



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124 Albuquerque, NM 87109 lwvcnm.org (505) 884-8441

President's Report by Starlyn Brown

April Was a Busy Month for LWVCNM (and May will be just as busy)

April was a very busy and productive month for the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico. Our volunteers continued their work preparing the **Primary Voter Guide**, registering voters, and educating the public about upcoming elections. We also met with several community organizations to coordinate voter outreach efforts and began discussions about hosting candidate forums.

Participation in our democracy has never been more important. Voters are the heart and soul of our democratic system. Elected officials serve the public, and informed, engaged voters are essential to ensure that our democracy works for everyone.

On April 6, I spoke before the Albuquerque City Council in support of **Ranked Choice Voting** in Albuquerque. The League believes Ranked Choice Voting can strengthen elections in several ways. It allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference, encourages greater voter participation, helps ensure that winning candidates receive majority support, and reduces the "spoiler effect," allowing voters to support the candidates they truly prefer without fear that their vote will be wasted.

Our **Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 9**, and we encourage all members to attend if you have not yet registered. The League is a member-driven organization. While the Board of Directors manages operations and sets direction throughout the year, member voices help shape the direction of our work. At the annual meeting, members will vote on proposed bylaw changes, approve a two-year budget, consider study proposals, elect Board members, and provide guidance to the Board.

One example of member-driven ideas in action came from last year's meeting, when a member suggested creating a **Who's Who Political Directory for Valencia and Torrance Counties**. Thanks to the work of Ashley Benning, this valuable resource has now been completed and is available both on our website and in print.

Early voting for the Primary Election begins May 5. This year is especially significant because of **semi-open primaries**, which will allow many more voters to participate. For the first time, LWVCNM is **printing the Primary Voter Guide** in addition to our traditional printing of the General Election guide. That means we will publish **two voter guides this year**, doubling both our work and our expenses. To support this effort, we have launched a fundraising campaign through Zeffy, are actively applying for grants, and are reaching out to individuals, businesses, and organizations that share our commitment to civic engagement, informed voters, and a strong democracy.

As always, thank you to our volunteers and members whose dedication makes this work possible.

There will be NO May Educational Meeting, as the Annual Meeting will be held this month, so please plan to join us in June for the Educational Meeting detailed below!



Join us for the **Brown Bag Lunch and Learn**
JUNE EDUCATIONAL MEETING
Thursday, JUNE 11th at Noon

WHERE: LWVCNM Office Conference Room, 6739 Academy Rd. NE, ample parking available

In person (members and guests only); Zoom (members and general public)

TOPIC: Affordable Housing: Beyond the Unhoused (One Year Later).

SPEAKERS: CABQ's Lisa Huval and Dr. Brittany Karnezis

This will be a hybrid meeting at 12:00 PM with in-person attendance in the LWVCNM conference room

CABQ Panelists will include:

- Lisa Huval, Housing, Initiatives Manager, Office of Housing, Dept of Workforce Solutions, discussing housing options available to lower-income residents and eviction prevention programs;
- Dr. Brittany Karnezis who will address both:
 - the Gateway Young Adult Housing and Treatment Navigation Center to prevent homelessness for youth aging out of foster care and
 - treatment services and the success rate for the mentally ill and substance abuse victims who may remain unhoused if not receptive to CABQ Shelter options.

You can also check the LWVCNM web page for the latest info as the date nears.

Also, please **Save the Date -- Saturday, June 13th at 10 AM --**
for the LWVCNM Annual Calendar Planning Meeting

This **Zoom ONLY meeting** offers LWVCNM members an opportunity to recommend speakers and topics for upcoming monthly educational meetings through July 2027.

For further information, please contact Karen Douglas.

2026 Annual Meeting

By now, you should have received the 2026 Annual Meeting Newsletter through the U.S. Postal Service. If you did not receive your printed copy, you can access it on our website.

Agenda

**UNM Continuing Education
1634 University Blvd. NE, Room 123**

May 9, 2026 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Registration Begins at 9:30 a.m.

