



2020 - 2021 HANDBOOK

- Calendar of Meetings and Events 2020 - 2021
- Directory of Local Leadership
- League Information and Policies
- Positions: Local, Regional, State, and National

League of Women Voters:

Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

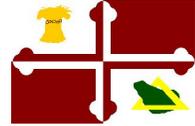
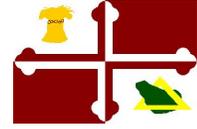


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5430 Vantage Point Road, Suite C
Columbia MD 21044
Tel. and fax: (410) 730-0142
email: info@howard.lwvmd.org
Website: lwwhowardmd.org



2020-2021 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS & EVENTS
Due to Covid-19, dates, locations, and times may change

SEPTEMBER 2020

9/7 Mon - Labor Day
LWVHC office closed
9/10 Thu - LWVHC Board Meeting, Zoom, 7-8:30 pm
9/15 Sun The Voter newsletter deadline
9/15 Tue - AAUW HC Voting presentation via Zoom 7pm
9/16 Wed - Great Decisions J. Cripe, 7pm
9/22 Tue - National Voter Registration Day
9/23 Wed - How To Vote and Research Candidates Presentation with HCC via Zoom at 2pm
9/24 Thu - Unit Meeting: Celebrating the 19th Amendment (How to Vote and Help Others Vote) via Zoom 7pm
9/24 Thu - How To Be An Informed Voter presentation with the HC Library via Zoom 7pm
9/26 Sat - LWVMD Fall Workshop Zoom 9-12pm

OCTOBER 2020

10/2 Fri - Candidates Forum Judicial (4-5pm), & Board of Education (2-4pm) via Zoom
10/3 Sat - GOTV Event with the Sheriff's Office in Downtown Old Ellicott City (11am - 2pm)
10/3 Sat - Oakland Mills Fall Fest Zoom 11-3pm
10/8 Thu - LWVHC Board Meeting, via Zoom 7-8:30 pm
10/12 Mon - Columbus Day
LWVHC office closed
10/13 Tue - Last Day to Register to Vote
10/14 Wed - Great Decisions J. Cripe, 7 pm
10/15 Thu - The Voter newsletter deadline

OCTOBER 2020 cont.

10/20 Tue - AAUW HC Electoral College presentation via Zoom 7pm
10/20 Tue - Last Day to Request Absentee Ballots
10/21 Wed - Sustainability Day Presentation at HCC 10am - 7pm
10/22 Thu - Unit Meeting: What Are We Voting On? Via Zoom 7pm
10/26 Mon - Start of early voting

NOVEMBER 2020

11/2 Mon - End of early voting
11/3 Tue - ELECTION DAY (Ballots must be dropped or postmarked)
11/11 Wed - Great Decisions J. Cripe, 7 pm
11/12 Thu - LWVHC Board Meeting, Via Zoom, 7-8:30 pm
11/15 Sun - The Voter newsletter deadline
11/19 Thu - Unit Meeting: Study Consensus Meeting Via Zoom 7pm
11/26 Thu - Thanksgiving
LWVHC office closed

DECEMBER 2020

12/10 Thu - LWVHC Board Mtg, Via Zoom, 7-8:30 pm
12/12 Sat - Barnes & Noble Gift-Wrap Fundraiser, 9am-9pm
4300 Montgomery Rd, Ellicott City
12/13 Sun - LWVHC Holiday Party, 3-5pm
12/15 Tue - Bill of Rights Day
12/15 Tue - The Voter newsletter deadline
12/17 Thurs - Unit Meeting, Meet Your Law Enforcement Team via Zoom 7pm
12/25 Fri - Christmas
LWVHC office closed

JANUARY 2021

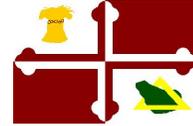
1/1 Fri - New Year's Day
LWVHC office closed
1/13 Wed - Maryland General Assembly convenes
1/14 Thu - LWVHC Board Mtg, Location TBD, 7-8:30pm
1/15 Fri - The Voter newsletter deadline
1/16 Sat - Legislative Kick-off Breakfast, Location TBD 9am-12 pm
1/18 Mon - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
LWVHC office closed
1/21 Thu - Unit Meeting: Study Consensus Meeting Location TBD 7pm
1/30 Sat LWVMD Winter Workshop Location TBD 10-2

FEBRUARY 2021

2/6 Sat - LWVMD Winter Workshop Snowday
2/10 Wed - Great Decisions J. Cripe, 7 pm
2/11 Thu - LWVHC Board Mtg, Location TBD, 7-8:30pm
2/14 Sun - LWVHC 75th Birthday
2/15 Mon - The Voter newsletter deadline
2/15 Mon - President's Day
LWVHC office closed
2/19 Thu - Unit Meeting: LWVHC Study: Equity in Education Report Location TBD 7pm

MARCH 2021

TBD - Tino's Italian Bistro Fundraiser
8775 Centre Park Drive, Columbia
TBD - LWVMD Legislative Day in Annapolis
TBD - Unit Meeting
3/10 Wed - Great Decisions J. Cripe, 7pm



MARCH 2021 cont.

3/11 Thu - Board Meeting, Location TBD, 7-8:30 pm
3/15 Mon - The Voter Newsletter Deadline

APRIL 2021

TBD Sat - GreenFest
TBD WVMD Lobby Day on Capitol Hill
TBD LWVHC Annual Meeting 6-9pm
TBD Unit Meeting
LWVHC Display, 10-4pm
4/8 Thu - LWVHC Board Mtg , Location TBD, 7-8:30 pm
4/14 Wed - Great Decisions J. Cripe, 7 pm
4/15 Thu The Voter newsletter deadline
4/22 Thu - 51st Annual Earth Day

MAY 2021

TBD Sat - LWVNCA Annual Convention
TBD - Unit Meeting
5/12 Wed - Great Decisions J. Cripe, 7 pm
5/13 Thu - LWVHC Board Meeting, Oakland Manor, 7-8:30 pm
5/15 Fri - The Voter newsletter deadline
5/31 Mon Memorial Day – LWVHC office closed

JUNE 2021

TBD - Howard County Council Mtg: Position Review
TBD - Sat LWVMD Council
6/5 Sat - LWVMD State Convention in PG County
6/9 Wed - Great Decisions J. Cripe, 7pm
6/10 Thu - LWVHC Board Meeting Location TBD, 7-8:30pm
6/15 Mon - Summer Voter newsletter deadline
6/30 Wed - Sine Die – General Assembly adjourns

JULY 2021

TBD Sat - LWVHC Annual Board Retreat and Calendar
Planning for July 2021 – June 2022
7/4 Sun - Longfellow Parade, 9:30am; Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Dr, Columbia

AUGUST 2021

TBD - Sat LWVNCA Workshop
8/1 Sun - Howard County Fair Volunteer Fireman's Parade
8/15 Sun - The Voter newsletter deadline
8/26 Thu - Women's Equality Day

Great Decisions

2nd Wednesdays 7pm - 9pm
Feb – June, Sept - Nov
Jerry and Janis J. Cripe's home
For registration information contact:
Janis J. Cripe, 410-730-8091
janiscripe@aol.com or
Sue Buswell, 410-992-1169
srbuswell@aol.com

The Voter Newsletter

Email submissions to the Voter newsletter by the 15th of each month to: Nancy Carlsen
nancy.carlsen@gmail.com
Please use the subject line: LWVHC Voter

Unit Meetings:

When scheduled, Unit meetings are held at 7pm on the third Thursday.
Meeting Location:
Oakland Manor, 5430 Vantage Point Road Columbia
Please check for exceptions located in the calendar and the Voter, the LWVHC Monthly Newsletter.

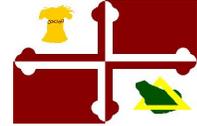
For more information about Unit Meetings, please contact Gina Smith at the LWVHC office,
info@howard.lwvmd.org
410-730-0142
or Krista Threefoot
two3foots@yahoo.com
301-351-8912



Directory of Local Leadership

For online privacy we have left out personal email and phone numbers, but left a space if you would like to print this page and add it as your personal reference.

OFFICERS			
Cynthia Williams	President		
Krista Threefoot	Vice President/Program		
Virginia Kirk	Secretary		
Barbara Russell	Treasurer/Voter Guide		
DIRECTORS			
Linda Wengel	Action		
Nancy Carlsen	Communications – Internal		
Linda Frascarella	Education		
Sandy Levy	Environment		
Michelle Rice Trotter/Amber Treat	Fundraising		
Lucie Geinzer	Membership		
Amber Treat	Publications		
Cheryle Wharton	Voter Service		
OFF BOARD			
	Arrangements		
Laura Mettle	Communications - External		
Susan R. Buswell	Giant Gift Cards		
Janis Cripe	Great Decisions		
Jerry Cripe	Great Decisions		
Andrea Morris Gruhl	LWVNCA Liaison		
Beth Hufnagel	Immediate Past President		
Roxanne Hughes-Wheatland	United Nations Representative		



HISTORY

The League of Women Voters of Howard County was founded in 1946 and was originally centered in the Elkridge area. The emphasis of this new League was education and community issues, focused on women, children and citizen participation.

Between 1963 and 1967, the League played a key role in the establishment of charter government in Howard County and in the formative years of the New Town of Columbia. League members actively supported the development of Columbia by serving as community speakers, canvassing various communities, and operating a very active Speakers Bureau which promoted the concept of Columbia to Howard County residents and to other Maryland communities.

While the county has changed dramatically since those early years, the League’s commitment to community continues on every level of government. Whether on issues of education, environment, the budget, planning and zoning, health and human services, election reform or civil rights, the Howard County League plays a leadership role.

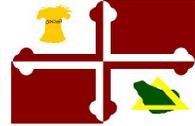
The proud tradition continues today in the Howard County League as we meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

League of Women Voters of Howard County – List of Presidents

1946 - 1949 Jeanette Smith	1978 - 1980 Priscilla Hart	2005 - 2008 Barbara Russell, Co-President
1949 - 1950 Nora Reynolds	1980 - 1981 Donna Ballard	2005 - 2009 Grace Kubofcik, Co-President
1950 (First name unknown) Sulkie	1981 - 1982 Roz Kirk	2008 - 2009 Barbara Schnackenberg, Co-President
1950 - 1951 Frances Neubauer	1982 - 1983 Mary Lou Shippe	2009 - 2011 Grace Kubofcik
1951 - 1953 Berta Hopkins Taylor	1983 - 1985 Eileen Molinaro	2011 - 2013 Betsy Grater, Co-President
1953 - 1955 Etta Southard	1985 - 1987 Joan Paik	2011 - 2015 Alice Giles, Co-President
1955 - 1957 Ida Curtis	1987 - 1990 Betty Harries	2013 - 2015 Lillie Gallant, Co-President
1957 - 1959 Frances Neubauer	1990 - 1995 Anita M. Iribé	2015 - 2017 Lillie Gallant
1959 - Gertrude Crist	1995 - 1997 Rosemary E.S. Mortimer	2017 - 2018 Barbara Russell, Co-President
1959 - 1960 Ida Cromwell	1997 - 1999 Alice P. Gretsche	2017 - 2019 Betsy Grater, Co-President
1960 - 1961 Thelma Romoser	1999 - 2001 Carole M. Conors	2018 Beth Hufnagel Co-President
1961 - 1963 Nell Harness	2001 - 2003 Susan R. Buswell, Co-President	2019 - 2020 Beth Hufnagel
1963 - 1964 Anita M. Iribé	2001 - 2005 Betsy Grater, Co-President	2020 - Present Cynthia Williams
1964 - 1965 Peggy Whyte	2003 - 2004 Sharon Wissel, Co-President	
1965 - 1967 Anita M. Iribé	2004 - 2005 Andrea Morris Gruhl, Co-President	
1965 - 1968 Pati Reich		
1968 - 1973 Ginny Higgins		
1973 - 1975 Margo Garner		
1975 - 1976 Marjorie Burk		
1976 - 1977 Helen Ruther		
1977 - 1978 Lynne Salisbury		



League of Women Voters of Howard County



TAKE ACTION! DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT!

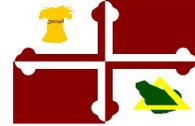
The League program does not stop with attaining member agreement. The next step is to change government policy to reflect the values and aims of LWV positions. The official positions of the League are presented by the President or designated members, but all members are encouraged to speak or write as individuals in support of positions held by the League. Independent action by members is encouraged regarding any issue.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING E-MAILS OR LETTERS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Start your communication with what you support or oppose in a short caption and include the words "support" or "oppose." Identify both the bill number, if you know it, and topic because your topic may also be on a different bill. Write about only one issue per communication. Write as an individual and use your own words. Write to express agreement and support, not just when you oppose. Include your address so that it is clear that you are a constituent and so that you can receive a response.

PUBLICATIONS

All members receive The LWVMD VOTER, The Howard County VOTER (monthly), an Annual Meeting WORKBOOK (in March) and the local League's HANDBOOK (in September).



LEAGUE PRINCIPLES

The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States. The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that all powers of the U.S. government should be exercised within the constitutional framework of a balance among the three branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial. (2008 National Convention) The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible. The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination. The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government. The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems. The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems and that development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

LEAGUE STRUCTURE

The League functions on four levels – local, state, regional and national. Each level focuses on issues appropriate to its area's governance. The local League's members are automatically members of the state, regional and national bodies, receive their literature, may attend their workshops and forums, and are eligible to sit

on their Boards and be named delegates to their conventions and councils. The League of Women Voters believes its strength and influence derives from a dedication to consensus building on grassroots initiatives and on careful preparation before acting.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide opportunities to be informed on public matters
- To encourage participation in federal, state and local decisions
- To establish positions on public policy through grassroots member participation and agreement
- To advocate League grassroots positions

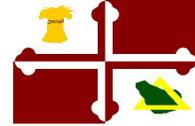
MEMBERSHIP

is open to all citizens of voting age who subscribe to the purpose and policies of the League. By joining the local League of Women Voters, one also becomes a member of the National League, the State League, and the National Capital Area League. A person may become a member of any one local League in the United States regardless of place of residence. Important local leadership opportunities exist for members in many areas including Nominating, Budget, Program Studies, Action committees and the Speakers Bureau.

Membership dues partially support our activities. Since the major portion of those dues is allocated to support the state, regional and national Leagues, additional funds must be raised through activities as well as through donations to the League's Voters Education Fund.

THE UNITS

historically are the 'heart'; of the League. The Units are small groups of local members who meet for discussion and study of various issues of interest in Howard County, Maryland, the region, and the nation. The purpose of Units is to facilitate discussion and understanding and are held to best meet the League goal "to promote informed and active participation in government." Units are where **LWV grassroots positions** are developed. Local program items are adopted by the membership at the yearly annual



meeting and are usually dealt with in the Units, where the consensus of each Unit is

forwarded to the local Board. Once consensus is reached, a position on an issue is identified and the LWV uses these positions to advocate (take action) at all levels of government.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

is composed of officers and as many as 13 Directors, six of whom are elected and as many as seven more who may be appointed. The two-year terms for the elected directors are staggered. Directors serve in a variety of leadership roles depending on the needs of the local League; the current list is on page 4.

MEETINGS

In addition to scheduled Unit and general membership meetings, our League's Annual Meeting is where members elect officers and discuss and vote on the coming year's Program. At our Annual Legislative event, locally elected members of the Maryland General Assembly are featured. In election years, our Candidate Forums are where the community may hear those who would represent them on local, state and national bodies. Occasional public meetings are held on other issues of concern to the community.

COMMITTEES

League members volunteer on committees to do the work of the League. Each member is encouraged to get involved. We encourage you to reach out to the Director whose portfolio best suits your interests. This is a sample of what each traditional Director does.

ACTION

Help research and prepare testimony for the Howard County Council and other Howard County boards and agencies in line with League of Women Voters member-adopted positions. Monitor and track legislation and hearings. Advocacy in action!

COMMUNICATIONS

Edit the monthly member newsletter. Facilitate the social media presence of the League. Maintain the website.

MEMBERSHIP

Connect new members with League activities. Recruit new members at community events. Write about members for the newsletter. Annual holiday party and summer picnic to bring members together. Program: Identify issues and develop and update League positions using the process of studies.

VOTER SERVICE

Register high school seniors and residents to vote. Produce the League's "Voter's Guide" which is used by voters to make informed decisions. Organize the Candidate Forums in election years. During elections, evaluate how polling locations are operating and report to the Maryland Board of Elections: A full listing of the current Board appears on page 4.

WHO REPRESENTS THE LEAGUE

Most League action consists of working to influence governmental decisions based on the consensus statements adopted at all levels of the League. An official League position is publicly presented only by the President (or designated member). Members are encouraged to speak or write, as individuals, in support of positions held by the League.

In League terms, 'consensus' refers to agreement by a substantial number of a representative group of members, reached after study and discussion. It is not a simple majority and is not reached by vote. Consensus is a prerequisite to any position the League takes on issues. It determines what action can be taken. It is meant to assure that members are not only informed but in basic agreement.



**LWVHC CANDIDATE RECOGNITION POLICY,
COMMENCING JULY 2000**

The League of Women Voters® of Howard County, Inc. established the following criteria for candidate recognition:

1. Non-Partisan Local Elections. With regard to non- partisan local elections, those candidates registered with the Howard County Board of Education including those certified by the Board of Elections as certified write-in candidates shall be considered candidates by the LWVHC.
2. Partisan Local Elections. With regard to partisan elections, those candidates who represent a party which is a recognized party by the State of Maryland shall be considered candidates by the LWVHC.
3. Voters Guides. For Voters Guides, schedules are established to meet publishing deadlines. Candidate materials received after deadlines because of a candidate's late entry into the field cannot be included.
4. Candidate Forums. Candidates will be included in Candidate Forums if their meeting of points 1. and/or 2. is established by the Board of Elections prior to the Forum.

DUES and FISCAL YEAR

Our fiscal year begins May 1. The new dues year also begins on May 1. All memberships expire on April 30. Those who join between January 1 and April 30 are members until April 30 of the following year. Members who have not renewed by July 31 are reluctantly dropped from membership and will be reinstated upon receipt of dues. Lapsed members do not receive League publications.

