

RECORDER'S FORM

Fall 2017 LWVMD Primary System Study

Date _____ Local League _____

Name & e-mail of person filling out report _____

Number of members participating _____ Number of units (meetings) _____

DUE DATE: March 5, 2018

Email: to: Barbara Sanders Bsanders@TerpAlum.umd.edu and lwvmd@verizon.net **OR**

Mail to: LWVMD, 111 Cathedral Street, Suite 201, Annapolis, MD 21401

Mark envelope: PRIMARY SYSTEM CONSENSUS

*League members throughout Maryland are involved in this study and may respond to questions differently from your local league. To help the state consensus committee in its task of determining whether a statewide consensus has been reached, **we are asking you to show not only your concurrence or consensus** for each question but also to indicate **whether it was a strong consensus (nearly unanimous) or a weaker consensus (the view of the group, but with several opposed or abstaining)**.*

After consensus is reached, your discussion leader can ask "Would anyone like to be recorded in opposition to the consensus? Or abstaining from it?" If there is no consensus on a question, please indicate in comments whether the members were split on yes/no, or whether group was just undecided, and why.

CONCURRENCE QUESTION (Adopting another LWV group's position as written; no changes)

Question 1. Should LWVMD concur with LWVMC election system criteria?

- 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**

Concurrence: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____

Comments:

CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

Note that questions 2 & 3 are opposites so that your answers to them cannot be the same.

Question 2. Should LWVMD retain our current state position supporting closed primary elections?

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

Question 3. Should LWVMD support a more open style of primary elections?

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

*Even if your local league prefers to retain our current position in support of closed primaries (Yes on Question 2), **please continue** with the following questions in case the statewide consensus turns out to support an open primary process. Please indicate **all** styles of open primaries you support or would prefer:*

a. Party-nomination – with each party’s winning candidate moving to general ballot

1) hybrid: open only to party members and non-affiliated registrants

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

2) open: all voters have choice of all candidates

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

b. Individual Candidate-based – all voters have choice of all candidates with a pre-set number or pre-set vote percentage of candidates moving to general election ballot without regard to partisan affiliation

1) candidates have partisan label on ballot

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

2) candidates appear without any partisan label

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

Question 4. In primary and general elections when there are more than two candidates, should the winner be determined by plurality (largest number of votes) or should a majority be required (50 percent +1)?

Consensus: PLURALITY__ (Strong__ or Weaker __) MAJORITY ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __)
NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

*Even if you answered "PLURALITY" above, the statewide consensus may be "MAJORITY."
Please indicate all ways you support or would prefer to reach a majority:*

a. Run-off elections

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

b. Ranked Choice Vote (Instant Runoff) in primary and general elections

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

Question 5. Should all recognized parties (currently including Democratic, Republican, Green & Libertarian) have access to taxpayer funded primary elections?

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

Question 6. Regardless of your response to other questions, should non-principal (currently Libertarian and Green) parties and non-affiliated candidates have easier access to the ballot?

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

Even if you answered "No" above, the statewide consensus may be "Yes." Please indicate all choices you support or would prefer:

a. Easing party's ability to put candidates on the general election ballots by

1) reducing the number of signatures required for initial recognition as a party;

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

2) reducing the number of general election votes required for a party to retain its recognition

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

3) permitting a party to 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;

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

b. Easing non-affiliated individual candidate's access to the general election ballot by reducing the number of signatures required on petitions.

Consensus: YES ____ (Strong__ or Weaker __) NO ____ NO CONSENSUS ____
Comments:

GENERAL COMMENTS (continue on back):