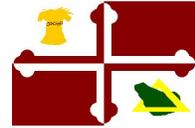




League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD)



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POSITIONS 2017-2019

I. GOVERNMENT

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE: Action to secure an effective, nonpartisan judiciary; and to promote fair and appropriate sentencing, including abolition of the death penalty; and a correctional system, including probation and other alternatives to incarceration, that protects society and prepares offenders for successful reintegration into the community.
Action to support access by indigent criminal defendants to legal counsel at every decisional stage of the judicial process, including bail hearings (1963, 1964, 1967, 1970, 1987, 1989, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012)

JUDICIARY: (1963, 1964, 1967, 1970, 2009, 2010, 2015)
Support for:

1. A constitutional provision for a statewide, uniform, unified judicial system in which all judges are trained attorneys. (1963, reaffirmed 1967, expanded 2009)
2. Appointment of judges by the governor based on the recommendations of judicial nominating commissions, with voter confirmation in nonpartisan merit retention elections. (1964, reaffirmed 1967, 1970, 2009)
3. A method for the removal of judges that is effective, removed from partisan considerations and requires lay representation on any commission set up for that purpose. (1970, expanded in 2009)
4. A non-partisan Evaluation Commission that issues public reports on judges' performance of their duties based on neutral criteria. (1970, expanded 2009)
5. Public funding for judicial elections so long as contested elections exist. (2009)
6. Continuing the option for the counties of Maryland to retain or abolish Orphans' Court (2010)
 - a. Selecting Orphans' Court Judges via non- partisan elections;
 - b. Selecting both attorneys and non-attorneys as Orphans' Court judges;
 - c. Changing the name of Orphans' Court to more clearly define the scope of its duties. (2011)
7. Eliminating partisan elections for selection of Clerk of the Court, Register of Wills and Sheriff. No consensus was reached on a method of selection of Clerk of the Court, Register of Wills and Sheriff. (2010) In 2010, a study of the financing of the Maryland Judiciary, a study of Orphans

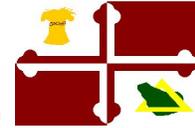
Court and the election/selection process of the administrative offices the Judiciary Clerk of the Court, Register of Wills and Sheriff resulted in new consensus positions listed above. Position 6c was proposed from the floor and adopted by the 2011 Convention.

SENTENCING:
Support for:

1. Sentencing based on the offense, the offender's previous record, aggravating or mitigating circumstances, and the impact on the victim.
2. Changing mandatory minimum sentencing procedures to allow for judicial discretion.
3. Sentencing guidelines which are:
 - a. evaluated continually by a panel of judges, legislators and others interested in sentencing.
 - b. expanded to include alternative sentencing.
4. Reporting judicial rationale for sentencing outside the guidelines.
5. Statewide plea bargaining guidelines.
6. Recognizing prison space as a limited resource reserved primarily for those who have committed serious or violent crimes, with the use of alternative sentencing for others.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT: (2005)
Support for:

1. The abolition of the death penalty.
2. For so long as Maryland has a death penalty, the League supports the following reforms for its equitable and consistent application:
 - a. uniform, statewide, criteria for death penalty prosecutions.
 - b. changing the standard of proof in weighing of aggravating and mitigating factors in sentencing from "preponderance of the evidence" to "beyond a reasonable doubt."
 - c. requiring prosecutors to provide open file discovery and all favorable evidence to the defense, and to establish uniform internal guidelines for cases that are particularly subject to human error, such as those relying on eyewitnesses, co-defendants or jailhouse informants.



- d. having mechanisms for preserving evidence such as DNA and for introducing newly discovered evidence.
- e. requiring judges to explain to jurors life without parole as a sentencing option and to charge the jury to weigh mitigating factors.
- f. effective defense including methods to screen, appoint and supervise lawyers representing defendants charged with capital crimes, adequate compensation for public defense counsel and sufficient funding to mount an effective defense.

- e. education, literacy, and vocational training.
 - f. reintegration services for all inmates prior to release and encouragement with strong incentives, to participate in these programs.
 - g. has space, security, and staff adequate to support program activities.
5. The correctional system's active encouragement of the use of qualified and trained volunteers.
 6. A significant citizen role in setting, reviewing, and monitoring correctional policy.
 7. The use of pre-sentence investigations.

