



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

WISCONSIN

612 W. Main St, #200
Madison, WI 53703

(608) 256-0827
www.lwwi.org



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Contact: Erin Grunze, Voter Education Coordinator
 Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director
Phone: 608-256-0827 Email: egrenze@lwwi.org or kaminski@lwwi.org

**ANDREA KAMINSKI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WISCONSIN,
TO RETIRE BY END OF YEAR**

Madison, WI – Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director of League of Women Voters of Wisconsin (LWV WI), announces her retirement for the end of December 2017. The LWV WI Board has selected Erin Grunze to be the next Executive Director effective January 1, 2018.

During her remarkable 13-year tenure, Kaminski has seen an unprecedented number of challenges to voting rights through restrictive photo ID and registration laws, an influx of dark money into politics, and the dissolving of governmental checks and balances. She has been at the forefront advocating for voters' rights and government accountability. "It has been an honor to work with Andrea on best practices for election administration, voter outreach, and accessibility," says Maribeth Witzel-Behl, Municipal Clerk of Madison. "Andrea's expertise and thoughtful recommendations have helped make our elections more accessible, secure, and transparent."

LWV WI filed a lawsuit in 2011 to prevent the photo ID law from taking effect and separately filed amicus briefs in other voting rights cases including the *Gill v Whitford* partisan gerrymandering case now in the U.S. Supreme Court. However, Kaminski's focus has not just been on litigation. She has often collaborated with other organizations such as the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, Wisconsin VOICES, and Common Cause in Wisconsin to secure increased educational resources and multilingual materials to inform all Wisconsin voters.

"Andrea has been a model leader in Wisconsin's progressive nonprofit community. Wise, thoughtful, and courageous, she also has shown her trust in the grassroots and in coalitions," remarks Matthew Rothschild, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.

The League has increased its presence in the state in the last few years. There are currently 18 local Leagues in the state with recently formed Leagues in the Northwoods and Upper St. Croix Valley. Four additional communities are in the process of developing a new League.

Kaminski has worked very effectively to make sure the core principles of the LWV WI remain consistent: that voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed, that everyone has the right to know how government acts on their behalf, and that these values are universally shared by citizens from all backgrounds and political ideologies. Her leadership has established a strong base on which LWV WI will continue to thrive as it approaches its 100th Anniversary in 2020.

"I have been so fortunate to be able to work for the wise and hard-working League members, who devote countless volunteer hours to registering and educating voters year-round just because it's the right thing to do," said Kaminski. "Never endorsing a political candidate or party, our local Leagues are known as trusted

conveners of high-quality voter education forums in their mission to advance informed and active participation in government – whether there is an election coming up or not.”

Grunze is the current Voter Education Coordinator for LWV WI where she manages the nationally recognized statewide Election Observation program. Last year she coordinated the Gear Up To Vote minivan tour for voter education and registration that traveled across Wisconsin between July and October. “Erin has demonstrated an ability to mobilize the vote and inspire active participation for good government. Since she joined our staff in February 2016 she has become a trusted and reliable leader, with a positive vision and an ability to guide and enhance communication among all members of the League. She has a determination to support the good work of our local Leagues and this will propel our ability to build a better democracy,” said Debra Cronmiller, President of the League’s State Board.

“I am thrilled by this opportunity and it is such an honor to be selected as the next Executive Director of LWV WI,” said Grunze. “I am so very fortunate to be part of this organization in any capacity and I now look forward to my new role and venture. Andrea has been instrumental to the firm foundation of financial and organizational strength of LWV WI with her unwavering integrity and steady leadership. It has been a wonderful experience for me to work with her for nearly two years. I look forward to building upon what the LWV WI Board and League members across the state have committed their volunteer work to as defenders of the democratic process. With voting rights being assaulted and voting turnout in Wisconsin down in the last election, LWV WI has much work to do. League members are rolling up their sleeves and directly tackling these challenges within our communities and our state.”

Although she will retire from her daily duties as Executive Director, Kaminski will continue to serve as the League’s lobbyist and Board Secretary.

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The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is a nonpartisan organization that advocates for informed and active participation in government. The League welcomes women and men across the state as members. With 18 local Leagues (and growing) in Wisconsin and 800 affiliates across the country, the League is one of the nation's most trusted grassroots organizations. Follow @LWV_WI on Twitter.