

## MISSION

To educate and mobilize League members to work toward legislation and other reforms that enact the goals of our LWVUS health care position, with a strong focus on [expanded and improved Medicare for All \(a single-payer system\)](#).

## January Meeting Topics

### Exploring Action-oriented Advocacy

At our Jan. 26 meeting, the most glaring issue for health care advocates was the nomination of the inappropriate, anti-science RFK Jr. to head the office of Health and Human Services (HHS), a position offered to him as a political favor.

What can we as League members do, we asked each other, to oppose his confirmation? **Does LWV non-partisan policy apply to political appointees as well as candidates for office?** A [quick email](#) with LWVUS Gov't Affairs confirmed, yes, it does apply.

If only there were an "[Action Alert](#)" like the one in the LWV President's [2-6-2025 "League Update"](#)! It says "Tell Your Members of Congress (and your networks) to Oppose the *SAVE Act*."

Without a relevant alert, could we use other official statements from LWVUS leadership, that include a request to share them, to fashion an "**alternative action alert**" that would let us communicate with our Members of Congress on this issue? Perhaps something like this:

Dear MOC,

*I am writing to share LWV CEO Celina Stewart's [strong condemnation](#) of the "weaponization of government against Americans,...that puts both [the American people and our democracy] in deep jeopardy. ...[LWV] calls on Congress to act now to stop the infringement on its legislative authority and respond to the ongoing assault on our democracy on behalf of the American people."*

*Personally, I am deeply concerned that the nation's health and safety could be at risk if HHS is weaponized by leaders with attitudes hostile to well-established science in the field. As your constituent, I urge you to use your legislative authority to ensure that the next head of the HHS will commit to robust distribution of life-saving vaccines, collection of data on which to base policy relative to food safety, drugs, etc., and will maintain our membership and support of international health agencies."*

What do you think? Is it within LWV guardrails? Could a League member send it?

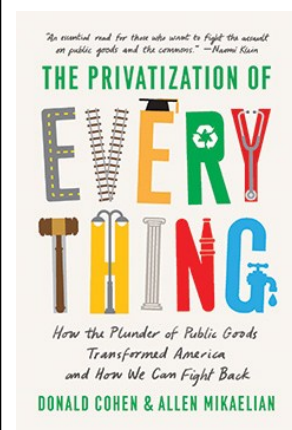
### Invitation to a Book Discussion

#### [The Privatization of Everything: How the Plunder of Public Goods Transformed America and How We can Fight Back](#)

By Donald Cohen and Allen Mikaelian (Contact [Linda Mahan](#) for details)

HCR4US members who worked on the concurrence with Vermont's new privatization position know the importance of this topic in health care — as it has been in a range of other areas, like jails, parking, roads, etc. The failure to adopt the VT concurrence at the 2024 convention was due perhaps to a prevailing sense among many Americans, including League members, that "corporations achieve superior efficiencies" and save us money. This book provides example after example to lay that myth to rest.

For governments, the appeal of "public-private partnerships," where private companies front money for public infrastructure, is the promise that they can get improvements with "no new taxes." However, the private investment usurps control of public goods and services and sends public money to contractor profits and investor returns. The true result, well-documented in this book, is reduced services and higher fees for users and lower wages and fewer protections for workers.



The public sector loses the ability to guarantee essential services to all residents which, according to [Abraham Lincoln](#), is part of government's fundamental "contract" with its citizens. Click here for the [book](#) and a [summary article](#).



## In Case You Missed It

Jan 31 KFF Health News hosted "[Recapping the RFK Jr. Hearings](#)" featuring KFF health reporters

Jan. 26 HCR4US meeting [video](#) and [audio](#) and [supplementary materials](#) with Action Links

Feb. 2 Best New Recording Artist Award winner at the Grammys includes health care in her acceptance [speech](#).

Jan/Feb 2024 AARP Bulletin (for members) "[Where Have All the Doctors Gone?](#)"

Feb. 10 KFF Health News hosted "[What's Next for the Affordable Care Act?](#)" featuring an expert panel discussing the future of the ACA.

## Websites

### HCR4US Toolkit:

<https://lwwhealthcarereform.org>

### HCR4US Youtube Channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/c/  
LWVHealthCareReform](https://www.youtube.com/c/LWVHealthCareReform)

### HCR4US Mtg Minutes:

<https://tinyurl.com/HCR4US-Minutes-etc>

### HCR4US Web-Contact Form:

[tinyurl.com/Contact-LWV-HCR-4US](https://tinyurl.com/Contact-LWV-HCR-4US)

## Networking

### One Payer States

<https://www.onepayerstates.org/>

### National Single Payer

<https://nationalsinglepayer.com/>

### Healthcare Advocacy on Substack

[Here's the link.](#)

### Physicians for a National Health Program

<https://pnhp.org/>

### Students for a Nat'l Health Program (SNaHP)

<https://www.facebook.com/snhp1/>

### Center for Medicare Advocacy

<https://www.MedicareAvocacy.org>

### National Nurses United

<https://www.nationalnursesunited.org>

### Medicare for All Resolutions

<https://www.medicare4allresolutions.org>

### Poor Peoples Campaign

<https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org>

\*\*\*ADD YOUR GROUP [HERE](#)\*\*\*

## Revisiting the Mission Statement

Does our Mission Statement (*MS, top of page 1*) capture our goals clearly enough to let us decide which activities will be consistent with them and which won't?