CORRECTIONS: (1971, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1985, 1987, 2002, 2003)

Support for:

1. Alternatives to incarceration in state prisons, e.g., community correctional facilities, halfway houses, group homes and other community-based services.
2. A well-staffed correctional system which provides effective training and adequate salaries for correctional services staff.
3. A probation system that:
 - a. is an integral and adequately funded component of the correctional system.
 - b. facilitates the behavioral change of clients through cooperation and interaction among community, agency, and departmental resources. These resources, including substance abuse programs, work empowerment, parenting skills, mental health counseling, and child/sex abuse treatment should be available to every client who needs them.
 - c. recruits and retains probation agents; provides a career ladder for field agents and gives them manageable workloads, time flexibility and office resources to do in-depth risk and needs assessment, develop treatment plans, make referrals for services, assist in getting clients accepted in programs, and follow up on client participation in programs. There should be appropriate office facilities, private space, and technological and clerical support to allow agents sufficient involvement with clients.
 - d. includes intensive as well as lower levels of supervision of clients.
4. A Maryland prison system which:
 - a. adopts, monitors and enforces standards which provide a humane physical and psychological setting.
 - b. provides useful activities for a substantial part of the work week.
 - c. has adequate programs which create and enhance self-worth and facilitate community reintegration and economic self-sufficiency, including substance abuse treatment programs throughout incarceration.
 - d. ongoing counseling programs.

JUVENILE CORRECTIONS

Support for:

1. Use of specialized judges, counseling services and administration of juvenile cases all geared to dealing with families.
2. Small, regional juvenile institutions.
3. Individually designed training and treatment programs and local or regional diagnostic services for juvenile offenders.
4. Coordination of programs and services for juvenile offenders provided by the state agencies.
5. 24-hour supervised residential work and restitution centers with treatment programs available.

ELECTION PROCESS: Action to assure fair campaigns and elections. Action to institute elections to fill vacancies in the General Assembly. Action to support a closed primary election, a mix of single and multi-member legislative districts and coterminous boundaries. Action to oppose term limits for members of the General Assembly. Action to assure an election system that is equitable, accessible, fiscally responsible, accountable and enforceable. Opposition to a requirement for uniform voting systems unless funded by the state.

(1972, 1985, 1993, 1997, 2001, 2013, 2014)

FAIR CAMPAIGNS (1971, 1974, 1982)

Support for:

1. Fair campaign financing. (LWVUS position)
2. Full disclosure. (LWVUS position)
3. Limits on Election Day campaigning.
4. Full enforcement of election laws.

FILLING VACANCIES IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

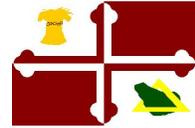
(1985, 1995, 2015)

Support for:

1. Special primary and special general elections to fill vacancies in the Maryland General Assembly to be held at the same time as other regularly scheduled elections (tie-in elections).
 - a. Support the option to use Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) to fill vacancies in any single seat or executive office elections, at the local, county or state level. This would require the winner to receive a majority of the votes, instead of



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conducting both special political party primaries and a special general election. (2015)

- b. A temporary gubernatorial appointment to fill legislative vacancies based on local political party committee recommendations, until elections are held.

- 2. Additional statewide standards regulating the central committee nominating process to fill legislative vacancies, public notice of meetings within the vacated district for public input, the public announcement of candidates prior to that meeting, and a publicly recorded vote of each committee member.

PRIMARY ELECTIONS, ELECTION DISTRICTS, TERM LIMITS (1993)

Support for:

- 1. A closed primary election.
- 2. A mix of single and multi-member districts. The following criteria should be used to decide which districts should be single and which should be multi-member:
 - a. full minority representation;
 - b. geographic integrity;
 - c. preservation of political and community boundaries; compactness.
- 3. Coterminous boundaries (Delegate districts nesting within Senate districts).

Opposition to:

- 4. Term limits for members of the General Assembly. (1993)

VOTING RIGHTS AND ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Support for:

- 1. An election system that is equitable, accessible, fiscally responsible, accountable and enforceable. (1997 and 2001)
- 2. Mandatory training for all election judges with the state providing basic training instructions.
- 3. A minimum compensation level for election judges set by the state.
- 4. A restructured Maryland State Board of Elections (MSBE) – formerly the State Administrative Board of Election Laws (SABEL).
 - a. giving MSBE legal authority and adequate funding to enforce election laws and regulations;
 - b. giving MSBE legal authority and funding to develop and maintain a centralized, computerized voter registration list and a centralized, computerized campaign finance reporting system;
 - c. staggered terms for members of MSEL;
 - d. a professional administrator hired by MSBE.
- 5. Statewide uniformity of voting registration and registration records.
 - a. a change in Maryland law that would allow any eligible individual to register to vote online and complete the registration process at the polling place. (2013)
- 6. A uniform, simple system for accurate identification of voters at the polls.