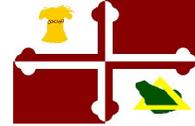
Dues may be tax deductible, depending on the individual's tax situation, as are all contributions to 501(c)(3) entities. Dues and/or contributions can be made at any time by sending a check to the LWVHC office (5430 Vantage Point Road, Suite C, Columbia, MD 21044) or through paypal at www.howard.lwvmd.org Individual membership dues are \$70.00. Each additional household member is \$22.50. Student membership dues are free.

BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETINGS are held the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Oakland Manor Library. All members are invited to attend.

EVENTS for the entire membership, friends, family members and the public are scheduled to further provide opportunities for people to be informed. Please see the Calendar page above. These meetings are also clearly indicated in the newsletters.

SNOW POLICY

If the Howard County Public School System cancels or delays classes due to weather conditions, the LWVHC and the LWVHCEF will also cancel their events.



NONPARTISAN AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICIES FOR BOARD MEMBERS

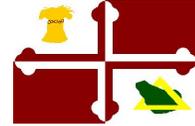
The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization of men and women whose purpose is to promote the informed and active participation of citizens in government. As an organization, the League does not support or oppose candidates for public office, but acts only on those issues chosen by the membership for study and action.

The League believes that political parties are essential to the American system of government and that participation of informed citizens is beneficial to the political parties and to the system. Consequently, the League encourages its members as individuals to be active in the political parties, in finding and supporting candidates for public office and in seeking election to public office.

The purpose of this policy is to assure the credibility of the League of Women Voters of Howard County as a nonpartisan organization which does not support or oppose any political party or candidate; only to the extent that the public and its elected officials are convinced of the League's genuine nonpartisanship will the League be able to render effective voter service activities and gain a wide base of support for its positions on government issues.

The League of Women Voters of Howard County, Inc. complies with the nonpartisan policy of the League of Women Voters of Maryland, Inc.

1. Elective Office. Board members shall not run for or hold elective office; elective office shall mean an election run by the Howard County Board of Elections.
2. Political Party Office. Board members shall not serve in any position in a political party.
3. Political Club. Board members shall not serve in a visible position in a political club, as interpreted by consultation with the board.
4. Campaign Contributions. Board members may attend campaign fundraising events and make campaign contributions.
5. Political Campaigns. Board members may not chair or administer fundraising or political campaigns, chair a campaign event, or work in a visible way in the campaign of a candidate for office or for a party.
6. Additional Clarification. Board members shall present questions about specific situations to the board where the foregoing policies do not resolve the question.
7. Securing Appointments. The board may encourage and assist LWV members to secure appointment to government boards, commissions and committees. However, the board should be aware of and protect against the charge that the LWV is being used by a political faction. Unless clearly designated by the League, appointees are not official representatives of the League.
8. Serving on Boards. Board members may serve on advisory boards except in cases where a dual identity may cause problems or confusion. If a serious conflict arises between the two entities, it should be brought to the attention of the League board, and the board member must make a choice between the two.
9. Lobbying. Board members shall not lobby for a position in opposition to or in conflict with a LWV position.
10. Employment. If a conflict of interest problem arises from employment, it should be brought to the attention of the board.
11. Stipends. Board members may not accept stipends or grants for League projects while sitting on the policy-making board that is responsible for administering the grant.
12. Honoraria. Board members may accept honoraria.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HOWARD COUNTY, INC.
AMENDED AND RESTATED BYLAWS APRIL 23, 2019

ARTICLE I
Name and Office

SECTION 1. NAME.

The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of Howard Education Fund, Inc. (LWVHCEF). The LWVHCEF is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) and the League of Women Voters of the US (LWVUS). The LWVHCEF shall from time to time cooperate with other groups, including the League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA).

SECTION 2. PRINCIPAL OFFICE.

The principal office of the LWVHCEF shall be in Howard County, Maryland.

ARTICLE II
Purpose and Policy

SECTION 1. PURPOSE.

The purpose of the LWVHCEF is to, among other things, promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government, to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and to influence public policy on specific issues as decided by the Board of Directors, and to perform other activities permitted of corporations under the General Laws of the State of Maryland, to the extent such activities are permitted of organizations which are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the Code) (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) and contributions to which are deductible under sections 170(c)(2), 2055(a)(2) and 2522(a)(2) of the Code (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), including the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) and also including the making of distributions to states, territories, or possessions of the United States, any political subdivision of any of the foregoing, or to the United States or the District of Columbia, but only for charitable purposes.

SECTION 2. POLITICAL POLICY.

No substantial part of the activities of LWVHCEF shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and LWVHCEF shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

SECTION 3. UNITY.

All purposes and policies of the LWVHCEF shall be in accord with those of the LWVMD and the LWVUS and the 501(c)(3) section of the Code.

ARTICLE III
Membership

SECTION 1. ELIGIBILITY.

Any person who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League of Women Voters shall be eligible for membership.

SECTION 2. TYPES OF MEMBERSHIPS.

- (a) Individuals at least sixteen (16) years of age who join the LWVHCEF shall be voting members of the LWVMD, the LWVUS, and any regional League to which the LWVHCEF belongs.
i. Individuals who live within the area of a local League may join that League or any other local League.
ii. Those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or be state members-at-large.

(b) Special Classes of Membership.

- i. Those who have been members of the League for fifty (50) years or more shall be life members excused from the payment of dues.
ii. Individuals sixteen (16) and over in the above categories, who are enrolled in an educational program leading to a degree or certification, may be designated as "Student Members" and pay no annual membership dues.

SECTION 3. MEMBER ACTION.

Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters only when authorized to do so by the appropriate LWVHCEF, LWVMD, or LWVUS.

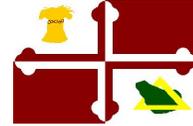
ARTICLE IV
Membership Meetings

SECTION 1. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS.

There shall be at least three (3) meetings of the membership each year that should be related to program or other important issues. The time and place of such meetings shall be determined by the Board of Directors (the Board). Notice shall be sent to all members at least thirty (30) in advance of the date of the meeting.

SECTION 2. ANNUAL MEETING.

The annual meeting shall be held during the month of April, the exact date to be determined by the Board. The membership:
(a) may adopt a local program for the ensuing year,
(b) shall elect required officers, and directors, and chair and two non-Board members of the nominating committee,
(c) shall adopt an adequate budget, and
(d) may transact such other business as may properly come before it.



SECTION 3. SPECIAL MEETINGS.

The President may call a special meeting or, at the request of at least ten (10) members, it may be called by the Board. When a special meeting is called, a notice shall be sent to all members at least seven (7) days in advance of the date the meeting is to be held. The reason for calling a special meeting shall be clearly stated in the notice provided to the membership. The meeting shall only include the subject(s) for which the special meeting has been called.

SECTION 4. QUORUM.

Fifteen percent (15%) of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum.

**ARTICLE V
Officers**

SECTION 1. ENUMERATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The officers of the LWVHCEF shall be President or Co-presidents (the term "President" shall be understood to include Co-presidents), Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer who shall be elected by the general membership at the Annual Meeting. Officers shall take office at the close of the Annual Meeting and shall serve for a term of two years or until their successors are elected. The President and Treasurer shall be elected in odd years; the Vice-president and Secretary shall be elected in even years.

SECTION 2. THE PRESIDENT.

The President shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the Board. The President may, in the absence or disability of the Treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts and notes. The president shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee. The President shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office and perform such other duties as may be designated by the Board.

SECTION 3. THE VICE-PRESIDENT.

The Vice-president shall perform such duties as the President or Board shall designate. In the event of the absence, disability, resignation, or death of the President, the Vice-president shall possess all the powers and perform all the duties of that office. The Board shall select a member to fill the vacancy of Vice-president.

SECTION 4. THE SECRETARY. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all annual and special membership meetings of the LWVHCEF, and of all meetings of the Board or any other such meeting that may be called under these Bylaws. The Secretary shall also be responsible for any correspondence as may be designated by the President or Board and shall assist such other work as the President requests. The Secretary shall submit final, corrected archival minutes as directed by the President.

SECTION 5. THE TREASURER.

The Treasurer shall collect and receive all monies due to the LWVHCEF. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of these monies, shall

deposit them in a bank designated by the Board and shall disburse the same guided by the budget and availability of income. The Treasurer shall present financial statements to the Board at its regular meetings and an annual report to the membership at the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall cosign, with the President, all disbursements in excess of \$1000 and contracts or other instruments when directed by the Board. The books of the Treasurer shall be reviewed annually.

**ARTICLE VI
Board of Directors**

SECTION 1. COMPOSITION, NUMBER, MANNER OF SELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE.

The Board shall consist of the officers of the LWVHCEF, six (6) to twelve (12) elected directors and up to twelve (12) appointed directors, all of whom shall be voting members. Directors elected by the voting membership at each Annual Meeting shall serve for a term of one year, or until their successors shall be elected. The terms of office of the appointed directors shall not exceed one (1) year and shall expire at the conclusion of the next Annual Meeting.

SECTION 2. QUALIFICATIONS.

No person shall be elected or appointed or continue to serve as an officer or director unless this person is a voting member of the LWVHCEF, and is deemed to be in compliance with the LWVHCEF's Conflict of Interest Bylaws (Article VII).

SECTION 3. VACANCIES.

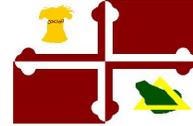
Any vacancy occurring on the Board may be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board. Three consecutive absences from Board meetings by any Board member without a valid reason may be deemed a resignation.

SECTION 4. POWER AND DUTIES.

The Board shall have full charge of the property and business of the organization, with full power and authority to manage and conduct the same, subject to the instructions of the voting membership. It shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the programs adopted by the LWVUS, LWVMD, and LWVNCA conventions and the LWVHCEF Annual Meeting. The Board shall create and designate special committees as it may deem necessary. The Board shall provide for an annual financial review.

SECTION 5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The Executive Committee, consisting of the officers of the LWVHCEF, shall exercise such powers and authority as may be delegated to it by the Board and shall report to the Board on all actions taken by it between regular meetings of the Board.



SECTION 6. MEETINGS.

(a) Regular Meetings. There shall be at least nine (9) regular meetings of the Board annually. The President shall notify each member of the Board of all meetings.

(b) Special Meetings. The President may call special meetings of the Board and/or the Executive Committee and shall call a special meeting of the Board upon the written request of three (3) members of the Board.

(c) Conference Telephone Call Meetings. The Board members may participate in meetings by means of conference telephone calls or similar communication allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. The president shall give due notice to the board members prior to the meeting with instructions. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting. Such meetings shall follow the prescription of in-person Board meetings. A quorum must call in for decision- making. Meeting material and an agenda must be available to all participants.

(d) Email Meetings. Board meetings may be held by email to deal with specific matters that arise between in-person or conference call Board meetings. Such email meetings can take place provided that all Board members have access to email on a personal computer. For an email meeting to occur, the President must notify all Board members of the starting and ending time of the meeting and have acknowledgement by a quorum of all Board members that they have received notice of the meeting. The President would provide an agenda which would contain no more than three (3) matters. The meeting should not contain minutes of a previous meeting nor treasurer or committee reports. Those participating must do so by assuring that all participants are included in order for their comments and votes to be considered and valid by selecting 'reply all.' At the termination time of the meeting, all input, discussion and voting would cease.

(e) Polling between Board Meetings. Polling of all Board members may be used between regularly scheduled meetings by telephone, electronic media, or mail. Any activity as a result of the polling will be confirmed at the next scheduled Board meeting.

SECTION 7. QUORUM.

A majority of the elected members of the Board shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at every meeting of the Board. If a quorum is present at the commencement of a meeting, a quorum shall be deemed present throughout the meeting.

SECTION 8. REMOVAL.

The Board shall have the power to remove any director or officer with due process and such action shall be conclusive.

**ARTICLE VII
Conflict of Interest**

SECTION 1. INTEREST IN CONTRACT OR TRANSACTION.

Board members, officers or committee members having an interest in a contract or other transaction presented to the Board shall give prompt, full and frank disclosure of their interest to the Board prior to the Board acting on such contract or transaction.

SECTION 2. DETERMINATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

The Board shall determine, by majority vote, whether the disclosure shows that a conflict of interest exists or can reasonably be construed to exist. If a conflict is found to exist, such persons shall not vote on, nor use their personal influence on, nor participate in the discussion of the issue. These persons may not be counted in determining the existence of a quorum at any meeting where the contract, transaction, or determination is under discussion or is being voted upon.

SECTION 3. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the disclosure made, the vote thereon, and where applicable, the abstention from voting and participation, and whether a quorum was present.

**ARTICLE VIII
National Convention, State Convention and Council and
Inter-League Organization Convention**

SECTION 1. NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The Board shall select delegates to the LWVUS National Convention in the number allotted the LWVHCEF under the provisions of the By-laws of the LWVUS at a meeting before the date on which the names of the delegates must be sent to the LWVUS.

SECTION 2. STATE CONVENTION.

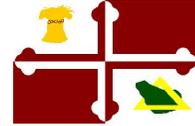
The Board shall select delegates to the LWVMD State Convention in the number allotted the LWVHCEF under the provisions of the By-laws of the LWVMD at a meeting before the date on which names of delegates must be sent to the LWVMD.

SECTION 3. STATE COUNCIL.

The Board shall select delegates to the LWVMD Council in the number allotted the LWVHCEF under the provisions of the By-laws of the LWVMD at a meeting before the date on which names of delegates must be sent to the LWVMD.

SECTION 4. INTER-LEAGUE ORGANIZATION CONVENTION.

The Board shall select delegates to the Convention in the number allotted the LWVHCEF under the provision of the By-laws of the Inter-League Organization at a meeting before the date on which the names of the delegates must be sent to the organization.



ARTICLE IX
Nominating Committee and Elections

SECTION 1. NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

The Nominating Committee shall consist of five (5) voting members, two (2) of whom shall be members of the Board. The Chairman and two members, who shall not be members of the Board, shall be nominated annually by the Nominating Committee and elected at the Annual Meeting. The Board shall appoint the two Board members of the Committee prior to the first meeting of the Nominating Committee.

Any vacancy on the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the Board. Suggestions for the nominations of Officers and Directors may be sent to this Committee by any voting member.

SECTION 2. REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE AND NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR.

The report of the Nominating Committee of its nominations for Officers, Directors and the members of the succeeding Nominating Committee shall be sent to all members one month before the date of the Annual Meeting. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be presented at the Annual Meeting. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by any voting member provided the consent of the nominee shall have been obtained.

SECTION 3. ELECTIONS.

The election shall be by ballot, provided that when there is but one nominee for each office, the secretary may be instructed to cast the ballot for every member. A majority vote of those qualified to vote and voting shall constitute an election. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

ARTICLE X
Principles and Programs

SECTION 1. PRINCIPLES.

The governmental principles adopted by the National Convention of the LWVUS, and supported by the League as a whole, constitute the authorization for the Principles and Programs of the LWVHCEF.

SECTION 2. PROGRAM.

The program consists of action to protect the right to vote of every citizen and those governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action by the members at the Annual Meeting. The members shall act upon the proposed program in the following manner:

(a) The Board shall consider suggestions developed at a meeting on program planning or any suggestions submitted by a voting member two months prior to the Annual Meeting and shall formulate a recommended program.

(b) The recommended program shall be sent to all voting members one month before the Annual Meeting.

(c) At the Annual Meeting a majority of voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption of items in the recommended program.

(d) Items submitted to the Board by voting members at least two months prior to the Annual Meeting, but not recommended by the Board, may be considered at the Annual Meeting provided that a majority vote requests consideration. Such items may be adopted by a two-thirds majority of voting members present and voting.

(e) In the case of altered conditions, changes in the Program may be made provided that information concerning any proposed change has been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to the general membership meeting at which the change is to be discussed and acted upon.

ARTICLE XI
Financial Administration

SECTION 1. FISCAL YEAR.

The fiscal year of the LWVHCEF shall commence on the first day of May each year.

SECTION 2. DUES.

Annual dues for the following fiscal year shall be payable on or before May 1 each year. The amount of these dues should be recommended by the Board and approved by the voting membership at the Annual Meeting. The Board shall adopt appropriate procedures regarding delinquencies including suspending membership status.

SECTION 3. GIFTS AND DONATIONS.

The Board may receive and accept gifts and donations from the members, the general public or any other source for the League's operational and educational activities. The Board, at its absolute discretion, may decline gifts it deems inappropriate.

SECTION 4. BUDGET.

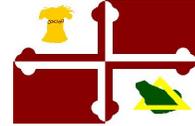
A budget for the ensuing fiscal year shall be submitted by the Board to the Annual Meeting for adoption. The budget shall include support for the work of the League as a whole.

SECTION 5. BUDGET COMMITTEE.

A Budget Committee shall be appointed by the Board at least four (4) months prior to the Annual Meeting to prepare a budget for the ensuing fiscal year. Two (2) members of the Board and three (3) members from the voting membership (one of these three being designated as chair), and the Treasurer and President shall be ex-officio members of the committee. This committee shall submit a budget to the Board for review before submission to the Annual Meeting. The proposed budget shall be sent to all voting members one month before the Annual Meeting.

SECTION 6. TRANSFER OF PROPERTY.

Two (2) of the following officers; the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, shall have the authority to assign, endorse, transfer, and deliver in the name and on behalf of the LWVHCEF, any



certificate of stock, bond, note, or other security or property belonging to the LWVHCEF.

SECTION 7. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS ON DISSOLUTION.

In the event of dissolution for any cause of the LWVHCEF, all assets which may at the time be owned by or under the absolute control of the LWVHCEF shall be paid to the LWVMD, provided that LWVMD is an organization exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Code at that time, after the Board has paid or made provisions for the payment of all of the liabilities of the LWVHCEF. In the event that LWVMD does not qualify as a tax-exempt organization, then the person designated by the Board shall dispose of all of the assets of the LWVHCEF exclusively for the purposes of the LWVHCEF to an organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

**ARTICLE XII
Parliamentary Authority**

SECTION 1. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY.

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these By-laws.

