LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WESTPORT

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League of Women Voters of Westport, Sustainable Westport, and Earthplace Announce the Cancellation of the October 13 State Senate Debate

Westport, CT — October 9, 2026 — The League of Women Voters of Westport (LWV), Sustainable Westport, and Earthplace announce the cancellation of the October 13 debate for Connecticut's 26th State Senate District.

After careful consideration and deliberation, the organizations have decided to cancel the debate following notification from the campaign of the Republican candidate that she will not participate, creating an "empty chair" situation. The League had received confirmation that the Democratic candidate had agreed to participate.

Under League of Women Voters debate guidelines, a debate requires the participation of at least two candidates on the ballot who meet the League's eligibility criteria. After considering the circumstances and the League's long-standing practices for conducting fair and nonpartisan candidate debates, the planning committee determined that cancellation was the appropriate course of action.

Since June, the organizations have worked collaboratively to plan debates for the 26th State Senate District and the 136th and 143rd State Representative Districts. The organizations began communicating with candidates in June and have dedicated significant volunteer time and organizational resources to planning events consistent with the League's nonpartisan guidelines. The first communication to candidates included a save-the-date. Follow up reminders, formal invitations and additional information went out in July, August, September and October.

The shared objective has been to provide voters with meaningful opportunities to hear directly from candidates and to understand their positions on important issues to enable them to make informed decisions in the November election.

“Our democracy depends on the participation of organizations and candidates who believe voters deserve to be informed about matters affecting our towns, districts, and state. When opportunities for voters to hear directly from candidates are lost, everyone loses,” said the Debate Committee.

The League extends its sincere gratitude to Sustainable Westport and Earthplace for their partnership and the months of work devoted to organizing these events. The League also thanks the organizations that supported these efforts and joined us as co-sponsors: The Y’s Men, The Y’s Women, The Westport Rotary Club, The Sunrise Rotary, The Westport Library, the Westport PTA, and the Westport Youth Commission.

The League remains committed to working with community organizations to host candidate forums, debates and other educational programs that encourage informed voter participation and strengthen civic engagement.

About the League of Women Voters of Westport

The League of Women Voters of Westport is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We do not endorse parties or candidates. We do empower voters through voter registration, education and advocacy on issues that matter most to our community. We are a membership organization and we welcome adult and youth members of any gender. Prospective members can join at lwvct.org or www.lwvwestport.org. Select Westport from the dropdown menu.

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