- 7. A registration deadline set as close as possible to primary and general elections, consistent with technology that provides ballot security and makes the administration of the deadline cost-effective. (“Ballot security” assures ballot secrecy and prevents fraudulently cast ballots.)
- 8. Provisional ballots, with a strong preference that voters be notified if they are later found not eligible to vote. Provisional ballots allow a voter whose name is not listed on the polling place election register to vote a ballot which is sealed and segregated from regularly cast ballots until the election authority can confirm the voter’s eligibility. They provide ballot security, are convenient for the voter and avoid disenfranchisement of voters due to administrative error.
- 9. Support for early voting:
 - a. State law should specify a minimum number of early voting days;
 - b. State law should specify that a Saturday and a Sunday be included in early voting days;
 - c. State law should give the State Board of Elections the authority to authorize additional early voting sites when such sites are requested and funded by a local election board;
 - d. Setting a deadline that occurs before early voting begins for write-in candidates to file a certificate of candidacy. (2013)

- 10. Development and maintenance of a permanent absentee list for absentee voters. There was no consensus as to whether the voters on the permanent absentee list should receive an application for an absentee ballot or the absentee ballot. (2014)
- 11. If security issues can be adequately addressed, support of online delivery of absentee ballots to all voters who request such delivery. (2013)
- 12. Study, research and pilot projects to determine the feasibility of Internet voting.
- 13. Assuring voters’ access in the polling place to personally–procured or provided information and materials (e.g. sample ballots, voters’ guide, campaign literature) to assist in marking the ballot. There was no consensus as to the format of materials allowed in the polling places. (2014)
- 14. Requiring that all voting equipment (hardware and software) for use in Maryland should allow alternative ways of casting and counting ballots and be usable for all county and municipal elections. (2014)

Opposition to:

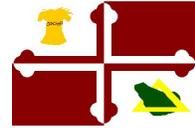
- 15. A requirement for uniform voting systems unless funded by the state. (1997) FIREARMS CONTROL: Action to strengthen gun control laws. (1991)

Support for:

- 1. Requirement of a proficiency test as part of the procedure for obtaining a hunting license.
- 2. Restriction on the availability of handguns (not including the banning of handguns).
- 3. Registration of all handguns including a more effective identification process.



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4. Compilation of more adequate and uniform firearm and firearm crime statistics by the State Police.
5. Development of police public relations programs to educate the public about firearms, especially gun safety, gun laws, and gun crime and accident statistics.

FISCAL POLICY: Action to promote an equitable and efficient fiscal structure for Maryland and to improve the fiscal relationships between the state and its political subdivisions. Action to support or oppose proposed changes to Maryland's revenue structure, using certain principles to analyze and evaluate the proposed changes. Action to increase the budgetary authority of the legislature and to achieve a more effective budget process.
(1976, 1981, 1999, 2004)

FISCAL STRUCTURE (1976, 1981, 1999)

Support for:

1. An equitable and efficient fiscal structure for Maryland.
2. Improvement of the fiscal relationships between the state and its political subdivisions.
3. Supporting or opposing proposed changes to Maryland's revenue structure by using the following principles to analyze and evaluate the proposed changes.
 - a. a progressive income tax which should be the first choice if a revenue increase is necessary.
 - b. a sales tax with exemptions to decrease regressivity.
 - c. a motor vehicle fuel tax on a per gallon basis to be used for transportation, with measures included to protect the environment.
 - d. the distribution of state funds to local governments in a variety of ways, based on factors such as population, need, wealth, and tax effort.
 - e. reduction of the number and complexity of equalization formulas used by the state to distribute money to local governments.
 - f. statements of intent and periodic review by the legislature of all state-funded programs.
 - g. permitting legislative reallocation of expenditures within the official state revenue estimate or the Governor's budget proposal.
 - h. fiscal restraints which promote good fiscal planning and allow for proper budget procedures.
4. Support for use of the following principles (no single revenue source will meet all principles), with principles a through c the most important and d through f more important than the others.
 - a. Adequate yield: Adequate and timely revenues are available to finance planned expenditures.
 - b. Equity/Fairness: The ability-to-pay principle defined as a progressive tax – a graduated tax which will collect a greater percentage of income from those with higher income than from those with lower incomes; e.g., a graduated income tax with a series of rates and income brackets.