**ARTICLE XIII
Officer Indemnification**

The LWVHCEF shall indemnify and hold harmless its officers and directors to the fullest extent of the law as provided in the Maryland Code of Corporations and Associations as amended from time to time. Indemnification shall extend to all judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, and reasonable expenses actually incurred by directors or officers if they were or are threatened with suit in their capacity as a director or officer. No directors or officers shall be entitled to indemnification if they received an improper personal benefit from the action for which they seek indemnification.

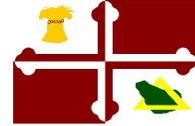
**ARTICLE XIV
Bylaws**

SECTION 1. BYLAWS REVIEW.

The bylaws shall be reviewed every other year.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENTS.

Amendments to these By-laws may be proposed by the Board or any individual voting member of the LWVHCEF. These By-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the voting members present at the Annual Meeting provided the amendments were submitted to the membership in writing at least two (2) months in advance of the meeting. Any amendments shall go into effect the first day of the following fiscal year unless otherwise specified in the amendment.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HOWARD COUNTY EDUCATION FUND (LWVHC) POSITIONS 2019-2020

I. GOVERNMENT

Support for County Government that is economical, efficient and responsive to the needs of all citizens. (Study, 1963)

CHARTER PROVISIONS

Support for:

- 1. an elected County Executive with a 3 year residency requirement.
2. a 5-member County Council; 1-year county residency requirement with 6 months in the district; at-large selection which best meets the current needs of Howard County; permitting State employees to serve on the Council unless there is a substantial conflict of interest.
3. advisory boards and commissions with appointments made in accordance with the 1968 Charter; boards and commissions meeting at times which permit maximum participation of interested and affected parties
a. transparency in the appointment process of boards and commissions through timely and accessible vacancy notices and information about candidates' qualifications. (2011)
b. transparency in the operations of boards and commissions through open meetings and readily and publicly available documentation, including meeting notices, agendas, minutes, and decisions/results. (2011)
c. regular evaluation of the effectiveness of boards and commissions to assess whether or not they: (2011)
i. regularly hold meetings and have a quorum
ii. take action which results in a change, activity or improved situation
iii. advocate for board functions, funding in board's area of expertise, and, if applicable, General Plan policy change
iv. make a list/description of accomplishments readily available
4. a petition and referendum method for altering the Charter to be used only as a last resort. (1966, 1967)

COUNTY COUNCIL TERMS

Opposes term limitations for members of the County Council for the following reasons:

- 1. Elections provide the best means for limiting terms.
2. Limiting terms of office restricts voters' rights and voters' participation.
3. Term limitations do not guarantee good Legislation.
4. Council members ineligible for re-election have no incentive to be responsive to the public interest.

- 5. Term limits could affect an imbalance of power between the Council and the Executive. (1993)

BUDGET PROVISIONS

Support for:

- 1. publicity for all departmental requests and for the budget process. (1972)
2. budget priorities which identify the level of services and consider the needs of a diverse population. (1973)
3. the use of general funds rather than fees for basic county services, such as police, fire protection and ambulance service, trash pick-up and disposal, and recreation facilities. The trend of substituting fees to pay the cost of basic county services in place of general fund revenue from taxation should be discontinued or rolled back. (1998)

OTHER PROVISIONS

Support for:

- 1. maintaining and strengthening inter-departmental and inter-governmental communications, including publication and dispersal of agendas and minutes of public meetings and hearings.
2. a single source of demographic information; the sharing of management tools. (1973)

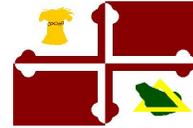
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Support for:

- 1. economic development activity in Howard County that promotes jobs for residents and ensures a business property tax base to retain and enhance the quality of life. The focus of incentives for businesses must be to ensure jobs for residents, furnish a substantial tax contribution, and provide a net benefit to the county.
2. an Economic Development Authority Board representing a cross section of disciplines, e.g., education, planning, health, transportation and citizens as well as business representation.
3. an Economic Development Plan which outlines specific long range goals and strategies, developed in an open process to reflect citizen opinion with the option of consulting with other jurisdictions and professional experts; the Plan should be reviewed annually; the Plan should be recommended to the County Executive for final adoption by the County Council.
4. a Plan that focuses on ensuring the continued quality of life by coordinating the rate of commercial and industrial growth with infrastructure capacity to absorb that growth. (1997)

Opposition to:

- 1. the use of business tax credits except in times of a poor economic climate. If tax credits are granted they should not discriminate against small or existing businesses. Tax credits



- 2. could be offered for the hiring of special populations such as people with disabilities or people on welfare. (1998)

JURY SELECTION

Support for:

- 1. development of policies educating citizens to assume their responsibility of serving on juries.
- 2. jury service qualifications as contained in the Maryland Annotated Code including:
 - a. U.S. citizenship and residency in county where the court is located.
 - b. minimum age of eighteen.
 - c. ability to read, write, communicate and understand the English language.
 - d. physical and mental competence.
- 3. the use of a combination of the voter registration list and the Motor Vehicle Administration's (MVA) list of licensed drivers and ID card holders as the source for jury selection
- 4. expanding citizen participation, willingness to serve, and reducing hardships of services by:
 - a. a three year exemption, once summoned; and a five year exemption for jury trial service.
 - b. the goal of jury service of either one day or one trial.
- 5. assurance of provisions to accommodate competent disabled citizens so as to enable their opportunity to serve on juries. (1992) (Jury position reviewed 2003)

ETHICS

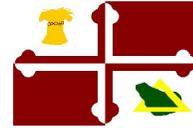
Support for the ethics, conflict of interest and financial disclosure laws and practices in Howard County.

- 1. Potential appointees to the Ethics Commission should demonstrate an interest and involvement in government and county affairs. The county administration should provide public notice of vacancies with some description of duties and responsibilities. Such notice should be not limited to posting on the county's website and cable TV channel, and sent to local newspapers for publication. (2008)
- 2. Members of all public boards and commissions which have final or significant influence on policy and legislative decisions should file financial disclosure statements. (2008)
- 3. The Ethics Commission should assume a proactive role by:
 - a. conducting an information and education program for the general public.
 - b. informing those under its jurisdiction of the provisions of the ethics law and requiring them to conform to it. These include county officials, county employees, members of boards and commissions and lobbyists as defined by Howard County PUBLIC ETHICS, Subtitle 2, Ethics, Sec. 22.202. Definitions., (j), (1) - (3).
 - c. publicizing its meeting(s) and adhering to a scheduled meeting date
 - d. issuing an annual report including a list of registered lobbyists.(2008)

MUNICIPAL INCORPORATION CRITERIA

Support for using the following criteria to evaluate any proposal for Municipal Incorporation within Howard County.

- 1. Would a proposed incorporation create enclaves of unincorporated area(s)? If so, what would the legal requirements be to annex these enclaves?
- 2. Would proposed municipal functions replace services currently provided by the county?
 - a. If so, how would the reduced expenditure for the county government compare with the reduction in revenues for the county?
 - b. If not, what would be the fiscal impact on the county government and on taxpayers both inside and outside the proposed municipality?
 - c. State law provides that Howard County may not impose a tax for any service which a municipality provides, a fact which must be considered in the evaluation of effect on county revenues.
- 3. Are there identified needs for services which are not currently being provided by the county? if so, can these services be provided by the municipality and are they proposed to be provided?
- 4. Is there an anticipated duplication of services by the county and the proposed municipality? If so, what is the anticipated increase in total cost to taxpayers?
- 5. Would municipal government be more responsive to residents?
- 6. The following factors would be considered in evaluating any incorporation proposal
 - a. State law provides that only residents or property owners in the area to be incorporated have the right to vote on incorporation, even though incorporation might affect services and tax rates for the entire county.
 - b. Is the possibility of assumption of planning and zoning powers desirable or Not?
 - c. Is the power of a municipality to abrogate existing or future county laws desirable?
 - d. A determination should be made as to the comparative ease with which a municipal charter may be amended, with voter approval not being automatically required. NOTE: If the proposal is to establish Columbia as a municipality, the following additional criteria must apply:
- 7. With regard to Columbia Association services and Facilities:
 - a. What responsibilities of the Columbia Association (CA) are to be replaced by municipal services?
 - b. What Columbia Association (CA) facilities and properties would be assumed by the municipality?
- 8. Would the projected cost of providing these services and those retained by CA equal or exceed the current cost of services provided by CA?



9. Does the proposed charter include a property tax limit, as is currently in the law for CA and would the law be changed to lower the CA assessment limit?
10. Can the first lien on all Columbia properties be removed?
11. Is there a way to guarantee that CA will be relieved of responsibilities the municipality intends to assume or could assume?
12. What continuing revenue must be generated by the CA lien to pay debt services which cannot or is not proposed to be assumed by the municipality?
13. Would the incorporated municipality include all parcels which pay the Columbia assessment?
14. Examine the current federal income tax law to determine if property taxes imposed by the municipality would be deductible.
15. Incorporation of the Columbia Villages would apply the & quot;one person-one vote & quot; rule to voting for all municipal officials. (1996)

II. SOCIAL POLICY

CHILD CARE

Support for Child Care. Basic elements should include support for the well-being, development and safety of all children. The programs should be well-managed, affordable, with trained and well-paid staff, with appropriate staff-to-child ratio, and with creative age- appropriate activities.

Support for:

1. supervised programs for infants through middle school, including special needs children to a later age
2. a full-time County Child Care Coordinator and Child Care Resource Center
3. a representative, county-wide Child Care Advisory Board which would
 - a. work with the County Child-Care Coordinator,
 - b. develop and maintain delivery of quality Child Care services, and
 - c. ensure health and safety of all children in Child-Care.
4. financing by a combination of public subsidy, business contributions, and parents' ability to pay
5. flexible, year-round programs
6. dedicated space for child-care programs in the schools.
7. publically supported, licensed and accredited child-care programs
8. governmental encouragement of employers to provide on-site child-care through zoning, tax incentives and other means
9. government's setting of an example in its providing of quality child-care for its own employees
10. government support for child care should include
 - a. purchase of Care (POC) subsidies.
 - b. locally funded Working Parents Assisted Programs
 - c. increased individual tax credits for child care and
 - d. training for child-care workers. (2001)

EDUCATION

Support for:

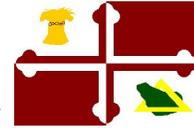
1. a strong program for teacher development; evaluation and promotion within the system; recruitment of experienced teachers from centers of recognized merit.
2. teacher salary schedules which recognize experience and education with an incentive pay schedule for designated special teaching positions.
3. a stipulated maximum class size, lower at the elementary level and increasing at higher levels.
4. enrichment programs based on individual needs of students.
5. early identification of and improved programs for all children with varied and/or special learning needs, with additional trained personnel as needed; such personnel not to be included in assigning district-wide pupil/teacher ratio.
6. the community school concept, with community use of school facilities the entire year and which is coordinated, staffed, and funded by the County government.
7. increased counseling service in schools, including elementary grades; training for mental health counselors. (1987)
8. Year Round Education (YRE)
 - a. the implementation of a pilot plan in elementary and middle schools for YRE in Howard County.(1995)
 - b. the measurement of the change in academic performance in YRE as reflected by the Maryland School Assessment Tests. (Note: members agree that assessment after a single year may lack substantial validity.) (1995)
 - c. YRE in Howard County if:
 - i. the school population exceeds design capacity by 15% or
 - ii. split shifts in schools become the alternative method of housing students. (1995)
9. an elected Howard County Board of Education with at large election of its members. (1999)
 - a. Board members should have staggered terms (2001)
 - b. Board members should be residents of the County and registered voters at the time of their election. (2001)

HOUSING

Support for an adequate housing choice, in a suitable living environment, within the economic reach of persons of all ages. Support for increasing diverse housing types as well as increasing the number and percentage of affordable units, both low-income and moderate-income units, to be distributed throughout the county. (2005) (2018)

Support for:

1. Residential Care facilities, with establishment of County regulations governing their use, to protect the rights of the



- facilities; residents and the community. (1970, 1971, 1985, 2005, 2018)
- 2. Assistance in the relocation of low and moderate income persons involuntarily displaced by government action. (2005, 2018)
- 3. Strategies that increase the number of low-income and moderate-income housing units including:
 - a. Zoning regulations
 - b. Favorable tax treatment for the building and maintaining of affordable housing
 - c. Limited selective use of fee in lieu of alternative compliance
 - d. County financing and construction of housing
 - e. Public financial assistance
 - f. Public and private partnerships to build and manage affordable housing facilities (2005)(2018)
- 4. A portion of new affordable housing to be reserved for Howard County public employees. (2005)
- 5. To continue, to enhance, and monitor MIHU (moderate income housing units) rental and purchase assistance and units for those with special needs. (2018)
- 6. Increasing and monitoring funds to prevent homelessness. (2018)
- 7. Redevelopment of existing residential properties without reducing the existing number of moderate and low income housing units. (2018)

TRANSPORTATION

Support for tax supported public transportation and for the encouragement of alternative to the use of the private automobile. Support for the establishment of a Department of Transportation, a Transportation Authority or an Office of Transportation within the Executive Branch. (April 1995)

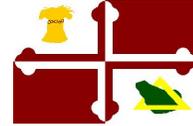
- 1. Financing of public transportation in the county should be by these means:
 - a. federal funds (capital and operating);
 - b. state funds (capital and operating);
 - c. local funds (capital and operating);
 - d. private funds;
 - e. non-profit user fees and fares;
 - f. Grants;
 - g. special taxing districts where all residents are taxed, but heavy-user districts are taxed more than non or lower-user districts;
 - h. public/private partnerships.
- 2. The following factors should drive the expansion of public transportation services in the county:
 - a. population density;
 - b. employment centers;
 - c. coordination with existing transportation service systems
 - d. medical centers;
 - e. senior centers;
 - f. shopping areas;
 - g. educational facilities;

- h. government centers;
- i. religious facilities;
- j. cultural and community events;
- k. libraries.

**III. NATURAL RESOURCES
LAND USE, PLANNING AND ZONING**

Support for:

- 1. an effective planning organization, professionally staffed with clear assignments and adequately financed, to meet future needs.
- 2. zoning controls to utilize land effectively for the benefit of all. (Study, 1963)
- 3. non-residential uses adjacent to residential uses, if carefully regulated to prevent all manner of nuisances, with buffer strips of reasonable size for sufficient screening.
- 4. a building code to ensure safe, durable construction, particularly for apartments and attached dwellings; uniform building standards for rental and sale property. (1965)
- 5. strong controls on pollution, signs, and clutter.
- 6. separate legal counsel, an expert in zoning laws, for the Planning Department and the Planning Board to research and prepare legal documents to ensure that all facts are brought into the record at zoning hearings. (1966)
- 7. cycle zoning with an emergency provision whereby the time for submission for zoning petitions is limited.
- 8. retention of decision-making powers on zoning by elected officials to maintain accountability to citizens. (1974, 2009)
- 9. development and implementation of master plans for unique communities within the county.
- 10. A General Plan defined Planned Service Area for public water and sewer service that is only changed outside the General Plan adoption cycle for health and safety reasons. (2007)
- 11. Walkable/bikeable communities that encourage and sustain connectedness, health, safety and convenience. (2007)
- 12. Preserving historic sites (2007)
 - a. Incentives for property owners to maintain and restore the historic resource including tax credits; federal, state and local.
 - b. Government to be involved in the preservation of historic sites utilizing tools to provide protection for historic resources such as
 - i. A county historic preservation plan
 - ii. A periodically updated comprehensive inventory of historically significant sites
 - iii. Site specific economic incentives
 - iv. Acquisitions and holding title to historic sites.
 - v. Restoration and resources
 - vi. Inspection of historic inventoried sites to reduce demolition by neglect NOTE: No consensus was reached regarding subdivision requirements for site size



and setbacks to maintain the context of the historic site.

- 13. Environmental and sustainable balance in developing property including the protection/restoration of habitat and natural resources through the use of the following tools: Professional staff with environmental expertise, environmental protection regulations and policies, clear lines of environmental review, green building requirements, on-site inspections pre-, during- and post-construction or environmental compliance. (2007)
- 14. Creating better government structure to ensure environmental quality with the goals of continuity, review, communication and enforcement. (2007)
- 15. Growth Management measures that include:
 - a. a growth cap which controls the pace of private development when public services are inadequate.
 - b. an adequate public facilities ordinance which defers new development until essential public facilities, which meet established capacity standards, are available to service the development. Essential facilities are water, sewerage, schools, and roads.
 - c. impact fees as a means of funding some of the capital costs incurred when new development occurs.
 - d. developer-provided sites and/or public facilities which meet county-set standards for acceptability.
 - e. agriculture as a preferred land use in the rural areas of the county. (1991)
 - f. provisions for clustering in rural areas through legal mechanisms that would:

active pursuit of community input and participation in planning facilities and programs.

- 3. a definition of open space, consistent in all county documents, which includes provisions for active recreation, passive recreation, and environmental protection as well as county standards for the acceptability of dedicated open space.
- 4. cooperation and/or coordination with all other county departments in recognition of their interdependence. (Study 1973, 1974, reaffirmed 1990)

- i. maintain "remainders"; as open land in perpetuity, by such methods as turning over "remainders"; to a third party like an environmental trust;
- ii. require "remainders" to be of reasonable size and quality. (1991)
- g. clustering in rural areas of Howard County but with no increase in residential densities above existing zoning allowances (1990); a scale of clustering that is consistent with protection of the environment. (1991)

- 16. a Howard County planning and zoning process that:
 - a. allows sufficient time for all interested parties to consider the issues thoroughly.
 - b. provides appropriate public safeguards in comprehensive and piecemeal zoning cases, such as due process, rules of evidence, and appeal to the courts.
 - c. provides opportunities for public participation through a sufficient number of public notices. (1994)

RECREATION AND PARKS

Support for:

- 1. accelerated acquisition of land for recreation and parks to approximate the goal of 35 acres per 1,000 population.
- 2. programs and facilities accessible to and meeting the needs of a changing and diverse population and that include:
 - a. frequent evaluation of programs,
 - b. ongoing needs assessment,

The Local Program Study For 2019-2020 is Equity in Education, chaired by Krista Threefoot.

