

PROGRAM

Following consensus meetings in local Leagues the study on primary elections resulted in concurrence and consensus on changes to LWVMD's position on primary elections. Following is the new position that the LWVMD Board recommends for membership approval. Studies on Death with Dignity and Bail and Corrections will be presented at the fall workshop with local League concurrence/ consensus meetings to follow. Death with Dignity will probably recommend concurrence with a study and position by the League of Women Voters of Utah. The study in Civic Education is concentrating on identification of civic education throughout the state while Aging Services will concentrate on affordable housing options, available transportation and meals at home for the elderly.

In addition to studies, guidelines for program are being revised to provide better tools for both the state and local Leagues. Having such tools available is particularly important as our membership increases. It is hoped that as more tools are available new members will be empowered to peruse active participation in important functions within all levels of the League.

RECOMMENDED REVISION OF ELECTIONS POSITION as result of 2018 Primary Election Study

First – Create at the beginning of the category **Government: Election Process** a new section – **GENERAL PRINCIPLES (2018)**

Support for:

1. We believe it is important that election systems:
 - a) produce representation that reflects community sentiment,
 - b) help increase voter participation by encouraging a broader range of candidates and more civil campaigns and
 - c) are feasible to implement.
2. We also prefer election systems that:
 - a) are easy for the voter to understand, both in terms of how to vote and how their vote is counted,
 - b) help ensure minority views and interests have some influence in selecting elected officials,
 - c) help raise the level of political campaigns by encouraging a focus on the issues and discouraging negative campaigning,
 - d) maximize the power of each voter's vote; and
 - e) help promote more openness and responsiveness between candidates and constituents.
3. If a majority of votes is required to win an election, Ranked Choice Voting (instant runoff) is the preferred method of determining such a majority. (There was no consensus on using a separate Run-off Elections to determine a majority.)
4. If candidates are to be nominated by parties for the general election ballot, ballot access for non-principal parties should be improved:

- a) all recognized parties should have access to taxpayer-funded primary elections; and
- b) a non-principal party should retain its status if the number of registered voters affiliated with that party is equal to or greater than the number of signatures required to gain initial recognition.

Opposition to:

- 1. Reducing the number of signatures required for initial recognition as a party (10,000 at the time of the 2018 study)
- 2. Reducing the number of petition signatures for a candidate to qualify for the general election ballot without the nomination of a recognized political party (10,000 for statewide candidates or 1% of the eligible voters in the election district of the candidate at the time of the 2018 study).

Rename the section titled **VOTING RIGHTS AND ELECTION ADMINISTRATION** to **ELECTION ADMINISTRATION** and move it to immediately follow the new section labeled **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**.

Second – Split the current section titled **PRIMARY ELECTIONS, ELECTION DISTRICTS, TERM LIMITS** into three separate sections titled by those terms.

Third – Revise the section on **PRIMARY ELECTIONS** (2018) as follows:

Support for:

~~A closed primary system.~~

- 1. More open primary elections, either through:
 - a) Party primary elections in which unaffiliated voters as well as party members would be permitted to vote in a primary election to choose the nominees of the parties;or
 - b) Candidate-based primary elections in which all voters choose among all candidates from all parties on the same ballot with the candidates' party affiliations listed. The subsequent general election ballot would include either
 - 1) a pre-determined number of candidates (e.g., the top two, three, or four); or
 - 2) those candidates receiving a pre-determined percentage of the total primary votes.

Melanie Cox