- c. Compatibility with state social and environmental policy: The state's policy and tax structure are working toward the same ends, not at cross purposes.
- d. Cost effective administration: Collection costs are low relative to the yield.
- e. Elasticity/natural growth: As the economy, the population and/or inflation grows, the revenue system will grow naturally at a similar rate in order to maintain a constant level of services.
- f. Equity/Fairness: The benefit principle means a tax or fee will be levied in proportion to the benefit received, e.g. user fees, college tuition, and dedicated taxes. Use of this principle must include an assessment of the impact on low-income people.
- g. Simplicity: The revenue source is easy to understand.
- h. Certainty: The tax is difficult to avoid.
- i. Public acceptance: The political will exists to impose the tax of fee and the public's willingness to comply is evident.
- j. Compatibility and links with federal policy: Maryland's budget includes a significant amount of federal funds; the state income tax is pegged to the federal income tax; several other smaller taxes also piggyback on their federal counterparts; and some state taxes are deductible at the federal level.
- k. A competitive business climate: The state's policy and tax structure will not adversely impact on-going businesses, or where businesses locate. The costs of inducements, such as tax credits, to businesses to move to or to remain in the state will be considered in the light of Maryland's overall competitiveness and attractiveness. Accountability for the cost of inducements and their results must be included in this policy.

Opposition to:

5. Any constitutional amendment proposed to limit state taxes and spending.
6. Tax or spending limits imposed by the state on local governments. (See "Education - Financing Education" for related support positions)

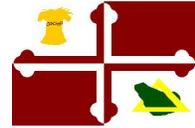
BUDGET PROCESS (1977, 2004)

Support for:

1. Increasing the budgetary authority of the legislature to achieve a more effective budget process
2. The following characteristics as important to Maryland's operating budget process:
 - a. Transparency: A budget process that is clear and readily understood.
 - b. Public Access: Opportunity for substantive public input during the entire budget process, including



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the formulation, enactment and implementation phases.

- c. Reliable, current and objective information.
- d. Accountability: A systematic review process of expenditures, programs and services to determine their impact, efficiency and sustainability.
- e. Sufficient time to deliberate.
- f. Flexibility: The ability to adjust to changing needs.
- g. Balanced budget requirement.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

Action to support county home rule, with preference for charter. (1967, 1983, 1985)

Support for:

- 1. County home rule, with preference for charter. (1967, reaffirmed 1983, 1985)

REDISTRICTING:

Action to assure a state redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation in the state legislature and House of Representatives with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny. (2004)

Support for:

- 1. A state redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation in the state legislature and House of Representatives with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny.
- 2. An independent commission as the preferred redistricting body. The membership of the redistricting commission should:
 - a. be multi-partisan and unaffiliated, geographically representative and not include any current state elected official.
- 3. Standards on which the redistricting plan is based should include:
 - a. substantially equal population;
 - b. geographic contiguity;
 - c. geographic compactness.
- 4. Final approval by the General Assembly for the legislative and Congressional redistricting plans.
- 5. An amendment to the Maryland Constitution affirming that the redistricting process for the House of Representatives should occur only once each ten years after the census.

STATE CONSTITUTION:

Action to secure a constitution that is clear, concise and confined to fundamentals. (1962)

Support for:

- 1. A constitution that is clear, concise and confined to fundamentals.

II. NATURAL RESOURCES

Coal: Action to oppose the granting of eminent domain for, and the construction of, a coal slurry pipeline through Maryland. (1986)
Action to support the collection of taxes and fees from the coal industry

for costs to the public resulting from the mining of Maryland coal. (1987)
Action to oppose strip mining on slopes steeper than 20 degrees. (1993)

Support for:

- 1. Holding the coal industry responsible for the payment of costs to the public resulting from its operation.
- 2. Use of the per-ton severance tax and the current system of impact/reclamation fees as the sources of revenues to cover these costs.
- 3. Continuation of the Maryland coal tax.

