

LWVOR Voter

LWVUS Update
January 2019

On November 6, 2018, Wisconsinites used the power of their vote to communicate their desire for change. As a result, voters elected replacements for both the incumbent governor and incumbent attorney general.

Shortly after the election, the outgoing Republican-dominated Wisconsin legislature called a special session and introduced and swiftly passed a number of bills aimed at undermining the authority and power of the newly elected governor and attorney general. Outgoing Governor Scott Walker promptly signed the bills.

Last week, the **League of Women Voters of Wisconsin**, along with Disability Rights Wisconsin and Black Leaders Organizing for Communities, filed a lawsuit challenging the validity of the bills passed during the special session. Specifically, the lawsuit contends that because the Legislature unconstitutionally convened the December 2018 “extraordinary session,” all business conducted during the session is void and unenforceable. The League is requesting that the courts intervene to prevent the harm that these bills cause to the voters of Wisconsin. This case is expected to move forward and be heard sometime before spring.

LWV of North Carolina vs. Rucho is headed to the U.S. Supreme Court and the court has added the Maryland case, *Benisek v. Lamone*, to the mix. This addition gives the court an opportunity to review multiple redistricting cases where both political parties gerrymandered.

The League of Women Voters of North Carolina sued Robert Rucho in his official capacity as Chair of the NC Senate Redistricting Committee for the congressional redistricting plan adopted in February 2016. The LWVNC challenged the NC congressional map as a violation of the 1st and 14th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution, rightly asserting that the plan is an impermissible partisan gerrymander. The court will hear these cases combined in March 2019 and decide them before the end of the term in June 2019.

The League is represented by our legal partners, Southern Coalition for Social Justice and Campaign Legal Center. As mentioned above, this docket is a consolidated matter with LWVNC v. Rucho, Common Cause v. Rucho, and now *Benisek v. Lamone*.

LWV of New York celebrated the passage of a comprehensive voting reform package that includes early voting, same day voter registration, and primary consolidation in the state of New York. The League of Women Voters of New York played a critical role in securing the passage of these crucial reforms and will continue to work with the legislature and governor to ensure proper roll-out of these new policies.

LWV of Massachusetts is sponsoring a webinar with world-renowned climate scientist Michael Oppenheimer who will discuss the meaning and implication of two important climate reports issued in late 2018. The webinar, on February 6 at 4:00 PM EST, is free but pre-registration is required.

Please use this link to register. https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_I0Z934sVQ2OiLIsW_upzg

LWV of Florida participated in the hard fought right for Amendment 4 in Florida, which restored voting rights to former felons this past fall, and it appears the victory sparked similar efforts in other states, including **Iowa** and **Tennessee**.

LWVUS celebrated the citizenship question in the 2020 census that was struck down by a federal judge this week.