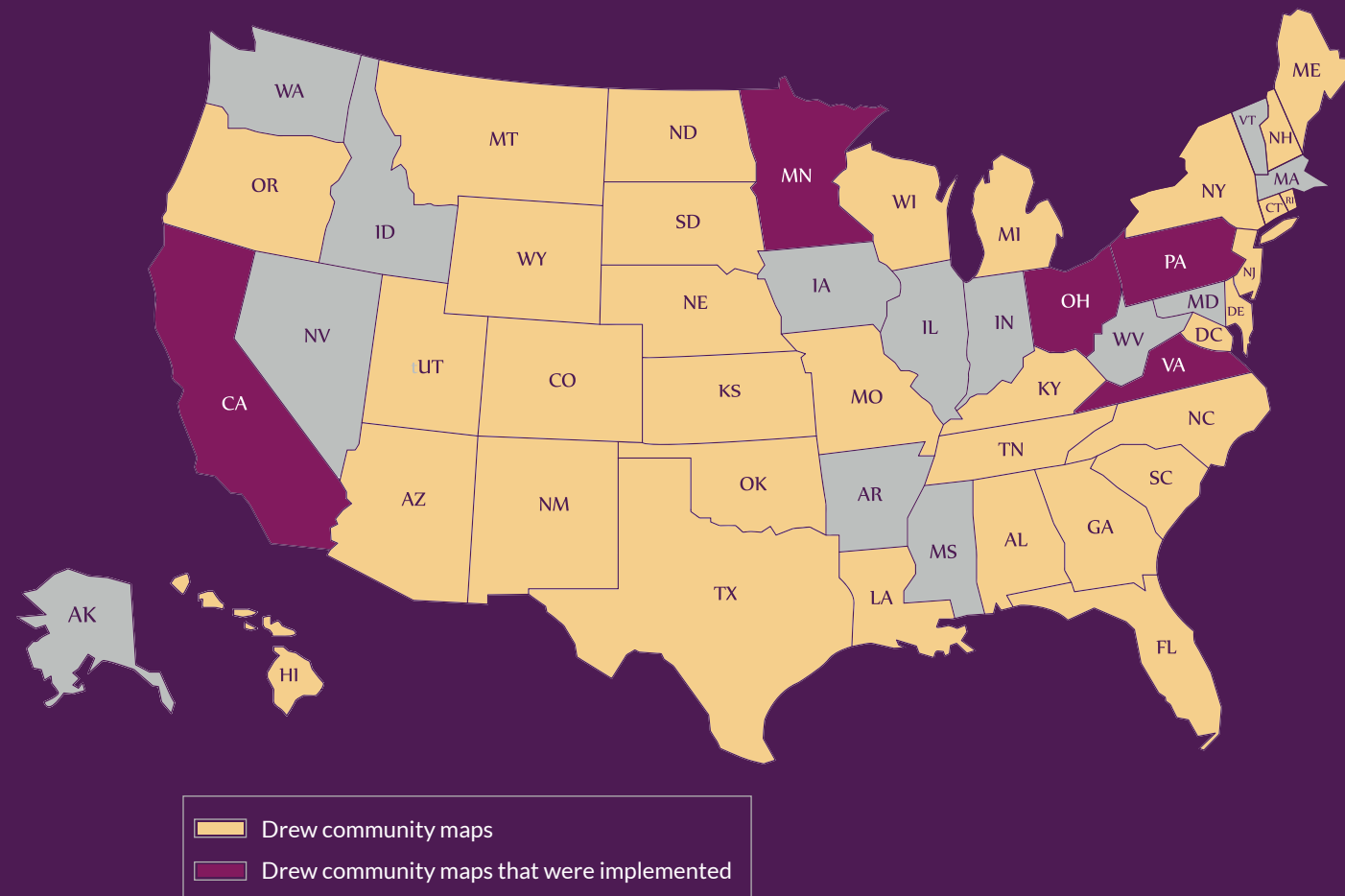


# 5 2021 MAPS AND LITIGATION

With the momentum created through PPFM, Leagues and their communities helped secure fair maps. In **38 states**, Leagues drew community maps using tools like Dave's Redistricting App, PlanScore, and the Princeton Gerrymandering Project. Of those drawn, maps submitted by Leagues in **California, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia** were implemented in the 2021 redistricting cycle.