**Business Meeting
10 – 11:30 a.m.**

Introduction

Registration Committee Report

Adoption of Agenda

Recognition of Board

Moment of Silence

Recognition of New Lifetime Members

Presentation of Budget

Election of Board Officers and Directors

Bylaw and Policy Revisions

Program Proposals

Other Business

Directions to the Board

Volunteer Recognition

Brunch Buffet 11:30 a.m.

Guest Speaker: Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller 12:00 p.m.

“Albuquerque Sanctuary City Protections from ICE”

Election Updates

The Voter Guide team has created *Voter Guides* for the June 2nd Primary Election.

We are printing two editions: one for Bernalillo and Sandoval and another for Tarrant and Valencia Counties. Independent voters (registered as declined-to-state) may participate in the primary election for the first time this year.

The LWVCNM website Voters and Elections pages contain additional information and links to the online versions after April 29th. Voters can also view candidate information specific to their ballot on VOTE411.org. It will go live on May 1st.

Early voting begins at the County Clerk's offices on May 5th. Expanded early voting will begin at other voting sites on May 16th.

We have been truly fortunate to have had the support of a great number of volunteers who have assisted with the production, fundraising, contacting community sites to stock guides, calling candidates, and delivering guides to our four counties. We are grateful for all their dedication to this effort.

Thanks to Ashley Benning, we now have a Who's Who Guide for Tarrant and Valencia Counties. A revised Who's Who Guide for Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties is in production. Both versions can be found on the LWVCNM website.

Please contact us if you have any questions. Lani Desaulniers (LMDesaul@aol.com)
- Lani Desaulniers & Karen Wentworth

Full-Time Internship in Santa Fe

Early July Through December - Apply by May 15th

- \$18.00/Hour

New Mexico Legislative Internship

The Legislative Internship Program employs undergraduate and recently graduated students in the New Mexico Legislature to provide practical experience in day-to-day legislative staff work.

Interns work full-time in the office for the Legislative Council Service and work with experienced legislative staff, legislators, committees, state agencies and the public.

Work performed may include legislative committee meeting organization, travel to various locations across New Mexico, issue analysis, and legislative projects.

Interns are competitively selected following an interview.

Send letter of interest, resumé and unofficial transcript by 5:00 p.m. May 15th to

internship@nmlegis.gov



The LWVCNM Book Club

meets the 4th Wednesday of each odd-numbered month

New members are always welcome!

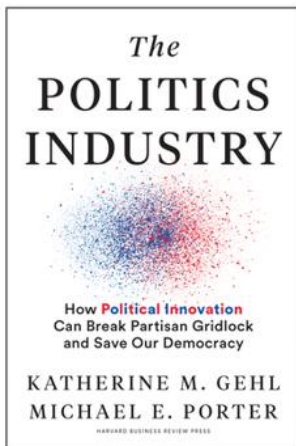
If you are not able to complete a book before the session, no worries . . . join a session and complete the book at your convenience.

Great conversation, light snacks, and a way to better get to know LWVCNM members.

Date: Wednesday, May 27, 2026

Time: 5:30 pm

Location: LWVCNM Office Conference Room, 6739 Academy Rd NE



Title: The Politics Industry: How Political Innovation Can Break Partisan Gridlock and Save Our Democracy.

By: Katherine Gehl and Michael Porter

This title was recommended by Bob Perls, founder and past-president of New Mexico Open Elections, during his presentation at the LWVCNM February Educational Meeting.

Katherine Gehl is a businesswoman and founder of The Institute for Political Innovation.

Michael Porter is an economist on the faculty of the Harvard Business School.

Contact Janet at 505-401-2052 for more information.

