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OP-ED: League of Women Voters Clarifies Nonpartisan Stance, Resources for Voters

A recent article concerning candidate forums for the 19th State Senate district included a comment by Rachael Cabral-Guevara indicating why she did not participate in the League of Women Voters forum. "What I'm opposed to is the dishonest manner in which LWV presents itself to voters," Cabral-Guevara said. "In good faith, I can't support something that tries to pull the wool over the eyes of voters."

While Ms. Cabral-Guevara is certainly free to accept or reject any invitation to connect with voters, let's set the record straight concerning what the League of Women Voters means when we say we are non-partisan.

The League serves two primary functions. We help people exercise their constitutional right to vote by helping them register, and by providing them with non-partisan, accurate information on candidates running for elected office. We never support or oppose any candidate or party.

In short, we stand on our founding principles to empower voters and defend democracy.

The League of Women Voters proudly works to ensure that every eligible voter is registered and ready to make an informed choice in a free and fair election. Armed with a meaningful basis to compare candidates, the voter is empowered.

We also study and research public policy issues, and arrive at positions that represent the consensus of our members, who come from all political parties or none. Our positions are out there on our websites for the world to see.

Over the League's more than 100-year history, our positions have proven to occupy middle ground in American political thought. In recent memory, we have been criticized for being too conservative. We have not changed. Political parties have become more polarized. Political discourse needs to be held to a level of honesty and truth.

Our voter education tools are trusted by voters of all political stripes. Vote411.org is an award-winning source of unbiased candidate information. Voters can enter their address and instantly find the races on their upcoming ballots. Vote411.org provides a brief biography of each person running for office and their answers to questions which we publish exactly as submitted by the candidate. Unfortunately for voters, some candidates refuse to submit responses.

In our candidate forums, we ask all candidates the same questions and give each the same time limit to answer. We openly solicit questions from voters so the candidates address the issues that voters care about.

When candidates refuse to respond to our questions on Vote411.org, voters lose. When candidates refuse to participate in a League forum, voters lose. This unwillingness to engage in civil discourse damages our democracy.

Voters have come to rely upon the League to provide non-biased information on candidates. We expect that individuals seeking to represent us reach out to all voters, not just their base. They should be concerned with ALL the people within their districts.

We encourage all voters to use the tools we provide through Vote411.org and to find local information provided on our websites: <https://lwwappletonfoxcities.org> and lwwwinnebago.org.

We extend an invitation to ALL candidates to work with the League to help strengthen the democratic process.

Respectfully submitted:

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—ABOUT THE LEAGUE—

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.