LWV RESOURCES FOR TAKING ACTION
THE ELECTED. League members should have a current copy of the pamphlet, *The Elected*, that provides contact information about elected officials at all levels for people of Howard County. You can download a copy at www.lvwhowardmd.org



League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA)

WWW.LWVNCA.ORG

Co-Presidents: Linda Softli, Joyce Starks

c/o LWVUS

1730 M Street, NW Suite 1000

Washington, DC 20036

LWVNCA POSITIONS, as Readopted May 7, 2017

AIRPORTS

1. Use of the three major metropolitan Washington airports [Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall (BWI), Washington Dulles International (IAD), and Ronald Reagan Washington National (DCA)] should be balanced based on overall airport infrastructure and capacity. Good ground transportation is necessary to all airports.
2. It is necessary to place limitations on the use of DCA. We support the enforcement of:
 - a. The current High Density and Perimeter Rules, and noise abatement procedures.
 - b. Other methods to limit aircraft types.
3. With regard to all three airports, jurisdictions should:
 - a. Enact responsible, comprehensive planning and zoning policies that limit development to industrial and/or commercial uses in the immediate vicinity of the airports.
 - b. Restrict residential development within the area directly affected by the presence and operations of the airports.
 - c. Consider potential development height when evaluating land use changes. (1985, 2007)

BELTWAY SAFETY

1. In order to control speeding and unsafe driving on the Capital Beltway and its feeder roads, we support:
 - a. the use of additional patrol officers for visibility and enforcement
 - b. the use of automated photographic speed enforcement devices as an additional system of speed enforcement.
2. We support measures to increase truck safety on the Capital Beltway and its connector roads that include:
 - a. mandatory commercial vehicle safety inspections in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia,
 - b. increased fines for truck safety violation
 - c. limiting hazardous material carriers to certain hours.
3. Weight and length limitations for commercial vehicles using the Capital Beltway and its feeder roads should not be increased.
4. Efforts among federal, state and local governments to improve coordination of inspection and enforcement activities on the Beltway should be an ongoing process (1991, 201

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH PLANNING

1. LWVNCA supports:
 - a. governmental regulations of health planning (1976, 89),
 - b. regional coordination among healthcare systems and agencies in the Washington Metropolitan Area to include gathering data, sharing information, avoiding duplication of facilities and services, and controlling costs (1976, 89),
 - c. regional health education and information services to the public (1977, 89, 2016).
2. In order to increase the availability of medical services, LWV supports the concept of 24-hour clinics & the use of para-professionals (1977, 89).
3. There should be improved care for the elderly and an emphasis on community support as an alternative to long-term institutional nursing care (1977, 89).

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

1. We support legislation to permit the use of marijuana and heroin for medicinal purposes (1989).
2. We believe that testing for illegal drug use is a justifiable invasion of privacy when required as part of the hiring process for jobs affecting public safety and national security (1989).
3. Employees who test positive should be:
 - a. retested prior to any disciplinary action (1976, 89),
 - b. allowed to continue working or put on administrative leave,
 - c. required in each case to participate in an employee assistance program,
 - d. subjected to random drug tests for a one-year period following a positive test (1989).
4. Measures for solving the drug problem should include interdiction, enforcement, education/prevention, and treatment. Education and treatment should receive special emphasis and should be stressed over criminal justice sanctions (1989, 91).
5. Drug treatment programs that should be given public funding priority include detoxification and self-help programs, outpatient care, and the use of therapeutic communities with aftercare as part of all programs (1991).
6. Treatment programs for drug users under 18 and for pregnant women should receive priority for public funding (1991).



League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA)

7. Drug treatment should be incorporated into the sentence for any juvenile or adult convicted of a crime who tested positive at the time of arrest (1989).
8. Pregnant drug users should not be subjected to criminal prosecution just because they are pregnant. Pregnant drug users who are before the court for crimes other than the use of drugs should be placed in mandatory treatment through a justice system diversion program. We support the use of outreach nurses and counselors for pregnant drug users without the threat of legal penalties (1991).
9. Financial responsibility for drug treatment should fall, to some extent, on all of the following: insurance, patients, patients' families, governments (federal, state, and local), employers, and labor unions (1989).
10. Each jurisdiction in the metropolitan Washington area should set up its own treatment programs for drug users (1989).
11. The area jurisdictions should establish a public/private partnership through the Council of Governments (COG) to develop a long-range plan to meet treatment needs and to identify financial and in-kind resources. This partnership should include the private sector and citizen groups (1989).

D.C. FINANCING

1. Budget Autonomy. The District of Columbia should have autonomy in budgeting locally raised revenue. The League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA) supports legislation eliminating the annual Congressional D.C. appropriations budget-approval process.
2. Federal Payment. To address the District of Columbia's need for a stronger revenue base, the LWVNCA supports Congressional legislation setting forth the factors for determining an annual, predictable federal payment. The most important factors to be considered are:
 - a. taxes that the District of Columbia cannot levy because of Congressional prohibitions on the District's ability to tax; and
 - b. the cost of services provided by the District to the federal government Other factors might include the cost of state services provided by the District and the percentages of revenue that other U.S. cities receive from external sources. (2003)

LAND USE/HOUSING

1. Regional land use planning for the Washington Metropolitan area should include a coordinated and comprehensive approach to meet housing needs. The goal of the housing component of a regional land use plan should be to:
 - a. provide adequate housing for all income levels,
 - b. promote a balanced distribution of housing and employment for all income levels,
 - c. improve the quality of housing and neighborhood environments (1975, reaffirmed 1989).

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

1. We accept the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) as the basic instrument for cooperative regional planning. (1966, 82, 2016).
2. We support granting COG sufficient authority so that it can resolve governmental problems that cannot be solved by local governments, planning boards and agencies(1973, 82, 87, 89, 2016).
3. Because COG should have some funding powers, we support assessments of member jurisdictions, user fees, and state and federal grants.
4. We support citizen participation at the regional level for COG and other inter-jurisdictional agencies (1973, 83, 2016).

TRANSPORTATION

1. In support of the concept that there be some form of public transportation available for all, we endorse public policy in services and planning that:
 - a. supports a coordinated public transportation system which includes bus and rapid rail transit (1964, 70, 83, 89),
 - b. promotes and improves the present and proposed public transportation systems to encourage the use of mass transit (1963, 70, 89).
2. Priorities in transportation services and planning should include:
 - a. transportation systems services that are convenient, frequent, regular, speedy, and economical to the user and for the benefit of the larger community (1963, 64, 70, 83, 89),
 - b. reduced air pollution through the promotion of mass transportation systems (1970, 89),
 - c. allocation of road space for use of high-occupancy vehicles (buses, carpools, vanpools) to speed services, including traffic control measures.
3. We support public participation and supervision in determining information needed and in evaluating transportation proposals, transportation planning, and operations. Public involvement and decision-making should include
 - a. appointment of citizen members to decision-making boards with full authority to participate in their functions, and enough tenure to master the subject. (These members should be residents of the jurisdictions involved and include consumer advocates who do not have business connections or official roles in the transportation and appropriations process) (1971, 89),
 - b. every effort by local governments to include minorities, senior citizens, economically and/or physically challenged persons and other traditionally under- represented citizens on transportation and land use advisory committees and to facilitate this participation (1997),
 - c. open public meetings of all regulatory and public management boards (1971, 89),



League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA)

- d. compulsory paid publications in general circulation newspapers or proposals on which public review is to be held (1971, 89),
 - e. decision-making on the level of services for the regional mass transit system by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA) with local input, including citizen input early in the decision-making process (1981, 89).
4. We support financial measures that include:
- a. informing the public of the total costs of auto use and full public disclosure of the costs of transportation service, of who pays for service and who receives it, and of full cost/benefit information,
 - b. public investment to finance public transportation systems, to encourage substantially greater use of mass transportation, to increase resources for bus and rail transit, to achieve a realistic alternative to private auto use, to provide funds for bus shelters and information services (1971, 83, 89),
 - c. reduction of subsidies to auto use, such as tax favors which support parking and free parking for employees paid out of public funds (1971, 89).
 - d. the use of a dedicated tax to help fund public transportation. The objective of such a tax should be to spread the costs of mass transit among the total population and to encourage the use of mass transit instead of the automobile. A sales tax which excludes such necessities as food and medicines would be the best means of financing mass transportation in the metropolitan area. The most important criteria to be used in evaluating particular taxes dedicated to transportation should be revenue potential, timeliness, and reliability (1980). Note: the above position applies only to the Washington metropolitan area, and may be acted upon within the context of interstate regional cooperation, despite its partial conflict with the LWVMD, LWV-VA and LWVDC positions.
5. We support the integration of transportation and land use planning on local and regional levels (1997).
6. We support an interstate compact authority for regional transportation.
- a. Members representing corporate, environmental, social, and political jurisdictions would best promote a regional approach to transportation planning.
 - b. Members representing political jurisdictions would best produce cooperation among/between local jurisdictions and would best promote efficiency and flexibility in meeting transportation needs.
 - c. The following areas of transportation planning should come within the jurisdiction of a regional transportation authority: Roads and highways;

urban and suburban transit, including bus and rail; interstate rail, including connections among

systems, i.e., Amtrak, Marc, etc.; pedestrian/bike paths; water, i.e., water taxis, ferries, etc.; bridges and tunnels.

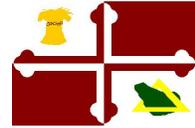
- d. Approved projects should be funded through: Federal funds appropriated through transportation authorization act; state and local contributions; user fees, including tolls, fares, and other fees; private funding; bonds; gasoline tax (2004).

WATER RESOURCES

1. In order to ensure a safe and adequate water supply for metropolitan Washington and to restore the quality of our streams and rivers, we support:
 - a. conservation and protection of drinking water and supply sources. Sources of drinking water serving the metropolitan area, such as the Potomac River and Occoquan and Patuxent Reservoirs, must be maintained and protected against pollution from both point and non-point sources,
 - b. regional demand reduction and water conservation measures to reduce annual per capita use --
 - i. Contingency plans should be developed on a regional basis to provide for mandatory restrictions on water use in time of emergency.
 - ii. Measures to recycle treated wastewater in industrial, agricultural, and other non-potable systems and measures to reduce the use of water of drinking water quality as a conveyer of wastes should be encouraged to the extent consistent with public health and hydrological requirements
 - c. water-sharing measures to meet emergencies and to protect the physical and biological integrity of the sources,
 - d. protection of groundwater,
 - e. official consideration of new drinking water sources
 - i. Sources within the metropolitan region should be investigated as possible adjuncts to existing water sources
 - ii. Construction of major upstream dams on the Potomac or its tributaries for the purpose of providing additional water supplies for the metropolitan region should not be undertaken unless other options have been found insufficient to meet the essential needs of the region.
2. We support regional planning to improve wastewater treatment management. Final selection for new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities should be based on meeting national clean water objectives, protecting public health, and minimizing environmental, energy, and cost impacts (1979, 89, 2016).



League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD)



121 Cathedral Street, Suite 2B, Annapolis MD 21401
410-269-0232 lwvmd@verizon.net - www.lwvmd.org
Co-President: Lois Hybl, pres@lwvmd.org
Co-President: Richard Willson, pres@lwvmd.org

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:

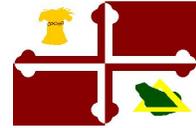
Support for:

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

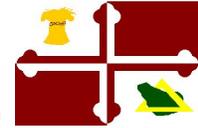
(1985, 1995, 2015)

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



League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD)



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:

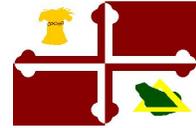
- 15. A requirement for uniform voting systems unless funded by the state. (1997) FIREARMS CONTROL: Action to strengthen gun control laws. (1991)

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.



League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD)



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)

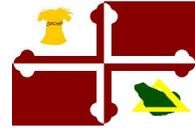
BUDGET PROCESS (1977, 2004)

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.

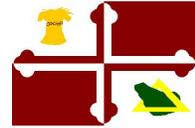
LAND USE/GROWTH MANAGEMENT: Action to encourage the State to establish goals, guidelines, and standards for land use, with local implementation of land use policies. (1975, 1979, 1991)

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.

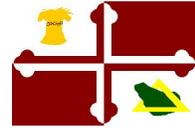
TRANSPORTATION: Action to support an integrated transportation system and mass transit systems which are efficient, safe, clean and accessible. Support for adequate and equitable funding and cooperative regional programs is necessary to achieve these goals. (2002)

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

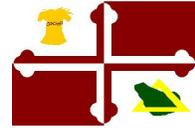
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS (2001)

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.



League of Women Voters (LWVUS)

1730 M Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036-4508

202-429-1965 www.lwv.org

President: Chris Carson, ccarson@lwv.org

PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS 2016-2018

A synopsis of *Impact on Issues*, the official League of Women Voters (LWVUS) publication of all LWVUS member-adopted positions, can be found on their website lwv.org.

I. REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

VOTING RIGHTS

Citizen's Right to Vote (1982)

Voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed.

DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation (1982, 2000)

Citizens of the District of Columbia should be afforded the same rights of self-government and full voting representation in Congress as are all other citizens of the United States. The LWVUS supports restoration of an annual, predictable federal payment to the District to compensate for revenues denied and expenses incurred because of the federal presence.

ELECTION PROCESS

Amending the Constitution (2016)

The League is concerned that there are many unresolved questions about the powers and processes of an Article V Constitutional Convention. The League believes such a convention should be called only if the following conditions are in place:

- A. The Constitutional Convention must be transparent and not conducted in secret. The public has a right to know what is being debated and voted on;
- B. Representation at the Constitutional Convention must be based on population rather than one state, one vote, and delegates should be elected rather than appointed. The delegates represent citizens, should be elected by them, and must be distributed by U.S. population;
- C. Voting at the Constitutional Convention must be by delegate, not by state. Delegates from one state can have varying views and should be able to express them by individual votes;
- D. The Constitutional Convention must be limited to a specific topic. It is important to guard against a "runaway convention" which considers multiple issues or topics that were not initiated by the states;
- E. Only state resolutions on a single topic count when determining if a Constitutional Convention should be called. Counting state requests by topic ensures that there is sufficient interest in a particular subject to call a Convention and enhances citizen interest and participation in the process; and

- F. The validity of state calls for an Article V Constitutional Convention must be determined by the most recent action of the state. If a state has enacted a rescission of its call, that rescission must be respected by Congress.

Apportionment (1966, 1982)

Congressional districts and government legislative bodies should be apportioned substantially on population. The League is convinced that this standard, established by the Supreme Court, should be maintained and that the U.S. Constitution should not be amended to allow for consideration of factors other than population in apportionment.

Money in Politics (2016)

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should:

- Enhance political equality for all citizens;
- Ensure maximum participation by citizens in the political process;
- Protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns;
- Provide voters sufficient information about candidates and campaign issues to make informed choices;
- Ensure transparency and the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections; Enable candidates to compete equitably for public office;
- Ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public; and
- Combat corruption and undue influence in government.

The League believes that political corruption includes the following:

- A candidate or officeholder agrees to vote or work in favor of a donor's interests in exchange for a campaign contribution;
- An officeholder or staff gives greater access to donors;
- An officeholder votes or works to support policies that reflect the preferences of individuals or organizations in order to attract contributions from them;
- A candidate or office holder seeks political contributions implying that there will be retribution unless a donation is given; and
- The results of the political process consistently favor the interests of significant campaign contributors.

In order to achieve the goals for campaign finance regulation, the League supports:



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- Public financing of elections, either voluntary or mandatory, in which candidates must abide by reasonable spending limits;
- Enhanced enforcement of campaign finance laws that includes changes to ensure that regulatory agencies are properly funded, staffed, and structured to avoid partisan deadlock in the decision-making process;
- Abolishing Super PACs and abolishing spending coordinated or directed by candidates (other than a candidate's own campaign committee); and
- Restrictions on direct donations and bundling by lobbyists, which may include monetary limits as well as other regulations.

Until full public financing of elections is enacted, limits on election spending are needed in order to meet the League's goals for protecting democratic processes. Among the different entities that spend money to influence elections, the League supports the following comparative limits:

- Higher spending limits for political parties, genuinely non-partisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote organizations and activities, and candidates spending money raised from contributors;
- Mid-level spending limits for individual citizens (including wealthy individuals), Political Action Committees (with funds contributed by individuals associated with the sponsoring organization, such as employees, stockholders, members and volunteers), and candidates spending their own money;
- Lower spending limits for trade associations, labor unions and non-profit organizations from their general treasury funds;
- Severely restricted spending by for-profit organizations spending from their corporate treasury funds; and
- No limits on spending by bona fide newspapers, television, and other media, including the Internet, except to address partisan abuse or use of the media to evade campaign finance regulations.

REDISTRICTING (2016)

Support redistricting processes and enforceable standards that promote fair and effective representation at all levels of government with maximum opportunity for public participation.

1. Responsibility for redistricting preferable should be invested in an independent special commission, with membership that reflects the diversity of the unit of government, including citizens at large, representatives of public interest groups, and members of minority groups.
2. Every redistricting process should include:
 - a. Specific timelines for the steps leading to a redistricting plan;
 - b. Full disclosure throughout the process and public hearings on the plan proposed for adoption:
 - i. Redistricting at all levels of government must be accomplished in an open unbiased manner with citizen

participation and access at all levels and steps of the process;

- ii. Should be subject to open meetings laws;
- c. A provision that any redistricting plan should be adopted by the redistricting authority with more than a simple majority vote;
 - d. Remedial provisions established in the event that that the redistricting authority fails to enact a plan. Specific provisions should be made for court review of redistricting measures and for courts to require the redistricting authority to act on a specific schedule:
 - i. Time limits should be set for initiating court action for review,
 - ii. The courts should promptly review and rule on any challenge to a redistricting plan and require adjustments if the standards have not been met.
3. The standards on which a redistricting plan is based, and on which any plan should be judged, must:
 - a. Be enforceable in court;
 - b. Require:
 - i. Substantially equal population,
 - ii. Geographic contiguity, and
 - iii. Effective representation of racial and linguistic minorities.
 - c. Provide for (to the extent possible):
 - i. Promotion of partisan fairness,
 - ii. Preservation and protection of "communities of interest," and
 - iii. Respect for boundaries of municipalities and counties.
 - d. Compactness and competitiveness may also be considered as criteria so long as they do not conflict with the above criteria
 - e. Explicitly reject:
 - i. Protection of incumbents, through such devices as considering an incumbents address, and
 - ii. Preferential treatment for a political party, through such devices as considering party affiliation, voting history and candidate residence.