LWVCNM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:
Starlyn Brown

1st Co-Vice Presidents/Voter Guide:
Karen Wentworth & Lani Desaulniers

2nd Vice President/Membership:
Elizabeth Shields

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Director/Webmaster/Zoom Host: Linda Miller

Voter Guide Distribution: Ellen Kelly

Advocacy Team/Observer Corps:
Karen Wentworth

Volunteer Coordinator:
Linda Miller

If you need help with Zoom,
please reach out to Zoom host, Linda Miller,
lmiller@unm.edu

Please submit your articles for the monthly Voter by
the 15th of each month to Michal Mudd at:

VoterEditorMichal@gmail.com

LWVCNM CALENDAR

May 6th (Wednesday) 5:30 pm

LWVCNM Board Meeting
ZOOM until further notice
All members welcome

May 9th (Saturday) 10 am – 1 pm

LWVCNM Annual Meeting
UNM Continuing Education Bldg.
By registration
(see pg 3)

NO LWVCNM May Educational Meeting

May 27th (Wednesday) 5:30 pm

LWVCNM Book Club
LWVCNM Office Conference Room
See info p. 5

June 3rd (Wednesday) 5:30 pm

LWVCNM Board Meeting
ZOOM until further notice
All members welcome

June 11th (Thursday) 12 Noon

LWVCNM Monthly Educational Meeting
In person and ZOOM

Topic: Affordable Housing: Beyond the
Unhoused (One Year Later).

Speakers: CABQ's Lisa Huval and Dr.
Brittany Karnezis
(see pg. 2)

June 13th (Thursday) 10 AM

Calendar Planning Meeting
ZOOM only

In Remembrance of Nora "Nan" Clayton

Nan Clayton was a Lifetime LWV member, recognized among others during the February 2020 LWVCNM 100th Birthday Party celebration. She relocated to Albuquerque to be nearer to family members following a lifetime of valuable contributions to her former LWVTX and Austin, TX community organizations, having joined the League in 1963.

She had served her community as a chemistry teacher, earning a Master of Chemistry Education degree from UT Austin, later serving as a school board member. Nan had sought the school board position following years of monitoring the organization as a Parent-Teacher Association volunteer. She was the second woman in the Austin School Board's 100-year history to be elected President and served for 17 years. Clayton Elementary School in South Austin bears her name. Later, she became a TX state chemist responsible for monitoring water quality.

Nan attended an evening unit of LWV Austin whose membership was comprised of mostly teachers, meeting in members' homes. One of her earliest LWV activities was licking stamps for the ERA campaign and she later served as LWVTX Education Chair, working with Helen Hayes, Ann Richards, and Kay Bailey Hutchison.



She served twice on committees to select voting machines, served as the unofficial LWV Austin liaison to the Chamber of Commerce regarding transportation issues, considering bond issues, and chairing a committee considering freight rail, traveling throughout the United States to observe different transportation systems.

Nan Clayton passed away at age 90 here in Albuquerque in the Fall of 2025, and LWVCNM would like to recognize her many lifetime valuable contributions.



OBSERVER REPORTS



Observer Corps Report – Albuquerque City Council meeting

16 Mar/6 Apr 2026

Mary Mulvany/Janet Kirkpatrick

All Councilors attended the 16 Mar and 6 Apr 2026 meetings: Stephanie Telles – District 1, Joaquin Baca – District 2, Klarissa Peña – District 3, Brook Bassan – District 4, Dan Lewis – District 5, Nichole Rogers – District 6, Tammy Fiebelkorn – District 7, Dan Champine – District 8, Renée Grout, District 9

Public Comment

Members of the public at both meetings were allowed one minute each for public comment.

Ranked Choice Voting [O-26-13 link](#)

At the 6 April meeting, the council considered an ordinance that would allow ranked choice voting. Members of the public spoke at both the 16 Mar and the 6 Apr meeting on this issue. Between the two meetings, forty people spoke in favor of ranked choice voting, including LWVCNM President Starlyn Brown. People speaking in favor cited the efficiency and cost savings of avoiding a run-off election, the disenfranchisement of active-duty military stationed elsewhere who are unable to participate in a runoff, increased voter participation, majority support for winning candidates, and increased civility of campaigns. Ten people spoke in opposition to ranked choice voting, citing the need to educate voters on the process and perceived lack of transparency of the process.

The proposed ordinance failed by a vote of three in favor (Fiebelkorn, Rogers, and Telles) to six opposed (Baca, Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, and Peña).

