As a “nonpartisan political organization”, our mission is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government.
We influence public policy through education and advocacy.

We neither support nor oppose any political party or candidate.
Our Goal

is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide.
Background and Beginning

It is Important to explore the status of women and the minimal rights of women in early history.
Women had few rights in the early 1800s

- Women could not vote or hold public office.

- Women had no access to higher education.

- Women were excluded from most professional occupations.

- Women could not make a legal contract or sue.

- Women could not own property.

- Women could not gain custody of their children in the case of divorce.

- Women had no legal control over their own earned wages.
Many women worked hard to secure voting & other rights.
It took years & years of hard work and a struggle across the country.
New York Suffragists’ Parade, 1912
The West Led the Way!

1853 - The Washington Territory nearly became 1st to grant women the right to vote, but the suffrage bill failed by one vote.

1863 - The struggle for women’s rights began in new Arizona Territory.

1869 - The Territory of Wyoming grants women the right to vote, hold office, own property and serve on juries.

1890 - Wyoming becomes a state; retains suffrage in new constitution.

1893 - Colorado becomes first state to enfranchise women through popular referendum.

1895 - Utah women win suffrage a 2nd time. (After suffrage 1st granted in 1870 by the territorial legislature, it was revoked by Congress in 1887)
1896 - Idaho approves woman suffrage by a vote of nearly two to one.

1910 - Washington state passes woman suffrage more than 50 years after first try.

1911 - California passes woman suffrage.

1912 - Arizona gains statehood on Feb. 14th – doesn’t include woman suffrage. On Nov. 5 – Arizona passes woman suffrage initiative overwhelmingly, carrying every county.

- Oregon passes woman suffrage by just 51 percent.
- Kansas approves woman suffrage.

1913 – Territory of Alaska gives women the right to vote.

1914 - Montana gives women the right to vote.
- Nevada passes woman suffrage.

1920 - The Nineteenth Amendment is ratified giving all women the right to vote.
Three of the Leaders in the Arizona Suffrage Movement

Josephine Brawley Hughes
1st President of the AZ Suffrage Association

Francis Willard Mund
AZ Equal Suffrage Assoc.
1st woman elected to AZ State Senate in 1914

Pauline Schindler O’Neill
2nd President of the AZ Suffrage Association, Phoenix Civil League
Arizona women began the suffrage battle to eliminate corruption, alcoholism and vice in the territory. By the time the vote was won, they had become convinced that much more was at stake: full participation on an equal basis with men.

...Winning Their Place: Arizona Women in Politics – 1883-1950
WOMEN VOTERS
VOTE AGAINST WILSON·ASHURST·HAYDEN
THEIR PARTY OPPOSES NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE
NATIONAL WOMAN'S PARTY
Madge Udall represents Arizona in a 1913 suffrage parade in Washington, D. C.
In 1916, NAWSA president Carrie Chapman Catt unveils her "winning plan" for suffrage victory at a convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Her plan required the coordination of activities by a vast cadre of suffrage workers in both state and local associations.
Carrie Chapman Catt leads suffragists in 1917 NYC parade.
Pre-1920s
When addressing the 1919 National American Woman Suffrage Association's (NAWSA) 50th convention, President Carrie Chapman Catt proposed creating a "league of women voters to finish the fight and aid in the reconstruction of the nation."

Women Voters was formed within the NAWSA.

After LWV organized, NAWSA dissolved.
The League of Women Voters was formally organized before women obtained the right to vote – six months before ratification of the 19th Amendment.

Chicago - site of the Feb. 14, 1920 national organizational meeting.
“The League of Women Voters is not to dissolve any present organization but to unite all existing organizations of women who believe in its principles. It is not to lure women from partisanship but to combine them in an effort for legislation which will protect coming movements, which we cannot even foretell, from suffering the untoward conditions which have hindered for so long the coming of equal suffrage.”

..........Carrie Chapman Catt, 1920
Due to the existence of other strong women’s organizations, Arizona’s League of Women Voters was not established until the 1950s.
The first league convention voted 69 separate items as statements of principle and recommendations for legislation. Among them were:

- protection for women and children
- rights of working women
- food supply and demand
- social hygiene
- the legal status of women
- American citizenship
1st Major National Legislative Success:

Passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act providing federal aid for maternal and child care programs.

The act, signed into law in November, 1921, was a response to the lack of adequate medical care for women and children.