This position does not supersede any existing state League redistricting position.

SELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT (1970, 1982, 2004, 2010)

The direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believe, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. We support the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of the president until the abolition of the Electoral College is accomplished. The League also supports uniform



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voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The League supports changes in the presidential election system—from the candidate selection process to the general election. We support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information.

CITIZEN RIGHTS

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation (1984)

Democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

Individual Liberties (1982)

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes in the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. The League is convinced that individual rights now protected by the Constitution should not be weakened or abridged.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices (1983)

Public policy in a pluralistic society must affirm the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENCY

Congress (1972, 1982)

Structures and practices of the U.S. Congress must be characterized by openness, accountability, representativeness, decision making capability and effective performance. Responsive legislative processes must meet these criteria:

ACCOUNTABILITY. A Congress responsive to citizens and able to hold its own leaders, committees and members responsible for their actions and decisions.

REPRESENTATIVENESS. A Congress whose leaders, committees and members represent the nation as a whole, as well as their own districts and states.

DECISION MAKING CAPABILITY. A Congress with the knowledge, resources and power to make decisions that meet national needs and reconcile conflicting interests and priorities.

EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE. A Congress able to function in an efficient manner with a minimum of conflict, wasted time and duplication of effort.

OPEN GOVERNMENT. A Congress whose proceedings in committee as well as on the floor are open to the fullest extent possible.

The Presidency (1976, 1982) Presidential power should be exercised within the constitutional framework of a dynamic balance between the executive and legislative branches. Accountability and responsibility to the people require that unnecessary secrecy between and President and Congress be eliminated. Therefore, the League supports the following measures:

EXECUTIVE AGREEMENTS. Presidential authority to negotiate international executive agreements should be preserved. Accountability to the public requires that the President report to

Congress the text of all such agreements and that Congress review them periodically.

WAR POWERS. The President should be required to seek the advice of the Congress before introducing U.S. armed forces into situations where hostilities are imminent, to report promptly to Congress any action taken, and to obtain within a specified time congressional approval for continued military activity.

EMERGENCY POWERS. Presidential authority to declare a state of national emergency should be subject to periodic congressional review. The President should transmit to Congress yearly notice of all existing national emergencies and significant orders issued under each. Congress should review the emergencies and significant orders issued under each. Congress should review the emergencies every six months and should have the power to terminate them at any time by concurrent resolution. (All states of emergency now in existence should be terminated after a grace period for adjustment.)

FISCAL POWERS. The President should exercise executive responsibility for sound management of public funds in a manner consistent with the programs and priorities established by Congress. This requires procedures for congressional consideration of the budget as a whole and measures for congressional disapproval of presidential impoundment of funds.

SUCCESSION AND TENURE

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports the succession procedure spelled out in the 25th Amendment. However, the League favors a limit on the amount of time Congress may take to confirm the Vice-President.

The League also favors retention of a two-term limitation on presidential terms of office.

PRIVATIZATION (2012)

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that when governmental entities consider the transfer of governmental services, assets and/or functions to the private sector, the community impact and goals of such transfers must be identified and considered. Further, the LWV believes that transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good must be ensured.

The League believes that some government provided services could be delivered more efficiently by private entities; however, privatization is not appropriate in all circumstances. Privatization is not appropriate when the provision of services by the government is necessary to preserve the common good, to protect national or local security or to meet the needs of the most vulnerable members of society. While the League recognizes that the definition of core government services will vary by level of government and community values, services fundamental to the governance of a democratic society should not be privatized in their entirety. These services include the electoral process, justice system, military, public safety, public health, education, transportation, environmental protection and programs that protect and provide basic human needs.

The decision to privatize a public service should be made after an informed, transparent planning process and thorough analysis of the



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implications of privatizing service delivery. While specific criteria will vary by service and local conditions, the League believes the following considerations apply to most decisions to transfer public services, assets and functions to the private sector:

- On-going and timely communication with stake-holders and the public;
- Statement of the circumstances as they exist and what is to be gained;
- Definition of the quality, level and cost of service expected; Assessment of the private market; whether there are providers to assure competitive pricing and delivery; (in some cases there may not be multiple providers if a service is so specialized. i.e. high tech, airports.)
- Cost-benefit analyses evaluating short and long term costs of privatization, including the ongoing costs of contract administration and oversight;
- An understanding of the impact on customers, the broader community, environment and public employees;
- An open, competitive bidding process with clearly defined criteria to be used in selecting a contractor;
- A provision and process to ensure the services or assets will be returned to the government if a contractor fails to perform;
- A data-driven selection of private entities whose goals, purposes, and means are not incompatible with the public well-being;
- The careful negotiation and drafting of the controlling privatization contract; and
- Adequate oversight and periodic performance monitoring of the privatized services by the government entity to ensure that the private entity is complying with all relevant laws and regulations, contract terms and conditions, and ethical standards, including public disclosure and comment.

The League believes that the enactment of state laws and issuance of regulations to control the process and delivery of privatization within a state's jurisdiction is often appropriate and desirable. Best practices for government regulation of the privatization process should include the following requirements:

- An open process that allows for citizen input and oversight in a timely manner;
- A reasonable feasibility study and project evaluation appropriate to the size and scope of the project;
- The establishment of carefully crafted criteria for selection of the private-entity (beyond the lowest cost bid);
- Additional consideration for local bidders in order to support the local economy; The retention of liability and responsibility with the government entity;
- Allowance for and promotion of opportunities for innovation and collaboration; and,
- Provision for employment, benefits and training plans on behalf of employees displaced as a result of privatization.

II. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

UNITED NATIONS (1977, 2002)

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports a strong, effective United Nations and endorses the full and active participation of the United States in the UN system. The League supports UN efforts to

- promote international peace and security; advance the social and economic wellbeing of the world's people;
- ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- foster trust and cooperation among nations by encouraging adherence to conventions, treaties, and other international agreements;
- protect the integrity of the world environment;
- achieve the full and equal participation of women in all aspects of civil and political life.

The United Nations should be an important component of U.S. foreign policy. The League supports U.S. policies that strengthen the UN's capacity to solve global problems and promote prosperity throughout the world. The United States should work actively and constructively within the UN system, exercising diplomatic leadership in advance of decisionmaking. The United States should not place conditions on its participation in the United Nations, except in the most extreme cases, such as flagrant violations of the Charter.

The League supports UN leadership in a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to promoting world peace and security that includes ongoing efforts to eliminate the underlying causes of conflict. UN peace operations should include such strategies as

- an increased emphasis on preventive diplomacy and the use of such techniques as an early warning system to identify possible threats to peace and mediation to help resolve disputes;
- preventive deployment of UN peacekeepers to forestall the outbreak of hostilities;
- enhanced capacity to respond rapidly and effectively to contain conflict and establish a just and stable peace;
- UN peacekeeping operations that have strong political and financial support from the world community and the consent of the local parties;
- military intervention, as a last resort, to halt genocide and other crimes against humanity and to prevent the spread of conflict;
- protection of civilian populations, including protection of displaced persons;
- longterm commitment, both pre and postconflict, to establishing the institutions and conditions needed for real economic and social development;
- enhanced capacity at UN headquarters to plan, manage and support UN peace operations.

The United States should support all aspects of UN peace operations. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have an important role to play in peace operations, including participating in behind the scenes diplomatic efforts and providing humanitarian aid.



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The League strongly supports the central role of the United Nations in addressing the social, economic, and humanitarian needs of all people. The advancement and empowerment of women is fundamental to achieving peace and prosperity and should be a high priority for UN programs. Other areas for emphasis include

- eradicating poverty and hunger;
- improving basic living standards worldwide;
- promoting the wellbeing and potential of children, with special attention to the girl child;
- promoting human and political rights;
- ensuring access to a basic education for all;
- ensuring a basic level of health care for all;
- protecting the environment and the world's natural resources.

The League supports efforts to strengthen the development and humanitarian work of the United Nations through greater coordination among agencies, more efficient use of resources, additional funding as required, and more partnerships with NGOs and other nonstate actors. UN-sponsored world conferences are valuable forums for building international consensus and developing practical plans of action to solve global problems.

The United States should provide strong leadership and financial support to the UN specialized agencies, participate constructively in international conferences, and fulfill all agreed upon commitments.

The League believes that world peace and progress rest in part on a body of international law developed through conventions, covenants, and treaties and on the judgments of international courts. Disputes between nations should be considered and settled in the International Court of Justice, and its judicial decisions should be honored.

The League supports the creation of a permanent international tribunal, such as the International Criminal Court, to try individuals charged with crimes of genocide, war crimes, and other systematic crimes against humanity.

All court procedures must meet the highest judicial standards, including guarantees of due process protections and the integrity and impartiality of the courts' officials.

The League supports full U.S. participation in the international judicial system and U.S. ratification and observance of international treaties and conventions consistent with LWVUS principles and positions.

The League supports the basic principles of the UN Charter. The League supports one nation, one vote in the General Assembly, the veto power in the Security Council, and a strong, effective office of the Secretary General. The League supports measures to make the Security Council a more representative body that better reflects the diverse interests of UN member nations and the world's people. The United States should work to encourage member nations to consider the needs of the world as a whole and avoid divisive politicization of issues.

Member nations have the collective responsibility to provide the resources necessary for the UN to carry out its mandates, with each providing financial contributions commensurate with its ability to pay. The United States should meet its financial obligations to the UN on time, in full, and without conditions.

TRADE (1973, 2002)

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports a liberal U.S. trade policy aimed at reducing trade barriers and expanding international trade. Such a policy helps foster international cooperation, democratic values, and economic prosperity at home and abroad as well as benefiting consumers through lowered prices, expanded choice and improved products and services. The League believes that U.S. trade policy should be based on the long-term public interest, not on special interests, and should advance the achievement of other important policy goals, including

- improvement of basic living standards worldwide; reduction of inequalities within and among nations;
- protection of the environment and global natural resources;
- respect for human, labor, religious and political rights;
- improvement of labor conditions around the world.

The League endorses the worldwide systematic reduction of tariffs, subsidies and quotas. The League also supports the reduction of non-tariff barriers to trade consistent with the goals and strategies set forth in this position statement. Administrative and customs procedures should be efficient and flexible.

The League supports U.S. participation in an international trade organization aimed at promoting worldwide economic growth via an open trading system. This organization should have the power to hold nations accountable for commitments made in multilateral trade treaties and should recognize the legitimacy of international agreements in the areas of the environment, labor, and human rights. Its proceedings should be open to scrutiny by the public, the press, and non-governmental organizations. The public should have timely access to a wide range of its documents, and its dispute settlement process should allow friend-of-the-court briefs.

The organization should recognize the legitimacy of a country's measures in the areas of the environment, health, labor and human rights that are more stringent than international standards or than those of its trading partners. These measures should not discriminate between domestic products and imports and should not be used as a pretext for restricting the flow of trade. The League believes that trade agreements should be negotiated multilaterally in the broadest possible international forum. Regional and bilateral trade agreements can be useful steppingstones to broader trade liberalization but should not be allowed to block progress in multilateral negotiations nor to marginalize poor countries.

The League believes that the U.S. trade policy-making process should be open, transparent, and efficient and should advance League trade policy goals. The President should be given the authority to negotiate trade agreements within prior guidelines and conditions set by Congress. Congress should have an adequate but limited time period



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to debate and accept or reject the resulting proposed agreements, without amendment. Congress should take an active part in the policy-making process, establishing trade priorities and negotiating objectives and observing and monitoring trade negotiations. Congress should have the resources and staff expertise necessary to fulfill its trade responsibilities. The trade policy-making process of both Congress and the executive branch should include meaningful opportunities for input from a broad range of public interest perspectives, as well as from business interests, and should include timely assessment of the impact of proposed trade agreements.

The League supports a variety of trade-related strategies to protect the environment and promote labor, political, religious, and human rights, including

- trade negotiations and trade agreements that lead to progress on environmental and social objectives;
- monitoring and reporting of countries' practices and performance in these areas;
- recognition of the legitimacy of multilateral environmental agreements;
- strengthening the International Labor Organization and promoting ratification of ILO core labor rights;
- promoting ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and similar international agreements;
- international sanctions aimed at ending egregious violations of human rights;
- legitimate labeling and certification programs (e.g., eco-labeling);
- protection of endangered species;
- elimination of environmentally and economically harmful subsidies and incentives (e.g., for fishing, timber, agriculture);
- codes of conduct to encourage responsible business practices in these areas (e.g., guarding against abusive child labor);
- domestic regulations and practices that advance environmental and social goals and that are not a pretext for restricting trade; and
- aid to developing countries to improve their ability to create and enforce national laws protecting the environment and human labor rights.

The League supports trade and related policies that address the special needs of developing countries, with emphasis on economic growth and improving income distribution. The League supports such measures as:

- priority elimination of tariffs and quotas on exports of developing countries;
- longer adjustment periods and financial and technical assistance for implementation of trade commitments;
- special measures to ensure access to essential medicines;
- financial and technical assistance to enable developing countries to participate effectively in the world trading system financial aid for infrastructure improvements; and
- policies that recognize the special circumstances of developing countries in the areas of food security and transition to the world trading system.

The League supports strong U.S. Leadership in, and financial support of, international institutions and programs that reduce poverty and address the special needs of developing countries in the areas of the environment and human and labor rights.

The League supports measures to address the adverse impact of international trade on domestic workers, firms and industries. Training, education and safety net programs, such as cash assistance, relocation assistance, and health care, should be enhanced and made easily available to dislocated workers, whether or not a trade connection can be made. Portability of health care coverage, pension rights and other fringe benefits should also be assured. The League supports temporary trade barriers consistent with international trade rules to permit firms seriously injured by surging import competition to adjust to changed conditions.

U.S. RELATIONS WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (1986)

U.S. interests in developing countries should reflect the reality of global interdependence. Paramount among these interests are reducing the risk of military conflict, promoting the sound management of global resources, protecting human rights, stimulating economic growth and improving the quality of life in developing countries. U.S. policies toward developing countries should not be based on maintaining U.S. preeminence.

The LWVUS strongly believes that development assistance, which is designed to meet the long-term social and economic needs of developing countries, is the most effective means of promoting legitimate U.S. interests. Military assistance and the direct military involvement of U.S. forces are not appropriate means to further the League's stated paramount interests in developing countries.

Developing countries should not be the pawns or the playing fields for geopolitical competition. The relationship between the superpowers should not be an important factor in determining U.S. policies toward developing countries. The LWVUS supports efforts to reduce international competition in developing countries, including:

- enhancing the role of the United Nations and other multilateral organizations;
- supporting regional approaches to conflict resolution;
- encouraging cooperative efforts to promote the sound management of global resources and improve the quality of life;
- promoting measures to reduce tensions and increase communication, including scientific and cultural exchanges and other cooperative programs.

International Development Assistance: (1970, 1986)

Long-term requirements for world peace, humanitarian obligations and long-range national interests demand U.S. policies that help developing countries reach self-sustaining economic growth.

League members understand that the development process encompasses more than economic growth and urge that the focus be on the human concerns of development and on an improved quality of life for the people of developing countries. U.S. development



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assistance policies should enhance human dignity and fulfill basic human needs. The policies should be coordinated with other development efforts, and they should respect cultural differences. The League favors greater participation by the recipient nations in the planning and execution of development programs. The development effort should be one of a partnership between developed and developing countries. Development programs should be long-range, adequately financed, effectively coordinated and administered.

League members recognize that population pressures affect all other aspects of the development process. The League supports U.S. efforts to assist other nations in their population planning programs, in accordance with the culture and mores of each country. The League also emphasizes strongly the importance of programs for nutrition, health, employment and education.

The League advocates that the proportion of U.S. assistance given through multilateral channels should be substantially increased, with concurrent efforts being made to strengthen the multilateral agencies where necessary.

The League deems it essential that the trend of reduced aid be reversed and that U.S. contributions for development assistance be increased.

League members believe that aid alone is not enough to meet the needs of developing countries. Measures other than direct grants and loans must be utilized. The League advocates such measures as reduced tied aid, prevention and relief of debt burdens, and changed patterns of trade. The U.S. government must ensure that its trade, monetary, political and military policies do not subvert the goals of its development policies. The League also urges active participation in the development process by the private sector.

The League recognizes the gross disparity in trading positions between developed and developing countries. The exports of developing countries must be expanded if they are to broaden their economic base and improve their people's standard of living. Because of their need for greater access to U.S. and other industrialized countries' markets, the League favors generalized, temporary preferential tariff treatment and certain commodity arrangements for developing countries. The principle of reciprocity in trade agreements, which the League supports, should be waived in order to make special trade concessions to developing countries.

Private Investment and Commodity Arrangements: (1964, 1970)

Private Investment of U.S. capital in developing countries can be an important supplemental means of helping these countries reach self-sustaining economic growth. In order to facilitate the flow of private capital to those developing countries that most need it and that can use it most advantageously, appropriate safeguards are necessary against risks for both the investor and the developing countries. In order to protect outside investors against risks, the League favors continuation of governmental assistance, such as preinvestment surveys, investment guarantees and investment loans.

The League believes that tax credits on funds invested in developing countries could provide additional encouragement. In order to guard against risks for the developing country, the League believes that investors should be encouraged to engage in joint-venture type investments with local businesses, to seek matching investment funds within the country, to employ and train as high a proportion of local personnel as possible for responsible positions, and to send to these countries carefully chosen and well-briefed U.S. representatives. The League welcomes continued efforts by developing countries to encourage their citizens to invest more in their own countries' development efforts and to create a more favorable climate for public and private investment through appropriate internal reforms.

International commodity arrangements serve as a short-term supplement to long-run efforts to promote self-sustaining growth in developing countries.

Insofar as commodity arrangements can help moderate sharp fluctuations in the price of primary products and help stabilize the export income of developing countries, they can serve a useful, though necessarily short-term, purpose.

Each commodity arrangement should be evaluated on its own merit. Such arrangements should be flexible and open to renegotiation within a reasonable period of time.