Opposition to:

- 4. The use of the personal property tax for surface mined coal because of the difficulty in enforcement and collection.
- 5. Strip mining on slopes steeper than 20 degrees.

HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT: Action to promote the environmentally sound management of hazardous waste and to educate the public on safe disposal procedures. (1984)

Support for:

- 1. Sound management of hazardous waste through:
 - a. recycling, recovery and pre-treatment;
 - b. alternatives to land filling;
 - c. providing economic incentives to industry and evaluating the results;
 - d. providing funds for environmental monitoring and enforcement.
- 2. State government action to assist public and small generator waste disposal in an economically feasible and environmentally safe way through:
 - a. education of the public as to what hazardous waste is, how to dispose of it properly, and safe alternative products that can be used;
 - b. mandating informative labeling on all hazardous waste products;
 - c. encouraging the establishment of convenient collection sites throughout Maryland.

LAND USE/GROWTH MANAGEMENT: Action to encourage the State to establish goals, guidelines, and standards for land use, with local implementation of land use policies. (1975, 1979, 1991)

Support for:

- 1. State government having a larger role than local government in managing critical areas of statewide concern, especially environmental protection and resource conservation and preservation.
- 2. Goals and guidelines for regional and interagency coordination in the development and implementation of land use plans.
- 3. Local government's use of land use planning and regulatory techniques, such as adequate public facilities legislation, land banking, planned unit developments, transfer of development rights, and timed development ordinances to direct development to designated areas.
- 4. Preservation of agricultural land by:
 - a. Zoning;



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- b. continued use of preferential farmland easement laws, including collection of the roll-back tax;
 - c. transfer of development rights;
 - d. easement purchases funded by the state real estate transfer tax.
5. State government use of incentives such as the provision of technical assistance, infrastructure and grants to enable local governments to comply with state goals, guidelines and standards.

6. Public education to promote transportation goals which would provide alternative travel modes, encourage technological improvements that abate emissions from mobile sources, reduce energy consumption and protect natural resources.

III. SOCIAL POLICY

ADULT LITERACY: Action to ensure availability of free or low cost basic English language instruction for adult Maryland residents who are not proficient in reading, writing, speaking and understanding English. (2009)

Support for:

- 1. Federal, State and Local government funding of free or low cost basic English language instruction for adult Maryland residents.
- 2. State and/or local government providing tax credits or other monetary incentives to employers who:
 - a. provide paid work release time for employees to attend English as a Second Language (ESL) or literacy classes either on-site or offsite.
 - b. Contract with qualified professionals and/or community colleges to provide worksite ESL or literacy classes.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES: Action to support a comprehensive range of child-centered services to ensure all children a chance to grow toward stable, productive adulthood. (1995)

Support for:

- 1. Making the needs of children a high priority of government.
- 2. Effective services for children, including:
 - a. collaboration across departmental and agency lines to provide seamless services for children;
 - b. community-based points of entry where families at risk can apply for multiple services;
 - c. consumer-oriented service centers sited in easily accessible neighborhood locations (such as schools) with hours convenient to families;
 - d. a compatible computer system with appropriate safeguards for confidentiality, connecting agencies serving children to allow more open collaboration and provide comprehensive resource listing;
 - e. a non-categorized contingency fund with rational limits and clear accountability available to line workers dealing with crisis situations;
 - f. early intervention to prevent later crisis;
 - g. result-oriented, long-term evaluations of program and services based on measured outcomes.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Action to support preventing initial and repeat occurrences of violence against spouses, domestic partners, the elderly, and children. Action to support a strong statewide response to violence that is integrated, interdisciplinary, and adequately funded, involving all segments of the law-enforcement and judicial systems, the medical community, the schools, social services, animal care and

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT: Action to promote informed decisions affecting solid waste management. (1995)

Support for:

- 1. Ample opportunity and funding for active public participation including timely scheduling and notification of public meetings.
- 2. Provisions by local, state and federal governments of the following types of information on the impact of solid waste actions:
 - a. Environment;
 - b. Economics;
 - c. public health;
 - d. socio-economic demographics.
- 3. Technological information collected, shared and provided by the state.
- 4. State regulations in place regarding control, funding and public health for the management of solid waste.
- 5. The following incentives that encourage the reduction, reuse, and recycling of materials and the opening of new markets and that discourage the use of some materials:
 - a. legislative mandates;
 - b. tax incentives;
 - c. voluntary guidelines;
 - d. pricing support;
 - e. variable rates for waste pick-up;
 - f. procurement regulations
- 6. Inter- and intra-state solutions to solid waste management.

