



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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League Statement on Florida Elections Crisis

*In response to pressures from political campaigns on Florida's Supervisors of Elections, League of Women Voters of Florida President **Patricia Brigham** offered the following statement:*

After months of preparation for early voting and Election Day, our 67 local county Supervisors of Elections (SOEs) and their hard-working staffs have just completed an election marathon. Now, with an unprecedented three Florida recounts looming on the near-term horizon we are asking them to run another 26.2 miles. The League of Women Voters of Florida urges patience, civility, and respect. It is critical that we let our SOEs do their jobs. We call on our state's highest elected leaders to respect the process and to respect the protocols that govern the process. Hyperbolic rhetoric and finger-pointing do not make the ballot count go any faster. In fact, it distracts from the intense focus that must accompany this methodical process.

The ballots for the 2018 Election were lengthy, with 12 amendments, Cabinet races, and other state and local races. A large dose of realism from our state officials is required. First and foremost, this election, and each and every election, must primarily be about the voters of Florida. Governor Scott has a duty to allow our SOEs to count the votes without added pressure. An extension of the ballot deadlines would be a good start. With three pending recounts on the way, it is completely unrealistic to expect our SOEs to conform to the current deadlines. Human needs must be considered: Sleep, nutrition, and appropriate staffing. Mistakes are made when those needs are not met. Instead of filing lawsuits as a Senate nominee and using the bully pulpit of the governor's office to intimidate our SOEs with the threat of an FDLE investigation, Gov. Scott should be asking what state resources can be brought to bear to help our SOEs so they can get their job done and done efficiently and correctly. A fair and accurate count should be Gov. Scott's top priority. He is still our governor and should not be acting on behalf of the state as the Senate nominee at this crucial juncture.

Elections matter. In order to protect our democracy, a "rush job," and the injection of political ambitions into the ballot count, is a conflict of interest and completely disrespects our sacred elections process. We ask that our governor put the priorities of the voters first, and his political ambitions second. Muddying the waters puts our democracy at risk. The voters of Florida deserve better — their votes must be counted and our elections process protected. This process must not only be a fair win for the candidates, but more importantly, the voters. Our democracy depends upon it.