

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, Feb. 28, 2022

Contact: Stephanie Cepak, **Byrum & Fisk Advocacy Communications**, scepak@byrumfisk.com

League of Women Voters endorses Public Health Over Politicians' effort, joining opposition to dangerous Unlock Michigan 2.0 petition

LANSING — The **League of Women Voters of Michigan** is endorsing Public Health Over Politicians, the coalition of public health officials, doctors and nurses working to oppose the Unlock Michigan 2.0 ballot proposal that would limit the ability of public health agencies to respond to public health emergencies in the state.

The League, a nonpartisan political organization, is committed to increasing understanding of major public policy issues, working to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Among the tenets of its Social Policy position is the League's support of quality health care that is affordable and available for all Michigan residents.

The Unlock Michigan 2.0 effort would make legislators or county officials responsible for public health directives after 28 days instead of public health experts. The League noted that the Unlock Michigan group is the same that successfully repealed the 1945 Emergency Powers of the Governor Act by gathering enough petition signatures and enough votes in the Legislature to enact a new law that could not be vetoed by the governor or voted on by the people.

"We don't want this to happen again," said **Christina Schlitt**, co-president for the League. "We urge all Michigan voters to learn about the far-reaching consequences of the Unlock Michigan 2.0 petition, talk to others about this important issue so that everyone declines to sign. Public health decisions should be made by those with the proper education and training."

"Part of the League's mission is to educate voters and with more than a dozen initiatives pending, it's more important than ever that voters know what's really at stake with this Unlock Michigan 2.0 proposal," said **Paula Bowman**, co-president for the League. "Unlock Michigan 2.0 threatens the health and safety of Michigan residents, which is why voters should decline to sign this ballot petition."

Public Health Over Politicians is made up of public health officials, doctors and nurses who believe the health of all Michiganders should come before partisan and political games. The group has been endorsed by a growing list of organizations, including: the Michigan Nurses Association, Michigan Association of Local Public Health, Michigan Osteopathic Association, Michigan Association of Public Health and Preventive Medicine Physicians and the Michigan Parent Alliance for Safe Schools.

“We’re thrilled the League of Women Voters of Michigan has joined Public Health Over Politicians,” said **Janet Olszewski**, former director for the Michigan Department of Community Health and a member of Public Health Over Politicians. “Unlock Michigan 2.0 is a reckless proposition that should be rejected by Michigan voters. Undoing the public health code that’s guided our state for more than 100 years will influence the health and safety of Michiganders when it comes to Legionnaires’ disease, hepatitis or any other public health emergencies our state has and will face in the future.”

###