



Unite & Rise 8.5 Wisconsin: A Campaign to Defend Democracy



Unite & Rise 8.5 aims to build a movement of 8.5 million individuals to unite and rise up against the anti-democratic actions of this administration. Launching in May 2025 and running until the 2026 midterm elections, this initiative is part of our [Women Defend Democracy](#) campaign. Find the LWVWI Unite & Rise 8.5 webpage [HERE](#). For any questions, please contact Eileen Newcomer: enewcomer@lwvwi.org

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Overview

The number 8.5 million is the estimated number of voters it would take to bring about change through nonviolent protest. This is based on the [following finding](#) from the Carr-Ryan Center for Human Rights:

“Nonviolent protests are twice as likely to succeed as armed conflicts...and those engaging a threshold of 3.5% of the population have never failed to bring about change.”

According to the [University of Florida](#), approximately 245 million Americans were eligible to vote in the 2024 general election. According to the above research, if 3.5% of



these eligible voters — 8,575,000 people — engage in nonviolent protests, we *will* bring about meaningful change.

Messaging

Topline

1. Our country is in a constitutional crisis:

- The League defines a Constitutional Crisis as: When the executive, the legislative, or judiciary branches cannot or will not adequately protect the US Constitution, when there are explicit attempts to dismantle a functional democracy within any of the three branches, or when any level of federal government takes action to destroy democratic institutions in a manner that intentionally or purposefully jeopardizes the US Constitution.

2. There are four pillars of Unite & Rise 8.5 from LWVUS:

1

Legal & Policy Advocacy: Challenge unconstitutional actions through litigation, advocate for electoral integrity reforms at state and federal levels, fight voter suppression, and protect due process.

2

Public Mobilization & Coalition Building: Turn out millions for quick activations and longer-planned activist campaigns, uplift local voices, and partner with grassroots, national, and international organizations.

3

Civic Education & Engagement: Launch public awareness campaigns, expand voter registration and turnout efforts, host educational forums, connect policy to real-life impact, and equip people with tools to act.

4

Democracy Resilience: Build lasting infrastructure to protect democratic values and institutions for the long haul.

3. LWVWI has four pillars as well, specific to our needs in Wisconsin:



Unite & Rise Wisconsin Pillars:

1. Defend democracy & reject authoritarianism
2. Empower people with their rights & stand united in solidarity
3. Standing up to protect human rights including:
 - a. **Protect voting rights**
 - b. **End mass deportation and keep families together**
 - c. **Protect reproductive rights**
 - d. **Protect LGBTQ+ rights**
4. Lay the foundation for a more just democracy in Wisconsin

Best Practices

- Messaging formula: Shared values (freedom to vote, unity) + problem (legislators who don't reflect our values/trying to erode voting rights/power-grab) + solution (standing together to vote no, keeping our state moving forward)
- Say what is true rather than refuting what is not. Don't give opposition claims any airtime. Don't repeat their hurtful and dehumanizing language.
- Avoid jargon and stay out of the weeds!

Social Media Messages

- Democracy needs YOU! Sign the Unite & Rise 8.5 pledge to receive updates, build community, and take action! Join the movement: [bit.ly/LWVWI-UniteandRise-Pledge](https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/unite-and-rise-85-campaign-defend-democracy)
- Every voice matters. Every action counts. Stand with Wisconsin and join the movement to protect our democracy. Learn more about Unite & Rise 8.5: <https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/unite-and-rise-85-campaign-defend-democracy>
- We are facing a constitutional crisis. When our democracy is under threat, silence is not an option. Unite, rise, and take action to defend our rights. Subscribe to the Unite & Rise 8.5 newsletter to build community and learn of new actions you can take:
<https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/unite-and-rise-85-campaign-defend-democracy#UR-email-signup>



Newsletter Blurb

Unite and Rise 8.5: Defending Democracy Together

Our country is facing a constitutional crisis that threatens the foundations of our democracy. The Unite and Rise 8.5 campaign calls on all of us to take a stand. Sign the pledge, get involved, and commit to daily actions that protect our rights and our communities. No action is too small because every effort matters when it comes to defending democracy.

Join the movement at:

<https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/unite-and-rise-85-campaign-defend-democracy>



>>Download - [Newsletter header graphic](#)

Graphics

>> [view and download all graphics](#)




Videos

- [Unite & Rise 8.5](#) - LWVUS Campaign Overview
- LWVWI - [Know Your Rights and Protest Safety Webinar](#)

Actions

How Can You Make Change? Unite and Rise 8.5 will fight for our democracy on multiple fronts, from the courts to the streets. More actions will be outlined in the future, but as of today, here are a few you can take:

- Share the webpage  <https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/unite-and-rise-85-campaign-defend-democracy>
- [Donate to Unite & Rise 8.5](#)
- [Sign the pledge to Commit to Unite & Rise 8.5](#)
- [Sign up to be a League in Action Circle Captain](#)
- Be prepared to participate in rallies and protests, watch our webinar: [Know Your Rights and Protest Safety](#)
- Take [daily nonviolent action](#) to hold power accountable



- Raise your voice about illegal deportations: join mobilizations around immigrant rights and due process with organizations like the [National Partnership for New Americans](#), [United We Dream](#)
- Have a speaker join your event/meeting
 - Email lwwisconsin@lwwvi.org to inquire about speakers available
- Text your friends, family, and others in your network ➡
 - Sample message:
- [Subscribe to LWVWI's Unite & Rise 8.5 newsletter to stay informed](#) on more actions!

Actions from LWVUS

Speak up on the issues that matter.

- **Urgent:** Demand an end to the [government shutdown](#)!
- Oppose the [federalization of DC](#)!
- Tell your representative to [protect equal voting rights](#)!
- Reject the [anti-voter SAVE Act](#)!
- Urge Congress to [stand up](#) for our democracy!
- Demand passage of the [Equal Rights Amendment](#)!
- Support [Voting Rights Expansion](#)!

Other Resources

- League in Action Circle Captain's Huddle [Presentation Slides](#)
- Direct link to [LWVWI Unite and Rise Logos](#)
- LWVWI - [Resources and Actions to Protect Immigrant Communities](#)
- ACLU - [Know Your Rights for Protesters](#)
- ACLU - [Immigrants Rights](#)

