



GENERAL FEDERATION of WOMEN'S CLUBS

GFWC Legislation and Public Policy Quarterly Newsletter 2022-2024 Issue No. 1

By Kathy Huggins, GFWC Mississippi Valley Region Representative

Midterm Elections Are Coming Up. How Can We Help? Volunteer to be a Poll Worker!

Election Day 2022, November 8th, is right around the corner. We know that the democratic electoral process is a critical part of our American system of government, perhaps now more than ever. GFWC has a rich history of advocating for citizens to participate in fair elections. We even have resolutions on our books that read, in part:

140-050 Citizenship Rights and Privileges

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women's Club urges its member clubs to:
Encourage all citizens to actively participate in the democratic process

140-120 Electoral Process

RESOLVED, That the General Federation of Women's Club urges its member clubs to support:
Efficient and fair election procedures in every state, providing opportunities for all citizens to have access to voting

It is important that each of us participates by voting, either in person, or by absentee ballot. But there is another way clubwomen can support the Electoral Process. In many communities, poll workers are desperately needed. Have you ever thought about volunteering to be a poll worker? The most direct way to volunteer would be to contact your county election commission. Check them out online or give them a call. Becoming a poll worker is a great way to *Live the Volunteer Spirit!*

Why be part of the Legislative Action Center?

When we are part of the Legislative Action Center (LAC), clubwomen can be advocates for GFWC's legislative agenda. Recently, clubwomen have successfully advocated for the passage of the Violence against Women Act Reauthorization of 2022, and the Puppies Assisting Wounded Service Members for Veterans Therapy Act of 2021. We will continue to advocate for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, the passage of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, and for the passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act. GFWC legislative action alerts are based on public policies included in GFWC Resolutions which have been approved by the membership at an annual convention. GFWC leadership also approves the text before an alert is distributed through the Legislative Action Center.

The LAC has recently made a big change. The old platform was purchased and it became necessary for GFWC to switch to a new Legislative Action Center platform. This platform called Voter Voice has a more modern approach with features to keep our members connected to what's happening on Capitol Hill.

Unfortunately, not everyone was successfully transitioned to the new platform. To ensure that you don't miss out on an alert, please visit the new LAC at <https://www.votervoicenet.com/GFWC/home> and enter (or reenter) your contact information. Please have your club members do the same. Bring a laptop to a club meeting to get all of your members signed up!

When you act on a legislative alert sent out by GFWC, your congressional representatives will receive an email from you letting them know how you feel about that particular issue. Your single voice is amplified by the power of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other clubwomen reaching out at the same time.

Make your voice heard by being an active member of the GFWC Legislative Action Center!

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and many clubs take this opportunity for a Domestic Violence Awareness project. <https://www.domesticshelters.org/> is a great website to help clubwomen find their nearest shelter and services, if you are interested in finding a worthy organization near you.

If you are looking for national resources, you might consider the National Network to End Domestic Violence. The NNEDV creates an annual Domestic Violence Counts Report which is a "noninvasive, unduplicated count of adults and children who seek services from U.S. domestic violence shelter programs during a single 24-hour survey period." This report is shared with lawmakers to help raise awareness about domestic violence programs and help policymakers craft legislation to support survivors of domestic violence and their families. On September 9, 2021, 80% of the domestic violence programs in the United States participated in the national count. On that day, 70,032 adult and child victims found refuge in emergency shelters, transitional housing, hotels, motels, or housing provided by local domestic violence programs. On that day, 31,424 non-residential adult and child victims received supportive services including counseling, legal advocacy, support groups, and transportation. You can find your state count at NNEDV, nnedv.org.

During Domestic Violence Awareness Month 2022, the GFWC Legislative Action Center will launch an alert urging Congress to reauthorization of the Family Violence Prevention and Services Improvement Act which is the primary source of funding for programs offered by domestic violence shelters, increases funding for the National Domestic Violence Hotline, expands support for culturally specific programs, strengthens the capacity of Indian tribes, and meaningfully invests in prevention programs at the Department of Health and Human Services.

GFWC LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The members of the GFWC Legislation and Public Policy Committee are here for you. Please contact the member in your region with any questions you may have. We would love to speak to your state federation or club, in person or via Zoom.

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TOGETHER We Advocate For Those In Need