

2026 Legislative Interview Guide

PURPOSE

Legislative interviews give an opportunity for LWVMN members to meet their legislators and learn about them. The purpose is *not* to advocate on LWVMN issues on behalf of LWVMN.

The main purposes are: to develop an ongoing relationship with legislators, ask about issues important to local Leagues, and gather feedback on LWVMN's legislative priorities.

Members may share an LWVMN position if the legislator asks and the member knows the position, but members should not offer an LWVMN position without being asked for it by a legislator. Doing so might suggest to the legislator that you are seeking a particular answer. Legislative interviews offer constituents and the League an opportunity to hear from *them*.

At all stages of the legislative interview process, members must follow the [Member Code of Conduct](#), the [Speak With One Voice Policy](#), and the [Best Practices for Staying Nonpartisan in Advocacy](#).

If the district of the legislator you wish to meet with covers more than one local LWV, please coordinate with the other [local LWV](#) to prevent duplicative meetings and contact Sam at sstreuken@lwvmn.org if you have any questions about this or legislative interviews!

FORMATS

You may wish to consider various formats for your legislative interviews, including via videoconference (e.g., Zoom). Local LWVs will do town hall-style public meetings with individual legislators, panels of multiple legislators, and others do small group meetings with individual legislators. LWVMN encourages a format that will fit the needs of the local community and increase the likelihood of participation by the legislator. You can, and are encouraged, to request to meet with your legislator locally rather than at the Capitol.

GETTING THE INTERVIEW

Call your legislator's Legislative Assistant to arrange a time and place to meet with your legislator. Senator's Legislative Assistant, [use the Minnesota Legislature website to find the Senator](#). Click their name to go to a web page where their Legislative Assistant's name and contact information will be listed. Members of the House of Representatives might not have a clearly assigned Legislative Assistant. Instead, call their number listed on the [Representatives-Elect webpage](#) and state the purpose of your call.

If the legislator accepts the interview, be sure to send them a copy of the questions you will be asking at least several days ahead of the meeting. *Do not surprise the legislator with questions that they did not preview.* Please also let LWVMN know if the legislator declines.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introduce yourselves to the legislator, stating what area of their district you live in. State that you are a member of LWVMN and your local LWV. Explain that LWVMN is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that does not endorse or oppose candidates or political parties. Also explain that LWVMN holds nonpartisan candidate forums, runs nonpartisan voter registration drives, and advocates on a limited number of issues. We are just looking to hear *from them*.

On occasion, some legislators share their beliefs that LWV is not nonpartisan, or otherwise may be critical of LWV. Please thank the legislator for their candor, and express that you will report the information to the state office for their consideration and get back to them. You might also share any contact information that you have of LWVMN staff, invite them to future meetings, or direct them to our website.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

Please have at least one LWV member record or accurately summarize the responses of each legislator.

Here's an example of what a clear summary would look like:

What inspired you to run for office?

Susan Kent	Ran in 2012, state government on wrong track, wanted more for families, elderly, health, education, not a big government handout, better policy to improve overall financial health
Tou Xiong	Next progressive step and to continue work started at council level and in the community; motivated to run by failed 2018 Tax Conformity and Health Care
Steve Sandell	Recruited to run, strong background in education and focus on wellbeing of all society
Karla Bigham	Previous experience city council & public safety, didn't like what was going on, love community wanted to give back
Anne Claflin	Environmental Scientist, Started with job, need to take a risk to make a difference
Tony Jurgens	Already working in community, I saw it as an opportunity to make a greater contribution to community

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

The following questions are suggested to ask your legislators on LWVMN's legislative priorities and will be most helpful to LWVMN's advocacy efforts.

Their Own Priorities

1. What inspired you to run for office? How are you finding common ground with your colleagues, especially after recent political violence?
2. What will your top three priorities be for this legislative session and why?
3. What do you see as the biggest concerns facing Minnesota and how can we address them?
4. What, if any, legislation do you currently plan to introduce?

LWVMN Priority Issues

5. (Depending on if you ask a Packer or Viking fan), Minnesota once again led the nation in voter turnout in 2024 with safeguards that detected isolated issues. Would you propose any changes to existing election administration requirements to improve either access to the ballot by eligible voters, or improve election security and trust in elections? Why?
6. Across the country, we have seen efforts at so-called “mid-cycle redistricting” supported by whichever party is in power. While Minnesota’s divided legislature is unlikely to follow suit, the courts in Minnesota may once again have to draw congressional and legislative maps if the legislature and governor cannot agree on maps after the 2030 census. What is your perspective on changing Minnesota’s current redistricting process to create an independent citizen commission, with principles and a process to assure public input and participation and maps that reflect the nonpartisan interests of voters?
7. After we saw another mass shooting at Annunciation Church and School in August, many Minnesotans have asked leaders to take steps to prevent gun violence. What policies would you support that reduce homicides, suicides, or unintentional deaths or injuries due to firearms?
8. Minnesota has strong laws to conserve and protect our natural resources. At the same time, companies seek to access these resources whether through mining projects or operating data centers. How will you ensure government transparency and accountability to uphold our environmental laws and safeguard the public interest?

9. What is your perspective on the large amounts of money being spent by individuals and groups in MN to influence election results? What changes would you support to reduce the influence of big money in elections?
10. (Optional) Do you support adding an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Minnesota Constitution?

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

After the interview, thank your legislators for their time. **Please also send your notes and summaries to Sam or the LWVMN state office at info@lwvmn.org.** LWVMN recommends that interviews be completed before mid-February.

REMINDER: AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON “THANK YOU” CARDS, GIFTS, AND MEALS

It is often socially acceptable to provide small gifts of appreciation to speakers or partners who work with LWV. In the past, legislators who have participated in legislative interviews have sometimes been thanked with complimentary meals or food.

However, anti-bribery laws prohibit organizations that lobby, **including LWV**, from providing certain gifts to certain public officials, including state legislators. **Do not offer gifts, food or drink, or other compensation to public officials for attending legislative interviews.** However, a thank you card and/or “I will vote!” button would be appropriate.

There is one exception: If your format for legislative interviews is a large public event where public officials are *required* to present to *the full room of attendees*, you may provide a complimentary meal. Otherwise, do not provide gifts or meals during legislative interviews. If you believe your LWV’s interview process would fall under this exception, or if you have questions about this issue, contact info@lwvmn.org to confirm before proceeding. LWVMN must report the event to the Campaign Finance & Public Disclosure Board.