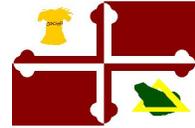
TRANSPORTATION: Action to support an integrated transportation system and mass transit systems which are efficient, safe, clean and accessible. Support for adequate and equitable funding and cooperative regional programs is necessary to achieve these goals. (2002)

Support for:

- 1. Maintaining the solvency of the Transportation Trust Fund.
- 2. Increasing funding for mass transit.
- 3. Developing regional visions and frameworks for transportation which reflect local concerns and which incorporate relevant LWV positions on land use, economic development and environmental protection.
- 4. Achieving and maintaining cooperative working relationships among state and local agencies in order to achieve better planning and to decrease the use of single occupancy vehicles.
- 5. Incentives which promote use of mass transit and other alternative modes of travel.



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control agencies, and the private sector, with a primary focus on the safety of victims. (2000)

Support For:

1. Counseling for abused persons, children and batterers.
2. A "seamless response" to domestic violence throughout the state
3. Early intervention where child behavior may signify abuse.
4. Programs to sensitize police and judicial personnel, health care providers, mental health workers, social service workers, businesses, community groups, educators, and veterinarians and animal care workers to indicators of abuse.
5. Adequate funding of domestic violence programs.
6. Forceful implementation of laws.
7. Safe homes to meet the needs of elderly victims.
8. Facilities for pets who are not permitted in shelters.
9. Research to develop programs and laws which will stop domestic violence.

DRUG AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ABUSE, POLICIES AND LAWS IN MARYLAND: Action to legalize the use of marijuana for any use, including medicinal, subject to restrictions on production and distribution (2012)

Support for:

1. Legalization of marijuana for any use, including medicinal use, subject to restrictions on production and distribution.
2. No agreement was reached as to the legalization of other non-prescription illegal drugs classified as controlled substances such as heroin or cocaine for medicinal or any use.

DRUNK DRIVING: Action to promote strong governmental measures and educational programs to address the problem of the drinking driver. (1983 and 2001)

Support For:

1. A blood alcohol concentration (BAC) not to exceed 0.08 standing as both the legal definition of driving while intoxicated and absolute proof of guilt per se in alcohol-related driving offenses.
2. The administration of BAC tests when there is a probable cause to believe that a driver is under the influence of alcohol.
3. Courts and other agencies expediting the handling of alcohol-related driving offenses.
4. Statewide guidelines for rehabilitation programs, which should be locally administered with costs shared by the offenders.
5. Judges' use of a variety of sentences for alcohol-related offenses.

EDUCATION: Action to support measures which recognize the primary responsibility for funding public elementary and secondary education lies with the state. (1972, 1975) Action to support the state aiding local school systems in attracting and retaining competent teachers. (1989) Action to oppose using public funding for vouchers to enable parents to send their children to private elementary and secondary schools. (2001) Action to encourage the inclusion of certain criteria in any

legislation or regulations governing the establishment of Public Charter Schools. (2001) Action to insure students have an opportunity to pass high school graduation tests. (2005)

FINANCING EDUCATION – The primary responsibility for funding public elementary and secondary education lies with the state. (1972, 1975)

Support for:

1. A foundation program based on a weighted per pupil formula supported from general state revenues at a level high enough to eliminate inequities.
2. Some local leeway to provide additional funding for education.
3. Continuation of local control over the schools.
4. The encouragement of increased federal funding for education.

(see Fiscal Policy support positions 4 and 5)

COMPETENT TEACHERS – state aiding local school systems in attracting and retaining competent teachers. (1989)

Support for:

1. The state setting realistic minimum beginning salaries.
2. The state funding scholarships for college education of qualified candidates entering the teaching profession, particularly for those agreeing to teach in critical subject areas or in school systems with critical teacher shortages.
3. The state supporting alternative paths to certification.
4. The state providing support for professional development activities.
5. The state encouraging the use of support staff to enable teachers to spend more time with students and their learning problems.

CHOICE IN EDUCATION – VOUCHERS (2001, 2002)

Opposition to:

1. Using public funding for vouchers to enable parents to send their children to private elementary and secondary schools

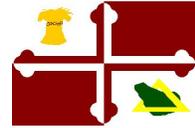
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS (2001)

Support For:

1. The following criteria in any legislation or regulations governing the establishment of Public Charter Schools.
 - a. Public Charter Schools must be non sectarian, non religious, non profit, and not home-based;
 - b. Applications may be submitted by a variety of groups or organizations, including, but not limited to, parents, teachers and institutions of higher learning;
 - c. Local boards of education determine which groups or organizations will be granted contracts i.e., 'charters', with the right to an appeal of that decision to the State Board of Education;
 - d. Waivers (to be specified in the contract) may include some public school regulations governing curriculum, calendar, and teaching methodology. No waivers may be granted from regulations



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governing fiscal accountability, nor (as specified by federal regulations) from civil rights or health and safety standards;

- e. Quarterly financial reports should be made to the local school board;
- f. Academic standards, including testing, required of other public school students must be met;
- g. Admission must be non-discriminatory and open on a first-come, first-served basis to all students who wish to apply, and
- h. Public Charter Schools must be funded at the same per pupil level as students in other public schools. No consensus was reached on whether we support or oppose Public Charter Schools.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION TESTING – insure students have an opportunity to pass high school graduation tests. (2005)

Support For:

1. As long as passage of academic tests (High School Assessments) is required for graduation, the following conditions should be in place to insure students have a fair opportunity to pass:
 - a. Access to curriculum and instructional materials aligned with state standards
 - b. Access to a high quality educational program, including advanced placement courses
 - c. Access to well qualified teachers
 - d. Timely and specific results
 - e. Multiple opportunities to pass the test
 - f. In-school and after-school tutoring and remediation
 - g. Opportunities to retake a course or take a mini-course
 - h. Alternate ways to demonstrate mastery of the subject
2. To insure every student the opportunity and resources to pass tests, the state should fund:
 - a. Pre-school education
 - b. Professional staff development (curriculum, learning styles, cultural differences, expectations of students)
 - c. Curriculum development and textbooks aligned with core curriculum
 - d. Smaller class size
 - e. Technical assistance to identify reasons for low academic achievement

No consensus was reached on whether passage of statewide, course-related testing should be required to determine eligibility for high school graduation.

MARRIAGE / CIVIL UNION EQUALITY: Action to ensure that Maryland law does not discriminate in its recognition of all marriages/civil unions on the basis of gender or religious definitions of marriage. (2007)

Support for:

1. State sanctioned, legally recognized unions which convey rights, benefits and obligations to same-sex partners who seek such unions.
2. Recognition of such unions and/or same-sex marriages that have been legally sanctioned in other states.
3. With preference for: In keeping with the principle of separation of church and state, making the basis of state recognition of all marriages/civil unions (same-sex or opposite-sex) a civil proceeding, with the additional step of marriage in accordance with religious traditions a voluntary option.

HEALTH CARE and HEALTH CARE APPEALS: Action to ensure a health care appeals system which protects patients, makes insurers accountable and objectively addresses patients' concerns. (1999)

Support for:

1. Uniform state standards and guidelines for health care appeals. The standards and guidelines should:
 - a. be applicable to all health insurers not covered by federal law
 - b. include time frames for responding to appeals and the qualifications
 - c. required of reviewers. require that professional standards be used in making decisions on appeals.
2. Collection of healthcare data which can be used to hold health insurers accountable and which is understandable and accessible to patients.

HOUSING: Action to develop a state housing policy responsive to the need for more affordable housing and to clarify landlord/tenant relationships. (1982, 1983)

Support for:

1. One state entity charged with and held accountable for establishing housing policies, programs and goals, periodically collecting and analyzing data, and reviewing housing programs.
2. Housing programs funded by bonds and general revenues.
3. Housing programs targeted to those geographic areas with proportionally the highest level of housing assistance needs.
4. New construction or rehabilitation to promote economic development. The change of state landlord/tenant laws to require a clearly written lease which states the rights and responsibilities of both parties and includes a warranty of habitability.
5. Requirement of landlords to state reasons for either terminating tenancy or initiating eviction proceedings.
6. The establishment of local and/or regional landlord/tenant offices and quasi-judicial commissions throughout Maryland.
7. The use of manufactured/mobile housing and the development of manufactured/mobile home subdivisions to meet the need for affordable and available housing.

The LWVMD approved studies for Civic Education, Citizens Initiative Process, and Death with Dignity at their June 2019 Convention.