

10/4/18 Response to email

The League of Women Voters of Richardson received an email from a voter who was very disappointed that our planned candidate forums for Texas House Districts 102 and 112 have been cancelled, even though only the challenger in each race agreed to participate. The voter believes that incumbents refusing to debate is a political strategy this year and the League has become part of that political strategy when forums are cancelled.

LWV-Richardson has a long-standing policy, based on guidance from LWV-US, that we will cancel a forum for a contested race unless there are at least two candidates participating. We have cancelled forums in past years for this reason, so the cancellations this year are not part of some recent political strategy.

Holding a forum for a contested race at which only one candidate was present might be construed by the IRS as a donation to that candidate's campaign. This could jeopardize our nonprofit status.

The League expects candidates to participate in nonpartisan forums where they publicly respond to questions so voters know who the candidates are and where they stand on the issues. Voters can help by urging candidates to participate.