

To: John J. Burzichelli, Chair, New Jersey Assembly Appropriations Committee

From: The League of Women Voters of Lawrence Township

We write to urge this committee to hold hearings on A3394, to provide civics instruction to middle school pupils in New Jersey public schools. The New Jersey Senate has already passed the Senate version, S854, by an overwhelming vote on January 21, 2021 and it was approved by the Assembly Education Committee on March 17, 2021.

The League of Women Voters has spent 100 years empowering voters and defending democracy. We want our children to become informed citizens who understand the fundamentals of the democratic process. A3394 enables middle school students to study the origins and principles of our American constitutional democracy, the functions and limitations of government at both the national and local levels and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a civil, democratic society. The New Jersey Center for Civic Education has curriculum specific to New Jersey and could address costs for any further curriculum development, adaptation of existing materials and teacher training.

Surely such instruction is needed in these times of civic upheaval. As our young people try to cope with today's political and social tensions they need guidance on how to express their views in an appropriate manner in a democratic society.

We urge hearings on A3394.

Signed,  
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