



The LWV is a nonpartisan, political organization that

- Encourages informed and active participation in government
- Influences public policy through education and advocacy

LWV-Texas, June 2016



- Hello. I am NAME, representing \_\_\_\_\_.  
Thank you for inviting me to talk about the League of Women Voters favorite topic—voting!
- Our vision is empowered citizens shaping better communities.
- As a nonpartisan organization, the League never endorses or opposes candidates or political parties. But we do advocate for positions on issues that our members have studied and agreed upon.

**Source**

AIGA, the Professional Association for Design. (2016). *Get out the vote*. Retrieved June 16, 2016, from <http://www.aiga.org/get-out-the-vote/>

## Who can vote?



- U. S. citizen
- At least 18 on Election Day
- Not declared mentally incompetent
- Not completing punishment for a felony
- Registered to vote
  - Texas county of residence
  - 30 days before Election Day



Texas college students can vote as long as they are:

- A U.S. citizen
- 18 on Election Day
- Mentally competent
- Not serving a sentence for a felony
- Registered to vote 30 days ahead of time

### **Sources**

- (a) Texas Secretary of State. (n.d.). *Register to vote*. Retrieved June 23, 2016, from <http://www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/>
- (b) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>

## Register at either

Parents' address or Student address



If attending college in Texas, you can register to vote either by using your parents' home address or your college address, depending on where and how you want to vote.

### **Sources**

- (a) Texas Secretary of State. (n.d.). Students. Retrieved June 23, 2016 from <http://www.votetexas.gov/voting/#students>
- (b) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>

## Then vote

### Parents' address



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### Student address



- If you want to vote using your parents' address and will not be returning home to vote, you will vote absentee by mail.
- If you want to vote where you are attending college in Texas, you must register to vote through that county elections office.

### Sources

- (a) Texas Secretary of State. (n.d.). Students. Retrieved June 23, 2016 from <http://www.votetexas.gov/voting/#students>
- (b) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>

## Texas college students



### Can vote absentee

- Must be registered to vote in Texas
- Apply for absentee ballot if living:
  - Out-of-county or
  - Out-of-state



- Texas allows students to keep their Texas county residency even when they move out-of-county or out-of-state to attend school.
- They only lose their residency if they establish residency in another state for any reason, such as to vote there.
- Thus they can apply for an absentee ballot in their county of residence.

### Sources

- (a) Residence, 1 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 1.015(d). Retrieved June 13, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.86.htm>
- (b) Campus Vote Project. (n.d.). *Student guides*. Retrieved June 13, 2016, from <http://campusvoteproject.org/studentguides/>
- (c) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>

## Out-of-state students



### Vote at home or

### In Texas

- Request absentee ballot
  - Check student voting guide for home state:
- Establish state residency
  - Register to vote

<http://campusvoteproject.org/studentguides/>



- Students from another state who are attending college in Texas can vote either at their legal residence in their home state or in Texas using their school address.
- To vote in their home state:
  - They would check the student voting guide in that state at the website shown on the screen.
  - Apply to vote by absentee ballot in their county of residence.
- To vote where they live while going to school in Texas, students must declare Texas residency and register to vote.

### Sources

- (a) Residence, 1 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 1.015(d). Retrieved June 13, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.86.htm>
- (b) Campus Vote Project. (n.d.). *Student guides*. Retrived June 13, 2016, from [://campusvoteproject.org/studentguides/](http://campusvoteproject.org/studentguides/)
- (c) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>

## Establish residency to vote



- Students can establish residency for voting in Texas if
  - they intend to remain at their Texas school address for the time being, and
  - they live there except while college is not in session.
- To establish residency requires:
  - Texas mailing address
  - Utility or phone bill using the mailing address
  - If you own a vehicle, establishing residency requires:
    - Vehicle registration within 30 days
    - Texas Driver's License within 90 days
- Voter registration requires:
  - Mailing address within the county.

