

May 23, 2016

Dear Board Members & Branch Chairs,

It is no surprise to anyone that 2016 is an important political year. One might think that this is true only because of the Presidential Elections; however, it is also important from a state politics perspective. As President, and TPACE Chair respectively, we are jointly asking that members be energized and involved in political activity at the local/regional level.

Last fall, we asked the Branch Chairs to rally members in voter registration activities, as well as in making plans to help transport people to polling stations on elections day. Branch funds may be used to help community organizations in providing these transport services. As we shared in our previous letter, there are a number of non-profit organizations across the State, with whom to participate, which already have voter registration programs in place (i.e., NAACP, Urban League, LULAC, League of Women Voters). If these activities have not already been initiated in your area, we asked that Board Members assist Branch Chairs in engagement and implementation.

Additionally, this is a “quiet year” for the Texas Legislature, since they are only in Session in odd-numbered years. This is the perfect time for individual NASW/TX members to do grassroots lobbying lobby and advocacy with to their Representatives and Senators regarding our Interim Legislative Agenda. Meeting or writing them now gives the Legislators and their staff time to fully consider our agenda items, rather than waiting until the very short – and hectic – Texas Legislative Session begins next year. Again, we ask Board Members and Branch Chairs to work with the local/regional membership in this activity.

It is so important for the general membership of NASW/TX to rally for voter registration and turnout, as well as get more actively involved in advocating at the state level for support of social work issues. If we want to change Texas for our profession and our clients, we must join together in the election and advocacy processes. As Leadership, we often tell the membership how important it is to be politically involved. However, some members need more of a framework or structure from us to assist them in following through. We ask for your help in this endeavor. Together, we can bring about change!

Sincerely,



Lucia Leo-Diaz, LCSW, BCD
President, NASW/TX Board



Virginia Manuel, LMSW
Chair, TPACE Board of Trustees