To help us decide whether we need to change either our statement or our activities, **Hank Abrons (CA)** framed these questions for us:

*What impact do we hope to have? Why do we meet? What is it we're trying to do in the League that can benefit from us working together?* Others added: *Does being in the League help us achieve our goals for health care reform?*

A Zoom poll at the Jan. 26 meeting asked attendees to consider whether we will have more impact if (1) we follow the prominent mention of Single Payer in the MS, and keep a narrow focus on achieving Single Payer financing reform; *or* (2) follow the first phrase, "work to educate and mobilize League members," and cast a wider net to harness energy among state and local Leagues for more varied health care reform topics; *or* (3) do both.

With only 15 voters, and some internal inconsistency, the slight advantage for a wider net in the polling is not a mandate. Still, can the poll help us clarify our desired impact and evaluate case by case whether an activity is enhanced by our being in this special interest group of the League -- or not?

For example, what do our different interpretations of our Mission Statement mean for the activities that were suggested at this meeting?

1. Work with groups like [Indivisible](#) to show public resistance
2. Follow up with Alan & Voki's [Daily Advocacy Newsletter](#)
3. Work on building up our state networks
- 4 Pursue useful incremental steps at the state level (*Medicaid eligibility for the undocumented, negotiation of drug prices, improved maternal health, state restrictions on private equity ownership of healthcare facilities, elimination of Pharmacy Benefit Managers, Medicare Advantage, and so-called "Value Based Care"*)

Numbers 1 and 2 are not consistent with policy [guidelines for taking action](#) as a League member. Numbers 3 and 4 are ambiguous between a narrow or wider mission.

Could we work as a group on activities like 3 and 4 and commit to Categories 1 and 2 as individuals, but still share what we learn from them with each other and the general public, perhaps even with LWVUS leadership.

## January 26<sup>th</sup> Attendees

|                       |                        |                      |
|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| AK — carolyn V. Brown | MA — Barbara Pearson   | VT — Betty Keller    |
| AK — Joan Soutar      | MI — Maria Woloson     | VT — Eduardo Siquera |
| CA — Hank Abrons      | NY — Janet Allen       | WA — Alan Unell      |
| CA — Jon Li           | NY — Judy Esterquest   | WA — Voki Hovagimian |
| CO — Elaine Branjord  | NY — Alberta Roman     | WI — Dorothy Skye    |
| CO — Barbara Dungey   | VT — Mary Alice Bisbee |                      |
| CO — Linda Mahan      | VT — Jean Hopkins      |                      |

# Article Archive

## Recent Articles of Interest Related to Healthcare Reform

Hold down the CTRL key and click on the hyperlinks to access the articles.

Please send us articles (citation and/or pdf) through the [Google Group](#).

### Jun. 27, 2023 [You Tube](#)

“Donald Cohen, The Privatization of Everything”

Program hosted by One Payer States

How "Business Can Do It Better" and "Business is More Efficient" do not apply to public-good services, e.g., services for which I'm better off when you're better off.

### Dec. 29, 2024 [The Wall Street Journal](#) (or without paywall)

“UnitedHealth’s Army of Doctors Helped It Collect Billions More from Medicare”

By Christopher Weaver, Anna Wilde Mathews, Tom McGinty

The biggest Medicare Advantage insurer presented physicians with checklists of potential diagnoses.

### Jan. 8, 2025 [AARP member edition](#) (or without paywall)

“Where Have All the Doctors Gone?”

By Howard Zucker, MD

Due to an astonishing combination of professional missteps, failed policies and an aging population, America is facing an unprecedented shortage of physicians — one that is putting each of us at increased risk.

### Jan. 22, 2025 [HealthAffairs.org](#)

“From Laggard to Leader: Why Health Care in the United States Is Failing, and How to Fix It”

By Donald M. Berwick, Elaine Batchlor, Cave A. Chokshi, Patricia Gabow, Richard Giffillan, et al.

The authors present a partial road map for transforming the US health care system with bold national goals: affordable and equitable care for all, an additional decade of healthy birthdays after retirement, elimination of racial and ethnic disparities in health, substantial reduction in health care expenditures, and, most important, improved health outcomes.

### Feb. 6, 2025 [The Guardian](#)

“US health department condemns private equity firms for role in declining healthcare access”

By Hannah Harris Green

Market consolidation and private equity investment can have deadly consequences in the healthcare industry, says the report.

## Take Action!

- Check for other health justice groups in your region—for “piggybacking” programs together. We may need to supplement LWV activism with groups like [Healthcare-NOW](#) or [One Payer States](#) which are more nimble but have less “gravitas” than LWV.
- Find out what it would take to move your state League to concur with the Vermont proposal on privatization which allows members to speak against Private Equity and Medicare DisAdvantage.
- Look up your state’s State Health Insurance (Assistance)([SHIP](#)) counselor program. NOTE: In states like MA and FL, the program is called Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders ([SHINE](#)).

“Advocate for policy — not politics.”  
“Action Absorbs Anxiety”