### Sources

(a) Residence, 1 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 1.015(d). Retrieved June 13, 2016, from

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.86.htm>

(b) Google images. Retrieved June 16, 2016 from <https://images.google.com>

## Student ID ≠ voter ID



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### Valid photo ID

- **Issued by Texas DPS**
  - Texas driver license
  - Texas Election ID
  - Texas personal ID
  - Texas concealed handgun license
- **Issued by U.S. Govt.**
  - Military ID card with photo
  - U.S. citizenship certificate with photo
  - U.S. passport

- An ID is required to vote in person in Texas, and
- First-time voters who are voting by mail and did not list their Texas driver license number or last four digits of their Social Security number on their Voter Registration Application will also be required to provide an ID along with their returned ballot.
- If you have one of the seven forms of photo ID listed,
  - you must use it and
  - the ID cannot have expired more than 4 years before voting.
    - The 4-year expiration is new in 2016--previously 6 months.
- Voters who do not show an acceptable ID at the polls can vote a regular ballot if they sign a simple form and present one of the following other documents (see next slide).

### Sources

- (a) Regular Procedure for Accepting Voter, 6 EX. ELEC. CODE § 63.001. Retrieved June 13, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.63.htm#63.0101>
- (b) Texas Secretary of State. (n.d.). *Texas voting*. Retrieved June 13, 2016, from <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/pamphlets/largepamp.shtml>
- (c) Texas Secretary of State. (2016, January). *Notice to voter who must provide identification (for voters voting by mail)*. Retrieved June 14, 2016, from <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/5-22af.pdf>



***If no photo ID, sign a simple form and present one of the following other documents:***

- Voter registration card (valid)
- Certified birth certificate (original)
- Current utility bill
- Bank statement
- Government check
- Paycheck
- Or any other government document with voter's name and address



**New in 2016:**

- You can vote by regular ballot instead of provisional ballot if you do not have a photo ID but sign the form and provide an alternative document.
- Addresses on your ID and voter registration do not need to match.
- Election officials and poll workers may not question you about voter ID issues.

**Source**

Texas Secretary of State. (2012; updated 2016). *Registration*. Retrieved August 22, 2016, from <http://www.votetexas.gov/faq/registration#2071>

**REQUEST  
MAIL BALLOT**

**Deadline:  
11 days before  
Election Day  
Oct 28 this fall**

- Call (800) 252-VOTE *or*
- Print or order online at  
[www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/reqabm.shtml](http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/reqabm.shtml)

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- Send your Application for Ballot by Mail as early as 60 days before an election. This will give you plenty of time to receive your ballot, mark it, and mail it back to the county early voting clerk.
- The application must be **received**
  - by your county early voting clerk
  - not later than the 11th day before Election Day.
    - Oct. 28 for Nov 8 Election Day in 2016
- To obtain an application, you can either:
  - Call your local county elections office or the Texas Secretary of State Office or
  - Download and print an application or order one at this website
    - Note to speaker: Information not easily retrievable by searching VOTETEXAS.GOV home page

**Resources**

- (a) Texas Secretary of State. *Application for a ballot by mail.*  
<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/reqabm.shtml>
- (b) Texas Secretary of State. *Listing of county websites.*  
<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml>
- (c) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>

**Application for Ballot by Mail**

1 Last Name (Please print information)

2 Residence Address: See back of application for instructions

3 Mail my ballot to: If mailing a ballot to a different residence

4 Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)