Proposed Gross Receipts Tax Increase [O-26-16 link](#)

At the 16 Mar meeting, Councilor Bassan proposed an ordinance increasing the gross receipts tax (GRT) by 0.4875% that would pay for municipal capital projects, related debt service, and municipal operations. She spoke at length that, although she is fundamentally opposed to tax increases, this was the only way she could find to finance the increased costs of the water park project in her district. This proposed ordinance was co-sponsored by Councilor Baca. Several amendments to this proposed ordinance were proposed:

- Amendment 1 (Fiebelkorn) changed the wording to dedicate all the amounts for municipal operations to increasing wages for city employees. Passed unanimously.
- Amendment 2 (Fiebelkorn) changed the wording to divide the GRT increase proceeds between capital projects at 30% and increased employee wages at 70%. Passed by six in favor (Champine, Fiebelkorn, Grout, Lewis, Rogers, and Telles) to three opposed (Baca, Bassan, and Peña).
- Amendment 3 (Fiebelkorn) proposed changing the additional GRT tax rate from 0.4875% to 0.1275%. This passed by a vote of five in favor (Bassan, Fiebelkorn, Lewis, Rogers, and Telles) to four opposed (Baca, Champine, Grout, and Peña).
- Amendment 4 (Grout) proposed that voter approval be required for this gross receipts tax increase. The amendment failed by a vote of two in favor (Grout, Rogers) to seven opposed (Baca, Bassan, Champine, Fiebelkorn, Lewis, Peña, and Telles).

During both the general public comment period and the bill-specific comment period, seventeen people spoke against the GRT increase, citing the regressive nature of the tax, the stifling effect of spending, a negative impact on small business, and pointing out that pay increases for employees should be a part of the annual budget process. Twelve people, primarily current city employees, spoke in favor of the wage increases that would come about by this GRT increase. They pointed out that a wage parity study determined that most ABQ city employees' wages are far below those of comparable cities in the region. As a result, there is high turn-over, and the city is finding it difficult to fill positions. Some employees are forced to work overtime to fill in the gaps.

The final amended version of the bill failed by a vote of one in favor (Fiebelkorn) to eight opposed (Baca, Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña, and Telles). Councilor Bassan, a sponsor of the bill, stated that she could not vote for the tax increase without adequate proceeds going towards the project in her district.

Safer Community Spaces Ordinance [O-26-15 link](#)

At the 16 Mar meeting, the City Council considered a bill to prohibit the use of city property for immigration enforcement. Twenty-three members of the public spoke in favor of the ordinance, citing the negative impacts they are seeing from immigration enforcement, such as impacts on children in school and decreased use of domestic violence and health care services. Two members of the public, both immigrants, spoke against the ordinance, stating they had followed the legal processes to become citizens. The ordinance passed by a vote of five in favor (Baca, Fiebelkorn, Peña, Rogers, and Telles) and four opposed (Bassan, Champine, Grout, and Lewis). The mayor signed the ordinance on 23 Mar.

Charter Amendment on the Fall Ballot [P-26-1 link](#)

At the 6 Apr meeting, the City Council voted to place a proposition on the ballot to amend the city charter. The charter amendment would change the title of the Director of Albuquerque Community Safety (ACS) to Chief. The amendment would also require that the appointment of the ACS Chief be confirmed by the City Council. The proposal passed by a vote of seven in favor (Baca, Bassan, Fiebelkorn, Lewis, Peña, Rogers, and Telles) to two opposed (Champine and Grout).



Observer Corps Report – Bernalillo County Commission
March, April 2026
Karen Wentworth

Bernalillo Set to Consider IRB to Fund Welcome Center/Digital Film Studios at Railyards

All members of the BCC were present at all March, early April meetings:

Barbara Baca, District 1; Frank Baca, District 2; Adriann Barboa, District 3; Walt Benson, District 4; Eric Olivas, District 5

The Bernalillo County Commission is considering a proposal for a \$32 million Taxable Industrial Revenue Bond to help fund a welcome center and digital production studios at the Albuquerque Railyards. The building(s) would be used to assist with movie production.

