

Energy Report Consensus

BACKGROUND: Prior to 1975, when a study of “Energy” was adopted, action was based on the LWVUS position. In 1977 a state position on energy conservation was reached. This included conservation education, incentives for efficient uses of current energy sources and greater use of alternative sources.

EN-5: When an energy source is chosen, the efficiency of the source selected should be an important consideration. The League favors research and development of such alternate power sources as solar, wind and tidal. Reliance on additional nuclear thermal plants as a major source must answer the public's concern about adequate and safe nuclear waste disposal.

EN-6: The state's short-term (to 1990) power needs should be met through implementation of a vigorous conservation program in which all energy users participate. If necessary to meet stated energy saving goals, elements of the program should be mandatory. The major emphasis of the program should be on positive conservation strategies such as tax incentives and assistance for other energy-saving improvements. The use of alternate energy systems such as on-site solar heating and recovery of energy from wastes should be actively encouraged. (Energy Sources - 1977)

Discussion Question:

What should the roles of the three levels of government (federal, state and local) be in developing and regulating use of energy sources?

Note for facilitators:

This question is intended to generate discussion of the range of energy sources, including fossil fuels, and the extent to which government should develop and regulate each. It is intended to “warm up” the group and get a sense of how the group thinks about these issues in advance of specific consensus questions. Discussion should take approximately 15-20 minutes.

Consensus Questions:

The LWVWA report in 1977 created a three-pronged approach:

- Conservation education
- Incentives for efficient uses of current energy sources
- Greater use of alternative sources

Since our 1977 study, technologies have changed because of research & development,

and government policies, etc. Therefore this report focuses on the third of the three-pronged approaches, alternative sources. And because many of these sources currently produce energy at a commercial level, now the appropriate term is renewable, not alternative, sources of energy.

1. Of the following list of characteristics of energy usage and production, which 2 - 4 do you consider the most important?

- a. Locally generated power
- b. Energy efficiency
- c. Level and results of current research
- d. Requirements for use of the renewable
- e. Level of resulting greenhouse gas emissions
- f. Level of dependency on few sources
- g. Reliability
- h. Cost
- i. Capacity (availability) of resources
- j. Competition for resource usage, e.g. water, land, navigation, rare minerals
- k. Environmental effects, e.g. wildlife, plant life, land, water, air
- l. Noise

2. Which of the above 1 - 2 do you consider to be the least important?

3. Based on your list of most and least important characteristics above and the choices below where should League put its support when it comes to renewable energy use and production? Please rank.

- a. Wind
- b. Solar
- c. Biomass/Bioenergy (wood)
- d. Wave
- e. Tidal
- f. Geothermal
- g. Hydropower

4. The Smart Grid will be expensive, and may possibly raise privacy concerns. Do you consider those to be problems?

5. Are there trade-offs you personally would be willing to make in your daily use of energy? If so, please list up to 3 or 4 your group would be willing to consider.