Each arrangement needs careful supervision and regular review in order not to inhibit diversification within these countries of land, labor and capital or to distort international patterns of trade. These arrangements might include such compensatory financing efforts as those initiated under the International Monetary Fund.

If any commodity arrangement is to bear fruit, primary-product countries should be encouraged through technical and financial assistance to diversify both their primary-product and industrial position. If diversification efforts are not to be frustrated, the developed countries, including the United States, need to open their export doors wider to a broader range of imports, whether raw materials, semiprocessed or finished goods. In order to help the United States meet new competition, greater use might be made of trade adjustment assistance to affected U.S. industries and workers.

The League recognizes that continuation of freer trade policies and reduction of various trade barriers are essential to improve the terms of trade of developing countries.

ARMS CONTROL (1983, 2010)

Arms control measures are essential to reduce the risk of war and increase global stability.

Toward that end, the U.S. government should give the highest level of importance to arms control efforts that:

- limit or reduce the quantity of weapons;
- limit proliferation and prohibit first use of nuclear weapons;
- prohibit first use and possession of chemical, biological and radiological weapons;



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- prohibit explosive testing of nuclear weapons reduce tensions in order to prevent situations in which weapons might be used.

While these objectives should receive the highest level of attention, the U.S. government also should negotiate measures that inhibit the development and improvement of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons that increase incentives to attack first in a period of crisis.

As a goal of international negotiations, the League supports the worldwide elimination of nuclear weapons.

The League of Women Voters recognizes that peace in an interdependent world is a product of cooperation among nations and therefore strongly favors multilateral negotiations. Leadership by the United States in advancing arms control measures through negotiations and periodic review is encouraged.

Given the potential for worldwide proliferation of nuclear technology, efforts involving all countries are essential to limit the spread of nuclear weapons and to protect commonly held nuclear weapons-free regions such as the seabed and outer space. Multilateral efforts are appropriate as well to achieve bans on the possession of chemical, biological and radiological weapons; and to achieve limitations on the transfer or trade of all weapons.

The League of Women Voters also supports bilateral arms control efforts which may be especially appropriate in negotiations to limit, safeguard and reduce the quantities of weapons. The League believes that unilateral initiatives are not the most appropriate means to achieve arms control.

The League does not support tying progress in arms control to other issues. The League believes that arms control is too important in and of itself and too crucial to all nations to be linked to other foreign and military policy goals.

The League of Women Voters believes that arms control measures should be evaluated in terms of the following factors:

EQUITY. The terms should be mutually beneficial, and each nation's security and interests should be adequately protected, as should the security of all nations. Equity does not necessarily require equality in numbers of weapons but may be achieved through a relative balance in total capabilities.

VERIFIABILITY. Each party should be able to ensure that other parties comply with the terms of the agreement, whether using national technical means (such as: satellites, seismic sensors and electronic monitors) or on-site inspection. The League recognizes the role that multilateral and international institutions can play in assisting verification efforts and believes it is extremely important to ensure compliance, acknowledging that absolute certainty is unattainable.

Equity and verifiability are critical in efforts to limit and reduce quantities of weapons and prohibit the possession and spread of nuclear weapons.

CONFIDENCE-BUILDING. Each party should be assured of the political or military intentions of other parties. Fostering confidence is vital in efforts to stem the development and proliferation of weapons and prohibit their first use; and to reduce tensions.

WIDESPREAD AGREEMENT. All appropriate parties should participate in and approve the results of the negotiating process. However, the League recognizes that, in specific cases, progress can be achieved even though some key parties do not participate.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. The quality of the earth's environment should be protected from the effects of weapons testing or use. Environmental protection has special significance in negotiations regarding all weapons of mass destruction as well as conventional weapons that have residual effects.

CONTINUITY. Negotiations should build on past agreements and should be directed toward future negotiations whenever feasible. Innovative thinking and new approaches should, however, be encouraged when appropriate.

FURTHER GUIDELINES

League support of arms-control measures includes action on proposals, negotiations and agreements.

The League supports efforts to achieve quantitative limits or reductions that focus on nuclear warheads, non-nuclear weapons of mass destruction, missiles and other delivery systems, antiballistic missiles, conventional weapons or troop levels.

The League advocates limits on the spread or proliferation of weapons, nuclear technology, and fissile materials. The League opposes the proliferation of weapons, nuclear technology, and fissile materials to non-state actors or to commonly held areas such as the seabed and outer space. The League supports establishing effective international monitoring, accounting and control of such transfers.

The League's pursuit of bans on the possession or use of weapons may apply to existing weapons or to those not yet developed.

The League seeks to reduce tensions through better means of communication, exchange of information or prior notification of military tests and maneuvers in order to avoid the risks of miscalculation or accident. Other League-supported measures to reduce tensions and create a climate of trust among nations include scientific and cultural exchanges, conflict resolution training and strengthening the United Nations and its supporting agencies. Efforts are encouraged to mediate regional issues and arrive at negotiated settlements to minimize arms build-ups and avoid conflicts. The United States should keep lines of communication open.

The League supports efforts to inhibit the development and improvement of weapons through qualitative limits including limits on testing of weapons. These constraints may be selective or comprehensive in their application.

Efforts to improve the arms control regime of international laws, oversight bodies, and verification modalities are also supported, and



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U.S. engagement and leadership in this regard is encouraged. The League supports diligence by the United States in meeting the terms of ratified arms control agreements and in reviewing their effectiveness over time.

MILITARY POLICY AND DEFENSE SPENDING (1984, 1986)

The U.S. government should seek to protect its interests at home and abroad through the use of nonmilitary measures, including diplomacy, mediation and multilateral cooperation. These measures reflect the importance that the League attaches to U.S. efforts to strengthen international organizations, reduce tensions among nations and minimize the risk of conflict worldwide.

The League believes that military force should be viewed as a tool of last resort. Unquestionably, defense of the homeland is an appropriate military objective. In this context, conventional weapons are clearly preferable to nuclear weapons. Any decision to defend another nation militarily should be in support of clear foreign policy goals and tailored to specific circumstances. Military assistance and the direct military involvement of U.S. forces are not appropriate means to further the League's stated paramount interests in developing countries.

The League believes that nuclear weapons should serve only a limited and specific function—that of deterring nuclear attack on the United States—until such time as these weapons are eliminated through arms-control and disarmament agreements. The goal of the U.S. military policy, however, should be to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used.

Nuclear Deterrence

The League believes that the United States should vigorously pursue arms-control negotiations in order to ensure that all nations reduce and eventually eliminate their stockpiles of strategic nuclear weapons. The League does not support unilateral elimination of any leg of the strategic nuclear triad of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and long-range bombers. However, the League does not support any modernization of the land leg that would result in weapons systems that are vulnerable or increase incentives to attack first.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

The League believes that the defense of NATO allies should continue to be a shared responsibility. The League supports the United States' commitment to defend NATO allies with conventional forces. The League urges continued efforts to negotiate mutual and balanced reductions in conventional forces in Europe.

The League believes there is no appropriate role for U.S. nuclear weapons in the defense of NATO allies. The League strongly opposes the policy of threatening to introduce nuclear weapons into a conventional conflict in Europe, a policy commonly referred to as "first use." Consistent with these views, the League opposes the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons on European soil.

Other Commitments

The League supports the U.S. commitment to defend Japan with

conventional forces. Conventional forces also are appropriate for defending other allies. The League rejects any nuclear role in defending Japan and other allies, in protecting access to vital resource or in responding to military conflicts around the world.

Defense Spending

The League believes that defense spending should be examined the same way as spending for other national needs. Within any given level of defense spending, the United States should move toward emphasizing readiness over investment. Preference should be given to operations and maintenance expenditures and military pay as opposed to research and development, procurement of new weapons and construction of military facilities. The League believes that savings in the defense budget can be achieved through increased efficiency and improved accountability.

In summary, the League believes that national security has many dimensions and cannot be limited to military policy alone. It can be defined as ensuring domestic tranquility, providing for the common defense and promoting the general welfare. Key elements include the country's ability to implement social and environmental programs and to maintain cooperative relationships with other nations. Other important components are effective political leadership and a strong economy. Therefore, in decisions about the federal budget, political leaders should assess the impact of U.S. military spending on the nation's economy and on the government's ability to meet social and environmental needs.

III. NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

NATURAL RESOURCES (1958-1986)

Natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. Pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Resource management decisions must be based on a thorough assessment of population growth and of current and future needs. The inherent characteristics and carrying capacities of each area's natural resources must be considered in the planning process. Policy makers must take into account the ramifications of their decisions on the nation as a whole as well as on other nations.

To assure the future availability of essential resources, government policies must promote stewardship of natural resources. Policies that promote resource conservation are a fundamental part of such stewardship. Resources such as water and soil should be protected. Consumption of nonrenewable resources should be minimized. Beneficiaries should pay the costs for water, land and energy development projects. Reclamation and reuse of natural resources should be encouraged.



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The League believes that protection and management of natural resources are responsibilities shared by all levels of government. The federal government should provide leadership, guidance and financial assistance to encourage regional planning and decision making to enhance local and state capabilities for resource management.

The League supports comprehensive long-range planning and believes that wise decision making requires:

- adequate data and a framework within which alternatives may be weighed and intelligent decisions made;
- consideration of environmental, public-health, social and economic impacts of proposed plans and actions;
- protection of private property rights commensurate with overall consideration of public health and environmental protection;
- coordination of the federal government's responsibilities and activities;
- resolution of inconsistencies and conflicts in basic policy among governmental agencies at all levels; regional, interregional and/or international cooperation when appropriate;
- mechanisms appropriate to each region that will provide coordinated planning and administration among units of government, governmental agencies and the private sector;
- procedures for resolving disputes;
- procedures for mitigation of adverse impacts;
- special responsibility by each level of government for those lands and resources entrusted to them;
- special consideration for the protection of areas of critical environmental concern, natural hazards, historical importance and aesthetic value;
- special attention to maintaining and improving the environmental quality of urban communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND POLLUTION CONTROL

The League supports the preservation of the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem and maximum protection of public health and the environment. The League's approach to environmental protection and pollution control is one of problem solving. The interrelationships of air, water and land resources should be recognized in designing environmental safeguards. The League's environmental protection and anti-pollution goals aim to prevent ecological degradation and to reduce and control pollutants before they go down the sewer, up the chimney or into the landfill.

The League believes that although environmental protection and pollution control are responsibilities shared by all levels of government, it is essential that the federal government provide leadership and technical and financial assistance.

The federal government should have the major role in setting standards for environmental protection and pollution control. Other levels of government should have the right to set more stringent standards. Enforcement should be carried out at the lower levels of government, but the federal government should enforce standards if other levels of government do not meet this responsibility. Standards

must be enforced in a timely, consistent and equitable manner for all violators in all parts of society, including governmental units, industry, business and individuals.

Environmental protection and pollution control, including waste management, should be considered a cost of providing a product or service. Consumers, taxpayers and ratepayers must expect to pay some of the costs. The League supports policies that accelerate pollution control, including federal financial assistance for state and local programs.

The League supports:

- regulation of pollution sources by control and penalties;
- inspection and monitoring;
- full disclosure of pollution data;
- incentives to accelerate pollution control;
- vigorous enforcement mechanisms, including sanctions for states and localities that do not comply with federal standards and substantial fines for noncompliance.

Further Guidelines and Criteria

Air Quality

The League supports:

- measures to reduce vehicular pollution, including inspection and maintenance of emission controls, changes in engine design and fuel types and development of more energy-efficient transportation systems;
- regulation and reduction of pollution from stationary sources;
- regulation and reduction of ambient toxic-air pollutants;
- measures to reduce transboundary air pollutants, such as ozone and those that cause acid deposition.

Energy

The League supports:

- energy goals and policies that acknowledge the United States as a responsible member of the world community;
- reduction of energy growth rates;
- use of a variety of energy sources, with emphasis on conserving energy and using energy-efficient technologies;
- the environmentally sound use of energy resources, with consideration of the entire cycle of energy production;
- predominant reliance on renewable resources
- policies that limit reliance on nuclear fission;
- action by appropriate levels of government to encourage the use of renewable resources and energy conservation through funding for research and development, financial incentives, rate-setting policies and mandatory standards;
- mandatory energy-conservation measures, including thermal standards for building efficiency, new appliance standards and standards for new automobiles with no relaxation of auto-emission control requirements;
- policies to reduce energy demand and minimize the need for new generating capacity through techniques such as marginal cost or peak-load pricing or demand-management programs;



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- maintaining deregulation of oil and natural gas prices;
- assistance for low-income individuals when energy policies bear unduly on the poor.

Land Use

The League supports;

- management of land as a finite resource not as a commodity, since land ownership, whether public or private, carries responsibility for stewardship;
- land-use planning that reflects conservation and wise management of resources;
- identification and regulation of areas of critical concern:
 - fragile or historical lands, where development could result in irreversible damage (such as shore-lands of rivers, lakes and streams, estuaries and bays; rare or valuable ecosystems and geological formations; significant wildlife habitats; unique scenic or historic areas; wetlands; deserts);
 - renewable resource lands, where development could result in the loss of productivity (such as watersheds, aquifers and aquifer-recharge areas, significant agricultural and grazing lands, forest lands);
 - natural hazard lands, where development could endanger life and property (such as floodplains, areas with high seismic or volcanic activity, areas of unstable geologic, ice or snow formations);
- reclamation of lands damaged by surface mining, waste disposal, overgrazing, timber harvesting, farming and other activities;
- acquisition of land for public use;
- identification and regulation of areas impacted by public or private investment where siting results in secondary environmental and socioeconomic impacts;
- review of environmental, social and economic impacts of major public and private developments;
- review of federally funded projects by all government levels;
- conformance of federal land resource activities with approved state programs, particularly where state standards are more stringent than federal standards.

Water Resources

The League supports:

- water resource programs and policies that reflect the interrelationships of water quality, water quantity, groundwater and surface water and that address the potential depletion or pollution of water supplies;
- measures to reduce water pollution from direct point- source discharges and from indirect nonpoint sources;
- policies to achieve water quality essential for maintaining species populations and diversity, including measures to protect lakes, estuaries, wetlands and in- stream flows;
- stringent controls to protect the quality of current and potential drinking-water supplies, including protection of watersheds for surface supplies and of recharge areas for groundwater.

Proposed Interbasin Water Transfers

Interstate and interbasin transfers are not new or unusual. Water transfers have served municipal supplies, industry, energy development and agriculture.

Construction costs of large-scale water transfers are high, and economic losses in the basin of origin also may be high. Environmental costs of water transfers may include quantitative and qualitative changes in wetlands and related fisheries and wildlife, diminished aquifer recharge and reduced stream flows. Lowered water tables also may affect groundwater quality and cause land subsidence.

As we look to the future, water transfer decisions will need to incorporate the high costs of moving water, the limited availability of unallocated water and our still limited knowledge of impacts on the affected ecosystems.

In order to develop member understanding and agreement on proposals for large-scale water transfer projects, state and local Leagues need to work together. The following guidelines are designed to help Leagues jointly evaluate new proposals for large-scale water transfers.

The process for evaluating the suitability of new proposed interbasin water transfers should include:

- ample and effective opportunities for informed public participation in the formulation and analysis of proposed projects;
- evaluation of economic, social and environmental impacts in the basin of origin, the receiving area and any area through which the diversion must pass, so that decision makers and the public have adequate information on which to base a decision;
- examination of all short- and long-term economic costs including, but not limited to, construction, delivery, operation, maintenance and market interest rate; examination of alternative supply options, such as water conservation, water pricing and reclamation;
- participation and review by all affected governments;
- procedures for resolution of intergovernmental conflicts;
- accord with international treaties;
- provisions to ensure that responsibility for funding is borne primarily by the user with no federal subsidy, loan guarantees or use of the borrowing authority of the federal government, unless the proposal is determined by all affected levels of the League to be in the national interest.

Waste Management

The League supports:

- policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes;
- policies to ensure safe treatment, transportation, storage and disposal of solid and hazardous wastes in order to protect public health and air, water and land resources;



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- planning and decision-making processes that recognize suitable solid and hazardous wastes as potential resources;
- policies for the management of civilian and military high- and low-level radioactive wastes to protect public health, and air, water and land resources;
- the establishment of processes for effective involvement of state and local governments and citizens in siting proposals for treatment, storage, disposal and transportation of radioactive wastes;
- full environmental review of treatment, storage and disposal facilities for radioactive wastes;
- safe transport, storage and disposal of radioactive wastes.

Criteria for Siting Waste Disposal Facilities

The following criteria are derived from the League's Natural Resources positions. They were developed to assist state and local Leagues in reviewing specific waste disposal sites and to help state and local Leagues evaluate both the process employed in site selection and the suitability of a proposed site or hazardous and radioactive waste treatment, storage and disposal facilities. The decision-making process should provide for:

- ample and effective opportunities for public participation, including funding to conduct such participation;
- evaluation of economic, social and environmental impacts so that decision makers and the public have adequate information on which to base a decision. In addition to the actual site, secondary land use impacts—such as buffer areas, adequacy of roads, sewers, water, etc.—should be considered;
- an examination of alternative site and methods of treatment and disposal. Comparison of costs must include short- and long-term costs, such as liability insurance, postclosure maintenance, monitoring of ground and surface waters and air before and after closure, and potential loss of land or water resources due to contamination;
- participation and review by all government levels to assure conformance with all adopted comprehensive plans at each level of government;
- procedures for resolution of intergovernmental conflicts;

Hazardous and radioactive waste treatment, storage or disposal facilities should be sited in areas that pose the least amount of risk to the public and to sensitive environmental areas. They should be located away from areas of critical concern such as:

- natural hazard areas subject to flooding, earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes or subsidence;
- drinking water supply sources, such as reservoirs, lakes and rivers and their watersheds, and aquifers and their recharge areas;
- fragile land areas, such as shorelines or rivers, lakes, streams, oceans and estuaries, bays or wetlands;
- rare or valuable ecosystems or geologic formations, significant wildlife habitat or unique scenic or historic areas;
- areas with significant renewable resource value, such as prime agricultural lands or grazing and forest lands that

would be destroyed as a result of the siting of hazardous waste facilities;

- residential areas, parks and schools.