## LEAGUE COMMUNITY MAPS

Five maps drawn and submitted by state Leagues were implemented



2

Number of states where the League has successfully challenged **partisan gerrymandering**



4

Number of states where the League has successfully challenged **racial gerrymandering**



24

Number of states that **organized public testimony** giving community members the opportunity to advocate on behalf of their community to map drawers



## LITIGATING NEW MAPS

The League joined 11 state lawsuits and six federal cases challenging congressional and state gerrymandered maps in California, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin. Of those cases, the **League has successfully challenged partisan gerrymandering in four states and racial gerrymandering in two**. These wins required states to redraw maps to ensure that Asian American and Pacific Islander, Black, and Latinx communities are fairly represented.

## INFLUENCING GREATER TRANSPARENCY

Throughout the redistricting cycle, advocates in the states ensured that the commissions adopted ethical standards with a focus on transparency, accountability, and standards of conduct. Leagues in **24 states organized public testimony giving community members the opportunity to advocate on behalf of their community to map drawers**. As a result of its civic engagement and education efforts, the League influenced greater participation and transparency in the 2021 redistricting cycle in six states.





## 6 LOOKING AHEAD

The League will continue litigating for fair maps and pushing for redistricting reform through ballot initiatives and legislative actions. Civic education will be imperative to ensuring that maps in 2031 are more equitable and drawn transparently with public input.

### PENDING LITIGATION

Though the League saw better maps in several states, many maps are still being litigated in state and federal court. As of this writing, **redistricting has concluded in 46 states**, and the League is litigating in seven states to ensure fair maps.

#### RACIAL GERRYMANDERING FEDERAL LEVEL

GEORGIA	TEXAS	WISCONSIN
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#### PARTISAN GERRYMANDERING STATE LEVEL

OHIO	NEW YORK	WISCONSIN	UTAH
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PHOTO: NewsRadio 95.3 FM/1230 AM WHOP

## FUTURE BALLOT INITIATIVES AND LEGISLATION ATTEMPTS

The League is committed to reintroducing ballot proposals and legislative language in support of fair maps and transparent processes. Leagues in Arkansas, Oregon, and South Dakota, whose attempts to put redistricting reform on the 2020 ballot were impacted by the global pandemic, are pushing for redistricting reform on the 2022 ballot.

Additionally, the League is litigating in South Dakota to protect the fairness of the state's ballot initiative process, as the League is collecting signatures for redistricting reform on the 2022 ballot.



## COALITIONS AND FUTURE COMMUNITY ACTION

Leading up to the 2031 redistricting cycle, the League will continue its efforts to strengthen public engagement in the process of working with local grassroots partners.

The League will continue working with the CHARGE partners in 2022. The coalition plans to relaunch in 2025 to focus on reform opportunities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The work with CHARGE will continue to build more training capacity and extend educational opportunities for those who want to participate in redistricting.

LWV staff will continue to support state League leaders in building and strengthening partnerships between League leaders in other states as well as establishing regional groups, especially with those who have overlapping interests and similar obstacles. This approach will foster collaboration in planning programs, events, and actions, giving Leagues the opportunity to engage more people.

The League will continue the conversation about the impact of redistricting through forums, town hall meetings, and media events at the state and local level.

Finally, the League wants to recruit the next generation of voting rights activists and redistricting champions. State and local Leagues are exploring how to engage high schoolers and college students around civic participation. Leagues have begun to identify and build relationships with youth organizations and universities to engage students and young adults in the census and redistricting advocacy work.

The League will continue to advocate for redistricting reform at all levels of government and educate communities about the importance of redistricting. LWV continues its call for Congress to pass voting rights legislation to establish federal criteria for map drawing. Every person living in the US deserves fair representation and ensuring that requires maps to be drawn with all voices involved.



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**“We are proud of the work the League has done educating and engaging voters to achieve fairer maps, but it was not done alone. Therefore, LWVUS and the PPFM team wish to thank every member, volunteer, donor, and partner who helped in this effort to keep democracy alive by creating fair maps.”**

*– Dr. Deborah Ann Turner, LWVUS Board President*

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