The county commission has also approved an Industrial Revenue Bond for up to \$175 million to Oso Negro LLC for a large battery storage facility at the Ladera Business Park on Albuquerque’s west side. The batteries will be used to provide backup electrical power to companies in the Albuquerque area.

This project is in line with the Central New Mexico League positions on Climate Change Action to “promote a clean low-carbon energy economy that is sustainable, including all forms of renewable energy and transportation infrastructure.”

The commission approved the Annual Housing Plan required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Federal funds are provided to the City of Albuquerque and the County of Bernalillo for housing vouchers, which provide families with funds to temporarily pay for rent or limited time housing. The City of Albuquerque continues to have about 2,000 people on its waiting list for housing vouchers. Bernalillo County has about 1,800 on its list. This is about the same number of waitlist applicants for the last 5 years. In addition, the commission has agreed to issue Project Revenue Bonds for Villa Hermosa to acquire and rehabilitate low- income housing. The bond is for \$25 million and will provide 288 additional housing units in Albuquerque.

This project is in line with the Central New Mexico position on Housing - “Local government has primary responsibility for making available, facilitating, and coordinating provision of affordable, decent and safe housing using federal, state, county, or city funds.”



Sandoval County Commission regular meeting
March 11, 2026
Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

Present: Jordan Juarez (Chair), Jon Herr (Vice Chair), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch, Michael Meek

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

No topics for which the League has an advocacy position were taken up during this meeting.

Additional Comments

Sandoval County Commission Website

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



Sandoval County Commission special meeting
March 20, 2026
Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

Present: Jordan Juarez (Chair), Jon Herr (Vice Chair; video), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

At this special meeting, the Commission heard budget requests from each county department. No topics for which the League has an advocacy position were taken up during this meeting.

Additional Comments

Sandoval County Commission Website

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



Sandoval County Commission regular meeting
March 25, 2026
Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

Present: Jon Herr (Acting Chair), Joshua Jones, Michael Meek, Jordan Juarez (Chair, video)

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

No topics for which the League has an advocacy position were taken up during this meeting.

Additional Comments

Sandoval County Commission Website

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



Sandoval County Commission regular meeting
April 8, 2026
Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

Present: Jordan Juarez (Chair), Jon Herr (Vice Chair), Joshua Jones (video), Katherine Bruch, Michael Meek

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

Economic Development

Jerry Schalow of the Sandoval County Chamber of Commerce presented project Discover Sandoval, a program to locate workforce surpluses in various parts of the country that align with the needs of Sandoval Counties industries, especially medical and high-tech specialties, and attract new residents and businesses to Sandoval County. He identified that (a) population growth is outpacing business growth in Sandoval County, (b) many residents commute to other counties and spend a significant part of their incomes there, and (c) people between the age of 20 and 35 leave the County after college to find jobs. Those who relocate to Sandoval County are mainly 35 years or older.

The project aims to attract high-paying specialty businesses willing to hire college graduates with no professional experience, to attract young people with the skills local businesses are seeking, and to focus on higher-paying businesses that would enable residents to live and work within the County.

As background, the LWVNM supports economic development with a focus on:

- economic growth more than population growth;
- good jobs with good wages;
- quality of life;
- consistency with protection of the environment and natural resources, particularly water;
- capitalizing on what is already here, such as existing businesses, technologies, and people

Additional Comments

Sandoval County Commission Website

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



**Middle Rio Grande Housing Collaborative (MRGHC) -
Affordable Housing Report
February 26, 2026
Janie McGuigan**

The MRGHC met at 1:00 pm, Thursday, February 26, 2026 for a regular meeting virtually via Zoom. The four current MRGHC Commissioners attended: Lawrence Rael, Interim Chair, Dan Majewski, Ian Robertson, and Steve Anaya. Other attendees were: Cindy Chavez, Bernalillo County Manager; Tommy Cummins, County staff, and Barbara Baca, County Commissioner; City of Albuquerque Councilmember Tammy Fiebelkorn, and City staff Erin Engelbrecht, Rick Giron, Abigail Stiles and Monica Montoya.

After the Agenda and Minutes from the November 20, 2025 meeting MRGHC were approved, and there were no public comments, County Manager Chavez stated that the MRGHC did not receive an allocation from the State for 2026-27. That said, the MRGHC staff, both County and City, are assessing the 2026-27 housing-related allocations of approximately \$210 M as listed in the HB2 budget (from the 2026 NM Legislative session). Staff will investigate whether those housing allocations are in alignment with the MRGHC's housing development and homeless program goals; how the funds are disbursed; and offer a partnership between MRGHC and the various state agencies and housing entities (Housing NM, Department of Workforce Solutions, NM Health Care Authority, etc.) that did receive an allocation regarding expenditure of those funds as appropriate that impact Bernalillo County.

As a follow up to the vacancy created by the resignation of MRGHC commissioner Talia Friedman in December 2025, City staff has nominated Connie Chavez, CEO of Heading Home, as a replacement Commissioner, pending approval by City Council.

Finally, the MRGHC Interim Chair stated that MRCOG, as the administrative funding entity for MRGHC, will be posting the MRGHC Executive Director position in the next week and confirmed that ongoing funding is continuing for that position.

It was suggested that Commissioners revisit the white paper that was developed by Kelly O'Donnell, PhD as to the core functions of the MRGHC that were listed in the Joint Powers Agreement between the City and the County as a way to further define the role of the MRGHC and a framework for moving into the future.

The next MRGHC meeting date will be Thursday, March 26, 2026 @ 1pm, in person at the MRCOG Board Room and virtually via Zoom.



**Middle Rio Grande Housing Collaborative (MRGHC) -
Affordable Housing Report
March/April 2026
Janie McGuigan**

The MRGHC meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 26 did not take place but was rescheduled for 1:00 pm, Thursday, April 2 in person and virtually via Zoom. Four of the five current MRGHC Commissioners attended: Lawrence Rael, Chair, Ian Robertson, Steve Anaya and Connie Chavez, the new City of Albuquerque representative to MRGHC. Other attendees were: Tommy Cummins and Ken Martinez, County staff; City of Albuquerque Councilmember Tammy Fiebelkorn, and City staff Erin Engelbrecht and Andrea Gonzales.

After the Agenda and Minutes from the February 26, 2026 MRGHC meeting were approved, and there were no public comments, the MRGHC Commissioners discussed the Executive Director Selection Process. Chair Rael said that the MRGCOG personnel office will advertise the Executive Director (ED) position opening through March. The Commissioners then went into Closed Session to discuss the specific process(es) for the assessment and preliminary selection of candidate applicants. Returning to Open Session, Rael announced that the Commissioners will ask that the MRGCOG staff review each applicant to ensure they meet the minimum qualifications and that any next steps after the information is received will be taken by a committee of the whole. The meeting was adjourned.

Subsequent to the April 2 regular meeting, it was announced via email and public notice that the MRGHC will meet in Closed Session on April 9, 2026 at 1:00 pm solely to review the Executive Director applicants as referred by the MRGCOG Personnel office. No other business was discussed outside of those personnel matters. After returning to Open Session, there was discussion and an announcement of the next MRGHC meeting (see below).

The next meeting of the MRGHC will be April 23, 2026 at 1:00 pm. It will be a Special Meeting in Closed Session format to discuss and interview the MRGHC Executive Director candidate finalists. Then following that, on the same day at 1:00 pm there will be a Regular MRGHC meeting in person at the MRCOG Board Room and virtually via Zoom.

Volunteer Opportunities

Because Democracy is not a Spectator Sport....

We need your skills, your enthusiasm, and your commitment to the myriad of projects always underway.

From simple clerical tasks to grass roots advocacy, ongoing or project-by project, we can fit your interests to a volunteer job. Expanding our volunteer base is a top priority of LWVCNM.

How to Find Out More About Volunteering? It's easy!

Contact us at (505) 884-8441 or lwvcnmoffice@gmail.com Leave a message with your name/phone number and expressing your interest in finding out more about volunteering. We'll contact you to match your interests and skills with a volunteer position, explain tasks involved, review time commitment for various positions, and offer training where needed.



**6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124
Albuquerque, NM 87109**

The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization is a nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