Nuclear Issues

The League's approach to nuclear issues is one of problem solving. The League's aim is to work constructively for the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment and for citizen participation in the decision-making process at all levels of government.

The League opposes "increased reliance on nuclear fission" but recognizes its place in the nation's energy mix. To achieve this

Objective:

- State and local Leagues may oppose licensing for construction of nuclear power plants on the basis of the national position.
- State and local Leagues may oppose licensing for operation of these plants now under construction on a case-by-case basis, after careful consideration of the need for power and of available alternatives and after notifying the national Board.
- State and local Leagues may support licensing for construction and operation of nuclear power plants only in special cases and only with prior permission from the national board.
- State and local Leagues may call for the closing of operating nuclear power plants because of specific nongeneric health and safety problems, but only with prior permission from the LWVUS.

Siting/Storage of High-Level Wastes (HLWs)

The disposal of HLWs is a national concern, and national policy should govern selection of any facilities constructed, whether an Away-From-Reactor (AFR) interim storage facility, a Monitored Retrievable System (MRS) facility or a permanent geological repository. The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 sets forth a program for selection, authorization and licensing of permanent repository sites and outlines programs for possible MRS and AFR facilities. In taking any action on this issue, the LWVUS will work to ensure that HLWs are disposed of in a manner that protects public health and safety and the environment.

During the 1981-82 congressional debate over disposal of nuclear wastes, the LWVUS made several statements regarding storage and disposal. The League testified that the storage of HLWs from commercial reactors should be maximized at reactor sites; the League would support a utility-financed AFR facility if one were needed to prevent nuclear power plants from being forced to cease operations because of spent-fuel buildup. In addition, the League supports an active state role in the HLWs decision-making process. These concerns, in addition to LWVUS positions on the process and criteria for siting and storage of HLWs, provide the foundation for LWVUS action.



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While only a limited number of facilities will probably be built, the LWVUS recognizes that Leagues located in states or communities under consideration as potential sites for such facilities may wish to take action based on national positions. In that event, the state League, or a local League working in concert with the state League, must consult with the LWVUS before taking any action. In making any action determinations on HLWs, the LWVUS will consider three questions: 1) Is the proposed facility needed at this time? 2) Is the site suitable? And 3) Did the selection process provide ample and effective opportunities for public participation? Leagues requesting LWVUS clearance for action should address these questions, particularly the assessment of the suitability of a specific site.

State Leagues also should be alert to action opportunities relating to the process of state consultation and concurrence in the proposed sites.

Siting/Storage of Low-Level Wastes (LLWs)

The Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Act of 1980 makes states responsible for the disposal of LLWs generated at commercial facilities within their borders. The act authorizes states to form regional compacts to establish disposal sites, and it allows state to refuse wastes from other states outside their compact region after January 1, 1986. State legislatures must approve a state's membership in a regional compact, but a compact does not become operational and legally binding until Congress consents to the agreement.

Appropriate State League Action

Some state Leagues are participating in state-level or regional-level discussions/negotiations over regional compacts and are seeking agreement on the compacts. The LWVUS believes it is important for all state Leagues within a proposed compact region to work together to resolve any differences and establish agreement. Clearly, that agreement must be in accord with national positions. Because this is a national concern, the LWVUS must review and approve any agreement reached among state Leagues in a compact region before state Leagues can take any action.

A state League in the proposed compact region that does not support the League agreement cannot act in opposition to that agreement. For example, if a state League disagrees with the approved League agreement, that state League can only lobby its state legislature either to withdraw from the proposed regional compact, i.e., "go it alone," or to join another compact region. A state League also may request LWVUS permission to contact its U.S. senators and representatives at the time Congress considers ratification of the regional compact to lobby them to withdraw the state from the proposed compact. Some individual state Leagues have undertaken studies of proposed compacts for their regions and have reached consensus on a proposed regional compact. Again, that consensus must be in accord with national positions. In addition, before taking any action, the state League must obtain clearance from other state League Boards in the proposed compact region because any action would involve government jurisdictions beyond that League. The state League also should consult the LWVUS before taking action.

A state League or a local League working with the state League can take action on a proposed LLW disposal site based on the public participation process if it concludes the process was inadequate or based on a study of the environmental safety/suitability of the proposed disposal site (see siting criteria). If potential environmental impacts of a proposed site affect more than one League, clearance must be obtained from the relevant League Boards before any action can be taken. If any unresolved differences develop among Leagues, the LWVUS will decide the appropriate course of action.

Transportation of Nuclear Wastes

The League recognizes that transporting nuclear wastes increases the likelihood of accidents that could endanger public health. The League also recognizes that transportation is less risky than allowing these wastes to accumulate at an environmentally unsafe facility.

State and local Leagues can work to improve the regulation of transportation of nuclear wastes, but they cannot support "blanket bans" on transporting nuclear wastes through a region or city. There may be instances, however, in which a carefully thought-out ban, based on extensive League study, would be appropriate for a specific area. Such a study should include the overall subject of transporting and managing nuclear wastes, including regulation of types of wastes, packaging, escort, notification of routes to local and state authorities, effective emergency response, and the designating of routes that minimize health, safety and environmental risks. The study should not be confined to one aspect of the transportation issue, such as routes.

If after a study of the wide-ranging issues involved, a League concludes that wastes should not be transported through an area, that League must discuss the results of the study and obtain clearance for any contemplated action from all appropriate levels of the League.

Defense Wastes

In managing high-level nuclear wastes, the League supports equivalent treatment of civilian and military wastes. The League supports the state consultation and concurrence process, consideration of environmental impacts of proposed sites and NRC licensing for defense waste facilities, as well as for civilian waste facilities. The League's position on equivalent treatment of all wastes includes transportation of defense wastes. Low-level defense wastes include wastes from military medical programs, naval shipyards that maintain nuclear-powered naval vessels and research facilities. The treatment of low-level defense wastes, however, is not spelled out in the Low-level Waste Policy Act of 1980. Most low-level defense wastes are disposed of in special federal facilities; however, some are disposed of in existing commercial sites.

Leagues may take the same action on transporting, siting and storing defense wastes as on civilian wastes. Action on defense wastes should be in accordance with any relevant future National Security position(s) developed by the League.



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Inter-League Cooperation

Leagues contemplating action on nuclear waste issues should keep in mind that any action almost invariable will affect areas beyond their jurisdiction. Thus, in all cases, local Leagues should clear action with the state League and the League Boards at the appropriate jurisdictional levels.

One example of necessary inter-League action on a regional level is the low-level radioactive waste compacting process. The League believes this is an important national, state and local concern aimed at responsible management and disposal of low-level wastes. Many state Leagues are actively participating in their regional processes, and some are taking consensus on the issue.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The League believes that public understanding and cooperation are essential to the responsible and responsive management of our nation's natural resources. The public has a right to know about pollution levels, dangers to health and the environment, and proposed resource management policies and options. The public has a right to participate in decision making at each phase in the process and at each level of government involvement. Officials should make a special effort to develop readily understandable procedures for public involvement and to ensure that the public has adequate information to participate effectively. Public records should be readily accessible at all governmental levels. Adequate funding is needed to ensure opportunities for public education and effective public participation in all aspects of the decision making process.

The appropriate level of government should publicize, in an extensive and timely manner and in readily available sources, information about pollution levels, pollution-abatement programs, and resource management policies and options. Hearings should be held in easily accessible locations, at convenient times and, when possible, in the area concerned. The hearing procedures and other opportunities for public comment should actively encourage citizen participation in decision making.

The League supports public education that provides a basic understanding of the environment and the social, economic and environmental costs and benefits of environmental protection, pollution control and conservation.

Mechanisms for citizen appeal must be guaranteed, including access to the courts. Due process rights for the affected public and private parties must be assured.

FEDERAL AGRICULTURE POLICY (2014)

The League believes that government should provide financial support for agriculture that includes disaster assistance, crop insurance, need-based loans and incentives to adopt best management practices. Support should be extended to specialty crops, such as fruits, vegetables and nuts, to new production methods, such as organic, hydroponic, and urban practices, and to farms that supply local and regional markets.

Subsidized crop yield insurance should be linked to implementation of best management practices with the subsidy denied for marginal or environmentally sensitive land. The premium subsidy for crop insurance should be available for a wide range of crops, such as fruits, vegetables and specialty crops. Government should limit the amount of the premium subsidy received by larger farms.

The League supports policies that increase competition in agricultural markets. Antitrust laws should be enforced to ensure competitive agricultural markets. Alternative marketing systems such as regional hub markets, farmers' markets and farmer cooperatives should be promoted.

Clean air and water regulations should apply to all animal and aquaculture production and processing facilities, and not just to the very large confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs). Such regulations should be designed in a manner that takes into account environmentally sound technologies and the scale of the operation being regulated. Small size operations should not be granted automatic exemption from regulation.

The League believes that government regulatory agencies dealing with animal and aquaculture production should have adequate authority and funding to 1) enforce regulations and 2) gather information that supports monitoring the impacts of all animal feeding and aquaculture operations on human and animal health and the environment.

Government should fund basic research related to agriculture. Government funded research should also address the impact of new technologies on human health and the environment prior to widespread adoption of products developed with such technologies. Assessment of products developed with new technologies should be conducted as transparently as possible, while respecting intellectual property rights. Research should be funded to support the continuation of diversified and sustainable agricultural systems, such as seed banking and promoting and preserving genetic diversity.

To provide adequate safety of our food supply, government should:

- Clarify and enforce pre-market testing requirements for foods and food additives developed using any new chemical technology, such as genetic engineering or nanotechnology;
- Require developers to monitor all such new food products developed after releasing to the market;
- Require developers of such new food products to provide data and other materials to independent third parties for pre- and post-marketing safety assessment;
- Fund independent third party risk assessment examining how long term and multiple exposures to such new foods affect human health and the environment;
- Withdraw marketing approval and require recall if such products are shown to be unsafe;
- Require post-market monitoring of human health and environmental impacts for pharmaceutical applications used in animal and aquaculture production;
- Limit use of antibiotics in animal production to the treatment of disease;



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- Promote crop management practices that decrease dependency on added chemicals; and
- Fund, employ and train sufficient personnel for assessment and compliance functions of regulatory agencies.

The League supports government developing and requiring more informative and standardized definitions on product labeling. Food labeling and advertising should display only approved health and safety claims and an accurate representation of the required ingredient and nutrition lists. The League supports consumer education about labeling of foods developed using any new technology.

IV. SOCIAL POLICY

Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice, and the health and safety of all Americans.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY (1972, 1980, 1989, 2010)

The federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing for all persons in the United States regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability. Employment opportunities in modern, technological societies are closely related to education; therefore, the League supports federal programs to increase the education and training of disadvantaged people. The League supports federal efforts to prevent and/or remove discrimination in education, employment and housing and to help communities bring about racial integration of their school systems.

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports equal rights for all regardless of sex. The League supports action to bring laws into compliance with the ERA: a) to eliminate or amend those laws that have the effect of discriminating on the basis of sex; b) to promote laws that support the goals of the ERA; c) to strengthen the enforcement of such existing laws.

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports equal rights for all under state and federal law. LWVUS supports legislation to equalize the legal rights, obligations, and benefits available to same-gender couples with those available to heterosexual couples. LWVUS supports legislation to permit same-gender couples to marry under civil law. The League believes that the civil status of marriage is already clearly distinguished from the religious institution of marriage and that religious rights will be preserved.

Further Guidelines and Criteria

In more specific terms, the kinds of programs the League supports include:

- Programs in basic education, occupational education and retraining when needed at any point of an individual's working career.
- Expanded opportunities in apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs.
- Child-care centers for preschool children to give parents the opportunity for employment.

- Greatly increased educational opportunity through compensatory programs for disadvantaged groups beginning at the preschool level and extending through secondary education.
- Federal financial aid to help needy students remain in high school and to take advantage of post-high school training and education.
- A regional approach to problems of economically depressed areas that cuts across state lines. This approach can be handled administratively by such means as interstate cooperation or more formal interstate compacts or commissions made up of representatives of state and federal governments. Development programs should reflect the needs of the particular area and can include such measures as provision of education and training for available jobs, encouragement of new industry in the area, development and conservation of natural resources and the building of public facilities.
- Programs that would inform individuals of their civil rights in education, employment and housing, and of the opportunities open to them.
- Full use of mediation and conciliation in efforts to bring about integration of minority groups into full participation in community life.
- A federal clearinghouse for the exchange of information on solutions communities have found to problems of integration in employment, education and housing.
- Programs to bring about effective integration of schools through federal technical assistance such as training programs and institutes for teachers and school administrators.
- Withholding federal funds from school districts that fail to meet realistic and effective guidelines and standards for school integration.
- Withholding government contracts from businesses and industries that discriminate in employment.
- An effective federal fair employment practices agency.

Education and Employment Criteria

In evaluating federal programs that have been, or will be, established to provide equality of opportunity for education and employment, the League will support those programs that largely fulfill the following criteria:

- The nationwide effort to achieve equality of opportunity in education and employment should include participation of government at all levels and encourage the participation of private institutions.
- Programs should be carefully tailored to the educational or employment needs of the people they are intended to reach.
- People for whom community action programs are designed should be involved in the planning and implementation of those programs.
- The programs should be carried out by personnel competent to meet the specific requirements of their jobs.



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- Programs should assist people to become self-supporting, contributing members of society.
- The programs should be nondiscriminatory with provisions for enforcement.
- Research, pilot projects and continuing evaluation should be encouraged and, where feasible, built into programs.
- Programs may be closely related but should avoid unnecessary duplication.
- State and local governments should contribute to the extent their resources permit; at the same time, adequate federal funds for the establishment and continuation of programs should be available if necessary.

Fair Housing Criteria

The following criteria should be applied to programs and policies to provide equal opportunity for access to housing without discrimination:

- Opportunities for purchase or renting of homes and for borrowing money for housing should not be restricted because of discriminatory reasons such as race, color, sex, religion or national origin.
- Responsibility in the nationwide effort to achieve equality of opportunity for access to housing resides with government at all levels and with the private sector—builders, lending institutions, realtors, labor unions, business and industry, news media, civic organizations, educational institutions, churches and private citizens.
- The continued existence of patterns of discrimination depends on the covert support of community leaders, institutions and residents. Award or withdrawal of federal contracts and placement of federal installations should be used as levers to change this covert support.
- After positive steps such as mediation and conciliation have been exhausted, the federal government should have the option for selective withholding of federal funds where patterns of discrimination in access to housing occur. In applying the option to withhold funds, the federal government should weigh the effects of its actions on the welfare of lower-income and minority groups.
- Federal programs should include provisions to guarantee equal opportunity for access to housing. Federal funds should not be used to perpetuate discrimination.
- In the enforcement of fair-housing laws, speedy resolution should be ensured. Administrative procedures and responsibilities should be clearly defined and widely publicized.
- Mediation and legal redress should be readily available. The process should ensure every possible protection for both complainant and persons or institutions against whom complaints are lodged. Avenues for mediation and legal redress should be widely publicized and should be easily accessible.
- Funding should be adequate to provide trained and competent staff for public education to inform citizens of the provisions of fair-housing legislation, of their fair-housing rights and of procedures to be followed in securing them.

Adequate funding should also be available for mediation and for all aspects of speedy enforcement.

- There should be continued evaluation to provide a basis for revision and strengthening of all procedures so that equality of opportunity for access to housing can be accomplished.

FEDERAL ROLE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION (2012)

The League of Women Voters believes that the federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12. A quality public education is essential for a strong, viable, and sustainable democratic society and is a civil right.

The League believes that the role of the federal government should include the following:

- Provide leadership and vision to promote a quality education for all children;
- Provide broad common standards developed by educational experts upon which states and local education agencies can build;
- Provide a suggested curricular structure or framework as a guide to state and local education agencies to develop their own curricula;
- Provide a national assessment that clearly informs teachers, parents and students about how well individual students have mastered criteria established at the national level;
- Provide a national assessment that informs districts how well their populations compare to other populations similar to theirs; and
- Provide a combination of competitive grants and non-competitive funding to states and local school districts to achieve equity among states and populations.

The League of Women Voters believes that an equitable, quality public education is critical for students. While the League recognizes that there are instances where the federal government's involvement is the only way to achieve universal change (desegregation, special needs population, gender equity), we also recognize that primary responsibility for public education resides with the states. In accordance with the League of Women Voters' position on Equal Rights, the League continues to support equity in public education for all through:

- Broad guidelines for accountability, leaving implementation to the state and local education agencies;
- Adequate funding sources that support the broad goals of national standards; and
- Mechanisms for local and state funding with adequate federal support for mandates that require less burdensome, compliance-based reporting and regulations.

The League of Women Voters believes a basic role of the federal government in funding education should be to achieve equity among states and populations on the basis of identified needs. This should be done with full understanding that equity does not mean equal, given that some populations are more expensive to educate than others and some localities have specific needs.



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The League believes that the federal government should be primarily responsible for funding any programs mandated by the federal government on local education agencies. Although the League recognizes equity in education depends on meeting basic human needs of children and of their families, the costs associated with providing equitable access to safe neighborhoods and secure housing do not belong in the education budget. Major programs of federal funding for public education (i.e., Elementary and Secondary Education Act) should be targeted toward children living in poverty and/or children with special needs.

The federal government has the responsibility to monitor and support access to the following:

- High quality teaching and learning, supported by quality current learning materials and well maintained educational facilities; and
- Access to health care needs (i.e., hearing, vision, dental, immunization, school-based health clinics at the secondary level, etc.) and nutritionally adequate food (i.e., school-based meals under “free and reduced meal programs”).

The League of Women Voters believes that the first five years of a child’s life are crucial in building the foundation for educational attainment and greatly impact success or failure in later life. Additionally, the League believes quality, developmentally appropriate and voluntary early learning experiences should be available to all children, with federally funded opportunities going first to children of poverty and/or with special needs. The League believes that the federal government should support the following:

- Early childhood education programs that include funding for parent education and involve child development, health, nutrition and access to other supportive services such as mental health care for all children and their families;
- Research that documents quality early childhood education programs; and
- Research that demonstrates the importance of linking state and local community partnerships with effective early childhood education programs and services.