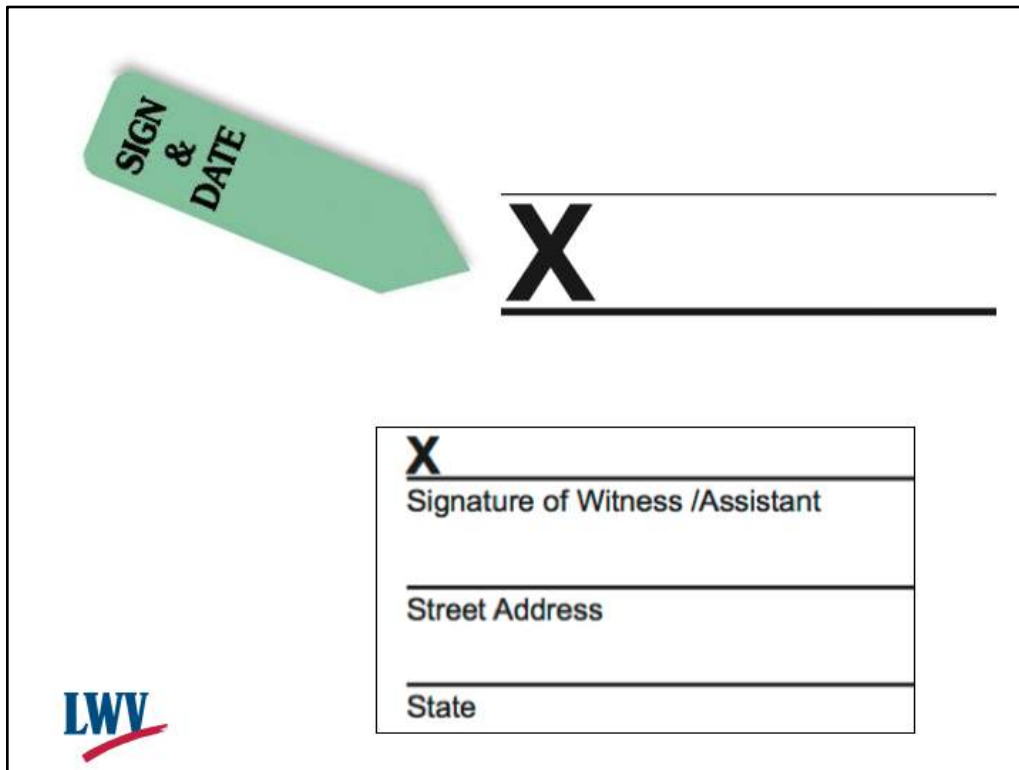
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In completing the application:

- Your name and residence address must match what is on your voter registration card. If you have moved
  - Within the county: Update address online
  - To a different county: Fill out a new Voter Registration Application
- “Mail ballot to:”
  - This is the address where you want your ballot sent.
  - And that address depends on the reason you are voting by mail.

**Sources**

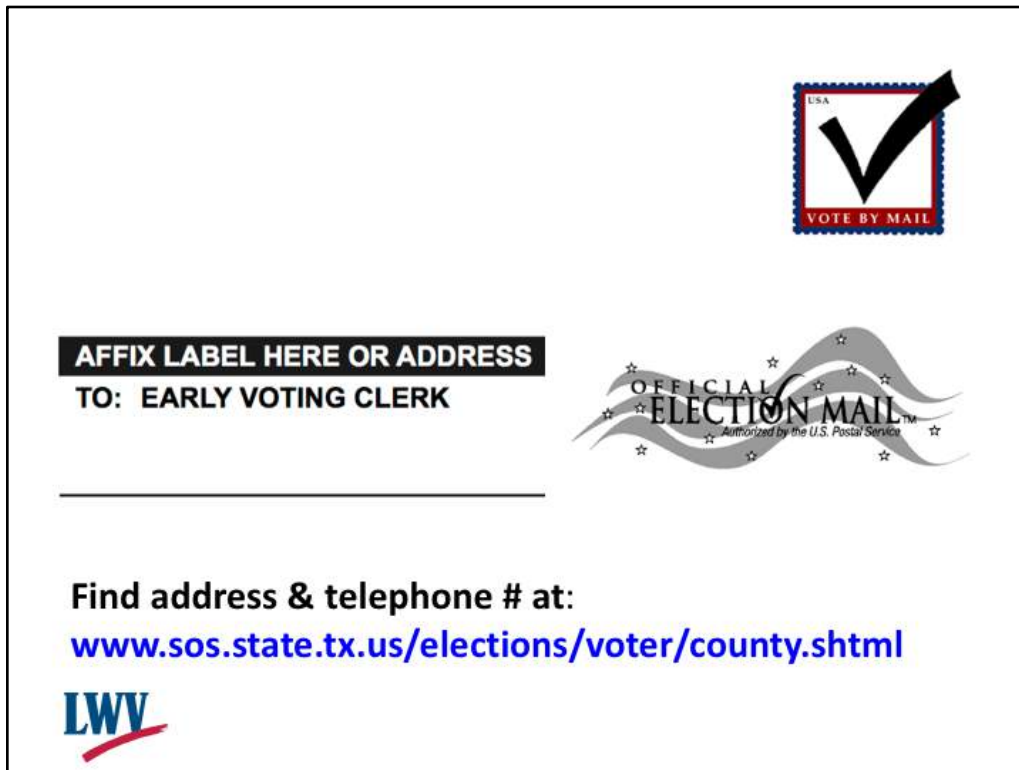
- (a) Texas Secretary of State. (n.d.). *Application for ballot by mail* [form]. Retrieved June 6, 2016, from <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/5-15f.pdf>
- (b) Texas Secretary of State. (n.d.). *Voter name and address changes*. Retrieved June 14, 2016, from <https://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/sos/SOSACManager>
- (c) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>



- Sign and date your Application for Ballot by Mail.
  - Your signature MUST match the one on your voter registration card.
- If you are unable to sign it yourself:
  - A person can witness your mark or attest that you cannot make a mark.
  - The witness or assistant must not only sign the application but provide an address and the relationship to the voter.
    - Unless the witness is a close relative, it is a misdemeanor to witness more than one Application for Ballot by Mail.
    - It is also a misdemeanor to omit the requested information.

**Sources**

- (a) Texas Secretary of State. (n.d.). *Application for ballot by mail* [form]. Retrieved June 6, 2016, from <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/5-15f.pdf>
- (b) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>



- Next, add the address of your county elections office to the designated spot on the application.
- Then fold the application, tape it shut, and put a first class stamp on it before mailing it.
- It can also be scanned and emailed or faxed to your elections office.

**Sources**

- (a) Texas Secretary of State. (n.d.). *Application for ballot by mail* [form]. Retrieved June 6, 2016, from <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/5-15f.pdf>
- (b) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>

# Voting



- When you get your ballot by mail, it will contain:
  - Instructions from the Texas Secretary of State,
  - an official ballot,
  - a ballot envelope, and
  - another envelope addressed to the county elections office (commonly called the carrier envelope).
- The two envelopes are usually different colors and vary from county to county and year to year.

## Sources

- (a) Additional Balloting Materials, 7 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.002. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.86.htm>
- (b) Election day. (2008, October 17). *Me and you and Ellie* [Blog]. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from <http://meandyouandellie.blogspot.com/2008/10/election-day.html>

## Vote



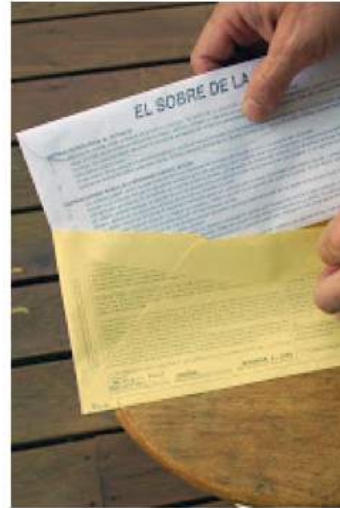
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- For each office, vote for the candidate of your choice.
  - Mark the ballot according to the instructions on the ballot envelope.
  - Some counties specify that the bubble be filled in by using a black or blue ink pen.
  - There is also a place at the top of the ballot to vote a straight ticket for one party.
- After you are done voting, fold the ballot and place it in the ballot envelope.

### **Sources**

- (a) Marking and Sealing the Ballot, 7 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.005. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.86.htm>
- (b) Lubbock County Elections Department. (2012). *How to mark a ballot by mail*. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from <http://www.votelubbock.org/voter-education/how-to-mark-a-ballot/>
- (c) Election day. (2008, October 17). *Me and you and Ellie* [Blog]. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from <http://meandyouandellie.blogspot.com/2008/10/election-day.html>

## Seal and insert



Seal the ballot envelope and place it inside the pre-addressed carrier envelope.

### **Sources**

- (a) Marking and Sealing the Ballot, 7 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.005. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.86.htm>
- (b) Election day. (2008, October 17). *Me and you and Ellie* [Blog]. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from <http://meandyouandellie.blogspot.com/2008/10/election-day.html>



## Seal and sign



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- Seal the outside envelope before signing your name.
- Sign your name next to the X on the back of the envelope.
- Be sure this signature is exactly the same as the signature on your Application for Ballot by Mail.

### **Sources**

- (a) Marking and Sealing the Ballot, 7 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.005. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.86.htm>
- (b) Election day. (2008, October 17). *Me and you and Ellie* [Blog]. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from <http://meandyouandellie.blogspot.com/2008/10/election-day.html>

## Mail it!



- Add the required postage and mail!
- If you are afraid to mail the envelope with your signature showing, you can put it in a larger envelope to mail. But be sure to:
  - have the correct address and
  - add enough postage.
- You can also use UPS or FedEx.
- In any case, only one sealed ballot can be placed in another envelope for mailing (unless ballots are from the same address).
- If you cannot mail your own ballot, give it to a trusted friend to mail. Never give it to a stranger or a someone working for a candidate or political party.

### Sources

- (a) Method of Returning Marked Ballot, 7 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.006. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.86.htm>
- (b) Election day. (2008, October 17). *Me and you and Ellie* [Blog]. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from <http://meandyouandellie.blogspot.com/2008/10/election-day.html>

## Deadlines – Nov 8 Election

- Tuesday, October 11
  - Last day Voter Registration Application postmarked
- Friday, October 28
  - Last day Application for Mail Ballot received
- Tuesday, November 8, 7:00 pm
  - Last day mailed ballot received



- Note that while a Voter Registration Application is valid if postmarked by the deadline, the Application for Mail Ballot and the marked ballot must be **received** in the elections office on the deadline—not post marked.
- This means to get there on time, a local ballot must be mailed at least 3-4 days in advance of the deadline.

### **Sources**

- (a) Delivery of Application to Registrar, 2 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 13.042. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.13.htm#13.002>
- (b) Submitting Application for Ballot Voted by Mail: General Rule, 7 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 84.008. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.84.htm>
- (c) Deadline for Returning Marked Ballot, 7 TEX. ELEC. CODE § 86.007. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/EL/htm/EL.86.htm>

## Common Errors

- Envelope not signed
- Signature does not match that on application
- Ballot mailed too late



There are always some ballots that don't count because of a simple oversight, such as:

- Forgetting to sign the outside envelope.
- The signature on the envelope and on the Application for Mail Ballot are different.
- Worst of all, it got in the mail too late to arrive by Election Day.

### **Sources**

- (a) California Forward. (2014). Three common errors: Voting by Mail [Image] in *Your final vote by mail cheatsheet!* Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.cafwd.org/reporting/entry/your-final-vote-by-mail-cheatsheet>
- (b) Google images. Retrieved June 1, 2016, from <https://images.google.com>

- Register
- Plan ahead
- Learn
- Vote

[lwvtexas.turbovote.org/](http://lwvtexas.turbovote.org/)



In short, there are four basic steps:

- Register to vote
- Plan ahead
  - Apply to vote by mail as soon as you can
  - Or check out your polling place
- Learn about the candidates and their stands on the issues.
- If want a reminder to vote, sign up with Turbovote.

**Source**

AIGA, the Professional Association for Design. (2016). *Get out the vote*. Retrieved June 16, 2016, from <http://www.aiga.org/get-out-the-vote/>



## The power is in numbers!

- Millennials are not only the largest living generation in the U.S., but have caught up with Baby Boomers in their share of the electorate.
  - Millennials comprise 1/3 of the voting-eligible population.
- Politicians listen to the people who vote
  - Senior citizens in this country have great government programs like Social Security and Medicare. That's because seniors as a group have a high turnout rate. So elected officials are very responsive to their needs.
  - Young people historically have had a low turnout rate, so politicians are less in tune with their needs.
- But more millennials are voting – the number voting in the 2016 primaries was up 1.5% over 2008, when both parties last had a competitive presidential race.

### Sources

- (a) CIRCLE. (2016). Cumulative youth vote in primaries/caucuses 2016. *2916 Election center*. Retrieved June 22, 2016 from <http://civicyouth.org/quick-facts/2016-election-center/>
- (b) Fry, R. (2016, May 16). Millennials match Baby Boomers as largest generation in the U.S. electorate, but will they vote? *Pew Research Center FactTank*. Retrieved June 22, 2016, from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/05/16/millennials-match-baby-boomers-as-largest-generation-in-u-s-electorate-but-will-they-vote/>
- (c) AIGA, the Professional Association for Design. (2016). *Get out the vote*. Retrieved June 16, 2016, from <http://www.aiga.org/get-out-the-vote/>

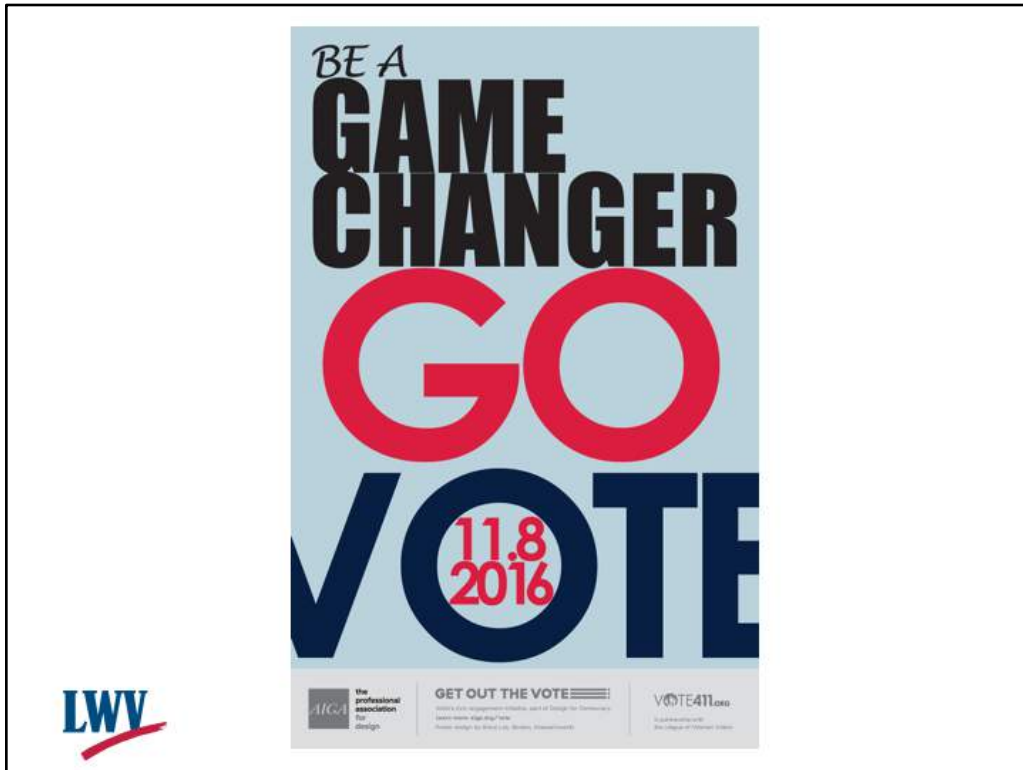


Why vote? Because it counts in so many ways!

- Most importantly, voters elect officials who make government policies that effect our lives, such as the
  - Interest rates you pay on your student loan
  - Taxes taken out of your paycheck
  - Health care benefits you get at your job
  - Availability of bike paths, parks, and libraries where you live
- Some of you may not like the choices on the ballot or the fact that your preferred candidate in the last election lost.
  - But in fact, usually half the voters (more or less) win and the rest lose.
  - Close elections encourage elected officials to listen to diverse opinions on an issue.
  - In the upcoming election, we need to vote and make the best choice we can among those running to keep our government functioning.
- And, yes, one vote can make a difference.
  - In the May 2016 Irving city council election, a runoff election was avoided because when one provisional ballot was counted, it pushed the incumbent over the 50% threshold required to avoid a runoff.
- The only time your vote doesn't count is when you don't vote.

**Source**

Brumfield, L. (2016, May 14). 1 vote decides winner: Provisional ballot takes incumbent to 50.01%/ *Dallas Morning News*. Retrieved May 14, 2016, from <http://ireader.olivesoftware.com/Olive/iReader/DMN/SharedArticle.ashx?document=DMN%5C2016%5C05%5C14&article=Ar02104>



Do you think that:

- College tuition should be free?
- The minimum wage for internships should be enforced?
- Pell grant awards should be increased to 100% of the average in-state tuition?
- Marijuana should be legalized?
- The voting age should be lowered to age 16?

Whatever your issue is that involves government policy, voting is one way to have some control over the decisions.

This is a competitive election, so be a game changer!