FISCAL POLICY (1984, 1985, 1986)

Federal fiscal policy should provide for: adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax; responsible deficit policies; and a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Tax Policy

The federal tax system should: be fair and equitable; provide adequate resources for government programs while allowing flexibility for financing future program changes; be understandable to the taxpayer and encourage compliance; accomplish its objectives without creating undue administrative problems.

The federal tax system, taken as a whole, should be progressive, not proportional.

The League: supports income as the major tax base for federal revenues; believes that the federal income tax should be broad-based with minimal tax preferences and a progressive rate structure; opposes a value-added tax or a national sales tax in the federal revenue system.

Further Guidelines

Under this position, the League of Women Voters would support tax measures that broaden the base and improve the equality of the income tax while working to incorporate progressivity into the tax system, taken as a whole. In evaluating specific tax preferences, the League will use the following criteria: whether the tax preference promotes equity and progressivity; whether the tax preference effectively furthers League of Women Voters program goals; whether the tax preference is the most efficient means of achieving its purpose; whether the revenue loss from the tax preference is justifiable.

Federal Deficit

The current federal deficit should be reduced. In order to reduce the deficit, the government should rely primarily on reductions in defense spending through selective cuts and on increased revenue through a tax system that is broad-based with progressive rates. The government also should achieve whatever savings possible through improved efficiency and management. The League opposes across-the-board federal spending cuts.

The League recognizes that deficit spending is sometimes appropriate and therefore opposes a constitutionally mandated balanced budget for the federal government. The League could support deficit spending, if necessary, for stimulating the economy during recession and depression, meeting social needs in times of high unemployment and meeting defense needs in times of national security crises. The League opposes a federal budget line-item veto.

Funding of Entitlements

The federal government has a role in funding and providing for old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance. For such insurance programs, participation should be mandatory and coverage should be universal. Federal deficit reduction should not be achieved by reducing Social Security benefits.

HEALTH CARE (1993)

GOALS: A basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all U.S. residents. Other U.S. health care policy goals should include the equitable distribution of services, efficient and economical delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology, and a reasonable total national expenditure level for health care.

BASIC LEVEL OF QUALITY CARE: Every U.S. resident should have access to a basic level of care that includes the prevention of disease, health promotion and education, primary care (including prenatal and reproductive health), acute care, long-term care and mental health care. Every U.S. resident should have access to affordable, quality in- and out-patient behavioral health care, including needed medications



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and supportive services that is integrated with, and achieves parity with, physical health care. Dental, vision and hearing care also are important but lower in priority. The League believes that under any system of health care reform, consumers/patients should be permitted to purchase services or insurance coverage beyond the basic level.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Support for:

- Behavioral Health as the nationally accepted term that includes both mental illness and substance use disorder.
- Access for all people to affordable, quality in- and out-patient behavioral health care, included needed medications and supportive services.
- Behavioral Health care that is integrated with, and achieves parity with, physical health care.
- Early and affordable behavioral health diagnosis and treatment for children and youth from early childhood through adolescence.
- Early and appropriate diagnosis and treatment for children and adolescents that is family-focused and community-based.
- Access to safe and stable housing for people with behavioral health challenges, including those who are chronically homeless.
- Effective re-entry planning and follow-up for people released from both behavioral health hospitalization and the criminal justice system.
- Problem solving or specialty courts, including mental health and drug courts, in all judicial districts to provide needed treatment and avoid inappropriate entry into the criminal justice system.
- Health education – from early childhood throughout life – that integrates all aspects of social, emotional and physical health and wellness.
- Efforts to decrease the stigmatization of, and normalize, behavioral health problems and care.

FINANCING AND ADMINISTRATION: The League favors a national health insurance plan financed through general taxes in place of individual insurance premiums. As the United States moves toward a national health insurance plan, an employer- based system of health care reform that provides universal access is acceptable to the League. The League supports administration of the U.S. health care system either by a combination of the private and public sectors or by a combination of federal, state and/or regional government agencies.

The League is opposed to a strictly private market-based model of financing the health care system. The League also is opposed to the administration of the health care system solely by the private sector or the states.

TAXES: The League supports increased taxes to finance a basic level of health care for all U.S. residents, provided health care reforms contain effective cost control strategies.

COST CONTROL: The League believes that efficient and economical delivery of care can be enhanced by such cost control methods as:

- the reduction of administrative costs,
- regional planning for the allocation of personnel, facilities and equipment,
- the establishment of maximum levels of public reimbursement to providers,
- malpractice reform,
- the use of managed care,
- utilization review of treatment,
- mandatory second opinions before surgery or extensive treatment,
- consumer accountability through deductibles and copayments.

EQUITY ISSUES: The League believes that health care services could be more equitably distributed by:

- allocating medical resources to underserved areas,
- providing for training health care professionals in needed fields of care,
- standardizing basic levels of service for publicly funded health care programs,
- requiring insurance plans to use community rating instead of experience rating,
- establishing insurance pools for small businesses and organizations.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES TO INDIVIDUALS: The League believes that the ability of a patient to pay for services should not be a consideration in the allocation of health care resources. Limited resources should be allocated based on the following criteria considered together: the urgency of the medical condition, the life expectancy of the patient, the expected outcome of the treatment, the cost of the procedure, the duration of care, the quality of life of the patient after treatment, and the wishes of the patient and the family.

IMMIGRATION (2008)

The League of Women Voters believes that immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the U.S. on student visas. All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

The League supports federal immigration law that provides an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry of immigrants into the U.S.

To complement these goals the League supports federal policies to improve economies, education, job opportunities, and living conditions in nations with large emigrating populations.

In transition to a reformed system, the League supports provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.



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The League supports federal payments to impacted communities to address the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

Criteria for Legal Admission to the U.S.

The League supports the following criteria for legal admission of persons into the United States:

- Family reunification of spouses or minor children with authorized immigrants or citizens;
- Flight from persecution or response to humanitarian crises in home countries;
- Economic, business and employment needs in the U.S.;
- Education and training needs of the U.S.;
- Educational program opportunities; and
- Lack of a history of serious criminal activity.

Administration and Enforcement

The League supports due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and right to humane treatment.

The League supports:

- Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of employee status;
- Verification documents, such as status cards and work permits, with secure identifiers;
- Significant fines and penalties for employers who hire unauthorized workers;
- Improved technology for sharing information among federal agencies;
- More effective tracking of individuals who enter the United States; and
- Increased personnel at borders.

The League also supports programs allowing foreign workers to enter and leave the U.S. to meet seasonal or sporadic labor needs.

Unauthorized Immigrants Already in the U.S.

In achieving overall policy goals, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria. While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.

MEETING BASIC HUMAN NEEDS (1971-1988, 1989)

One of the goals of social policy in the United States should be to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families and that the most effective social programs are those designed to prevent or reduce poverty.

Persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate or for whom jobs are not available have the right to a income and/or services

sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter and access to health care.

The federal government should set minimum, uniform standards and guidelines for social welfare programs and should bear primary responsibility for financing programs designed to help meet the basic needs of individuals and families. State and local governments, as well as the private sector, should have a secondary role in financing food, housing and health care programs. Income assistance programs should be financed primarily by the federal government with state governments assuming secondary responsibility.

Preventing and Reducing Poverty

In order to prevent or reduce poverty, the LWVUS supports policies and programs designed to: increase job opportunities; increase access to health insurance; provide support services such as child care and transportation; provide opportunities and/or incentives for basic or remedial education and job training; decrease teen pregnancy; ensure that noncustodial parents contribute to the support of their children.

Access to Health Care

The LWVUS believes that access to health care includes the following: preventive care, primary care, maternal and child health care, emergency care, catastrophic care, nursing home care and mental health care as well as access to substance abuse programs, health and sex education programs, and nutrition programs.

Access to Transportation

The LWVUS believes that energy-efficient and environmentally sound transportation systems should afford better access to housing and jobs and will continue to examine transportation policies in light of these goals.

Further Guidelines and Criteria

Criteria for Income Assistance

- Eligibility of all low-income individuals for assistance should be based on need. Eligibility should be established through simplified procedures such as a declaration of need, spot-checked in a manner similar to that used in checking the validity of income tax returns.
- Benefit levels should be sufficient to provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter. Minimum income standards should be adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living and should be revised periodically to take into account changes in the purchasing value of the dollar. Until a federal welfare program achieves an adequate level of benefits, some states will need to supplement federal payments.
- There should be increasing emphasis on cash assistance, but in-kind assistance (e.g., food stamps, housing subsidies, medical aid) should be continued to help assure that these needs are met.
- Under a revised program participants should not have their benefits reduced.



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- Privacy of participants should be protected. All administrative procedures should be conducted with respect for the rights and dignity of the individuals.
- Work should be encouraged: participants' total income should increase as earnings increase. Counseling, realistic training for actual jobs and financial incentives should be the links between job programs and income assistance.
- Supportive services should be available—but not compulsory—for participants in income assistance programs. Most important among these are child care, counseling, transportation, and family planning, health care and legal services.
- Fees for supportive services should be based on ability to pay and be free where necessary.
- Facilities and services for participants should be the same as for the general public.
- The federal government should exert leadership in setting standards for eligibility, for the quality of services and for adequate funding.
- Participants in the programs should be included in program development and implementation, and the administration of social services programs should be responsive to the needs of the people being served.
- Wherever possible, these services should be conveniently located in the neighborhood.
- Transportation systems should afford better access to housing and jobs and should also provide energy- efficient and environmentally sound transportation.
- Government programs that require recipients of assistance to engage in work-related programs would be acceptable only if the following protections are guaranteed to the participants:
 2. compensate for any failure or inadequacy of the system by building, financing, renting and selling homes to those citizens whose housing needs are not being met;
 3. give a variety of incentives to local jurisdictions to encourage them to provide within their boundaries an adequate supply of decent housing for low- and moderate-income groups;
 4. withhold federal funds from communities that fail to encourage such housing.
- State and local governments should assist by establishing effective agencies to aid, promote, coordinate and supplement the housing programs of the federal government and private sector.
- Government at all levels must make available sufficient funds for housing-assistance programs.
- When families or individuals cannot afford decent housing, government should provide assistance in the form of income and/or subsidized housing.
- Government programs providing subsidies to the building, financing and insuring industries for housing for lower-income families should be evaluated in terms of units produced rather than in terms of benefits accruing to these industries.
- Government at all levels should develop policies that will assure sufficient land at reasonable cost on which to develop housing and that will assure fulfillment of other goals such as access to employment, preservation of open space, environmental cleanliness and beauty, and other aspects of a suitable living environment.
- Regional and metropolitan planning should be promoted to prevent haphazard urban growth, and housing for low-and moderate-income families should be provided as a part of all planned neighborhoods or communities.
- Lower-income families should not be segregated in large developments or neighborhoods. As their economic status improves, lower-income families should be enabled to continue to live in the same units as private tenants or as homeowners, if they are so inclined.
- Housing should be designed to meet human needs and should be built with amenities that will encourage economic integration within apartment buildings as well as within neighborhoods.
- Publicly assisted housing should be included in viable, balanced communities, with provision for quality public services and facilities, including schools, transportation, recreation, etc., that will encourage integration and stability.
- Zoning practices and procedures that will counteract racial and economic isolation should be promoted.
- State and local governments should adopt and enforce:
 1. uniform building codes with standards based on performance;
 2. housing codes to protect the health and safety of all citizens.
- State and local tax structures should be examined and revised to:
 1. benefit communities that build housing for lower-income families;

Criteria for Supportive Services

1. job training;
2. basic education;
3. exemptions for primary care givers
4. supplemental support services such as child care and transportation;
5. equitable compensation to ensure that program participants earn the same wages and benefits as other employees performing similar work;
6. a disregard of some earned income for purposes of calculating benefit levels.

Criteria for Housing Supply

The following considerations can be applied to programs and policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family:

- The responsibility for achieving national housing goals rests primarily with the federal government, which should:
 1. assure that our economic system is functioning to produce and maintain sufficient decent housing for citizens at all income levels;



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2. encourage private owners to improve their homes;
 3. reduce speculative land costs.
- Government, industry and labor should encourage innovative building techniques to reduce the cost of housing production. Rights of tenants to negotiate for proper maintenance, management of facilities and services should be protected.
 - Housing programs should be administered by individuals trained for the jobs and sympathetic with the needs of their clientele.
 - Citizen groups should participate in the development of publicly assisted housing programs by:
 1. evaluating performance;
 2. activating nonprofit sponsorships;
 3. supporting legislation;
 4. developing public awareness of housing discrimination and need.

CHILD CARE (1969-1988)

Support programs, services and policies at all levels of government to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it, in order to increase access to employment and to prevent and reduce poverty.

EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN AT RISK (1994)

Early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. The League supports policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development and ensure the safety of all children. These include:

- child abuse/neglect prevention;
- teen pregnancy prevention;
- quality health care, including nutrition and prenatal care;
- early childhood education;
- developmental services, emphasizing children ages 0-3;
- family support services;
- violence prevention.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION (1994)

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports violence prevention programs in all communities and action to support:

- public and private development and coordination of programs that emphasize the primary prevention of violence.
- the active role of government and social institutions in prevention violent behavior.
- the allocation of public monies in government program to prevent violence.

GUN CONTROL (1990, 1994, 1998)

The proliferation of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. The League supports strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens. The League supports regulating firearms for consumer safety.

The League supports licensing procedures for gun ownership by private citizens to include a waiting period for background check, personal identity verification, gun safety education and annual license renewal. The license fee should be adequate to bear the cost of education and verification.

The League supports a ban on "Saturday night specials," enforcement of strict penalties for the improper possession of and crimes committed with handguns and assault weapons, and allocation of resources to better regulate and monitor gun dealers.

URBAN POLICY (1979, 1989)

It is in the national interest to promote the well being of America's cities.

Sharply targeted federal assistance to distressed cities should be central to this policy. The federal government should give highest priority in urban policy to measures that enhance the economic base of cities. The League also favors supplementary federal aid for cities in distressed fiscal condition and grants for particular program areas as strategies to counter the problems of hardship cities.

The fiscal health of cities depends on the active cooperation of all levels of government. The federal government should provide incentives to encourage states to take an active role in promoting the fiscal viability of their cities.

The League is committed to an urban environment beneficial to life and to resource management in the public interest.

Further Guidelines

Economic Development Assistance

The cornerstone of a national urban policy is a commitment to helping cities achieve economic strength. Federal programs to encourage private reinvestment in central cities should counter an eroding tax base and provide jobs for the inner-city unemployed. Therefore, the League supports the following federal strategies:

- Target community development programs to cities most in need.
- Encourage businesses to locate or expand in distressed cities through such financial incentives as investment tax credits, loan guarantees, subsidies for hiring the long-term unemployed and interest subsidies.
- Expand middle-income housing while not diminishing attention to low-income housing needs.
- Target federal purchasing and location of federal facilities in distressed cities.

General Financial Assistance

The League supports a variety of federal strategies, including direct general assistance, targeted to distressed cities. Such a program should include aid to counter recession. In providing federal aid for particular program areas, grants offer city governments the best opportunities to meet local needs.



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- In order to increase the availability of funds to city governments for capital expenditures, the federal government should use mechanisms to lower the cost of borrowing.
- Aid to cities should include technical assistance to improve management capacity.

DEATH PENALTY (2012)

The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty.

SENTENCING POLICY (2012)

The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING (2014)

The League of Women Voters opposes all forms of domestic and international human trafficking of adults and children, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking. We consider human trafficking to be a form of modern day slavery and believe that every measure should be taken and every effort should be made through legislation and changes in public policy to prevent human trafficking. Prosecution and penalization of traffickers and abusers should be established, and existing laws should be strictly enforced. Extensive essential services for victims should be applied where needed. Education and awareness programs on human trafficking should be established in our communities and in our schools.

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LWVUS Publications and Advocacy

Impact on Issues

Impact on Issues is the publication which holds all of the LWVUS nationwide members' studied, discussed and adopted positions on the international and national levels. State and local Leagues may use them for their state and local advocacy if they are appropriate and translatable to those levels; positions adopted at the state and local levels cannot be contradictory to them. The full publication can be found at www.lwv.org/content/impact-issues.

LWVUS Lobby Corps

The LWVUS Lobby Corps is a group of approximately 20 trained volunteer Leaguers from the District of Columbia, northern Virginia and Maryland who lobby the entire US Congress by appointment with regard to Congressional legislation that arises in line with member-recommended priorities for action at the national level. Several LWVHC members have served in this capacity, among them Suzanne Fox, Joanne Smikle, Maryann Maher, Carole Conors and Carol O'Keeffe. Carole Conors served as chair for over 10 years (2006-2017), and members are encouraged to inquire of Carole about possible Lobby Corps service and to submit applications.

League Action: Working Together to Influence Public Policy Tools and procedures for an effective action partnership among the national, state and local levels of the League.

Activities within the League at the National level in which local members are encouraged to engage:

LWVUS Grassroots Lobby Corps

Online network of members who receive email action alerts and are asked to respond by sending quick, targeted messages to Members of Congress. Howard County League members interested in joining can visit www.lwv.org.

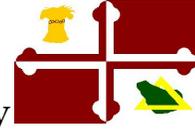
Action Alerts

Members of the Lobby Corps as well as local and state League representatives receive alerts by email. An alert asks Leagues and League Members to take action while it also provides substantive and political background action. The Action Committee of the Howard County League responds officially to these Alerts and will encourage members to do the same.

Legislative Action Center on the web at: www.lwv.org



League of Women Voters of Howard County



League of Women Voters
of Howard County, Inc
5430 Vantage Point Road, Suite C
Columbia, MD 21044

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, has fought since 1920 to improve our systems of government and impact public policies through citizen education and advocacy. The League's enduring vitality and resonance comes from its unique decentralized structure. The League is a grassroots organization, working at the national, regional, state, and local levels.

Since 1946, the Howard County League has welcomed women of voting age to participate in increasing the understanding of local issues through education and advocacy. In 1973, the League's National Charter was amended to allow men to join. For more information on positions, programs, and membership, visit www.lwvhowardmd.org or contact the Leagues' office at 410-730-0142 or info@howard.lwvmd.org.

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK