

# Introduction

**PROGRAM IN ACTION** is designed to help League Leaders make effective use of state program. It is a brief summary of studies, consensus and action taken by the League of Women Voters of Washington since the 1920s. League positions are included in their entirety.

One of the purposes of the League of Women Voters is to act on selected governmental issues. At its biennial convention, the LWV/WA determines areas of study for the next two years. This process begins with member input. The state board compiles program suggestions and then recommends studies to the membership for approval at convention. After study and discussion, consensus may be reached. This consensus becomes the basis for future action.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that government policy, programs and performance must meet these criteria:

- + competent personnel with clear responsibilities,
- + agency and inter-governmental coordination,
- + adequate financing,
- + effective enforcement, and
- + well-defined channels for citizen input and review.

**Local Leagues can act** on state positions if a state position applies to the local governmental jurisdiction. Leagues should be cautioned, however, that if there is any question as to whether the contemplated action is authorized under a state program position, clearance and clarification should be sought from the state League.

What it amounts to, really, is a question of courtesy and communication. As issues become more complex, one League's interpretation of an issue can be different from that of the state board or of another nearby League. Seeking a cooperative solution to the problem will benefit everyone. If the action involved affects governmental jurisdictions beyond the local League(s) desiring to take an action, clearance and concurrence must, of course, be obtained from the affected boards as well as the state board.

## Principles of the League of Women Voters

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 in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.

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 which 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 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 which affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy and adopt domestic policies which 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 the development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

These principles are concepts of government  
adopted by the national convention of the League of Women Voters.

# Legislative Action: Working Together to Influence Public Policy

From LWVUS *Impact on Issues 2006-08*

Effective congressional lobbying on national legislative issues depends on a partnership at all League levels—lobbying in Washington and constituent lobbying at home. The Advocacy Department leads the organization's federal lobbying work and provides information to state and local Leagues about advocacy priorities.

This department, working at the direction of the LWVUS Board, is responsible for developing and implementing strategies for lobbying on national issues and advancing LWVUS program priorities. In Washington, the LWVUS president testifies on Capitol Hill and, with members of the Board, lobbies members of Congress (MCs) through phone calls and office visits. Day-to-day lobbying of MCs, staff members and committees is carried out by the LWV's professional staff lobbyists.

The LWVUS volunteer Lobby Corps (LC) of some 20 Washington-area League members lobbies each month when Congress is in session. Each Lobby Corps member is assigned specific state congressional delegations. Contact the LC chair through the national office for the name of the LC member assigned to your delegation.

While it is the job of the LWVUS Board to take the lead in national action and to keep League action synchronized with the U.S. Congress, national legislation is every League's and every member's business. Each state and local League president is expected to take whatever official action is requested in response to a national Action Alert.

Encourage your members and Board members to contact their legislators on key League national issues because their action greatly enhances the League's clout. It is important to remember, though, that **only a League spokesperson, usually the president, speaks in the name of the League.** Leagues and League members should only lobby their own legislators. Individual members can take action on their own behalf.

Lobbying in Washington is vitally important, but direct lobbying of MCs by constituents often is the key to persuading them to vote for the League position. The arguments that League leaders and members make to your representative or senators can make the difference in how they vote. MCs return to their states or districts regularly during congressional recesses. This is a good time to schedule meetings with them or to talk with them at public events. Please inform your state League and the LWVUS Advocacy Department of your lobbying efforts, along with any important information uncovered during your lobby visit or call (reports may be sent to [lobbying@lww.org](mailto:lobbying@lww.org).)

The LWVUS Grassroots Lobby Corps provides another good way for Leagues to keep in contact with your members of Congress. This online network of activists gets the League message to Congress in a highly effective way. Members of the network receive e-mail action alerts from the LWVUS and then respond by sending quick, targeted, and sometimes last-minute, messages to members of Congress on priority issues before key votes. Any League or individual League member interested in lobbying Congress on LWVUS positions is encouraged to join

the Grassroots Lobby Corps by going to the League's Web site at [www.lww.org](http://www.lww.org).

The LWVUS grassroots lobbyist acts as a liaison between LWV lobbyists on Capitol Hill and local and state Leagues. The grassroots lobbyist works with LWV leaders and activists in targeted states and congressional districts to help develop and implement grassroots lobbying strategies. Call the LWVUS if you want to talk about lobbying strategies or have questions about LWVUS issues. Also call if you would like written materials or want to schedule training on grassroots strategies or on getting press coverage.

The LWVUS may call League presidents before critical votes in Congress or when in-depth and ongoing grassroots lobbying is needed from your area. LWV presidents also will receive sample op-ed pieces on issues on which we are actively lobbying.

League communications on priority legislative issues include:

**Action Alerts.** Members of the Grassroots Lobby Corps and local and state League presidents receive alerts by e-mail at critical times in the legislative process. An alert not only asks Leagues and League members to take action on a key issue, but also provides substantive and political background information. A quick and easy system for sending an e-mail directly to MCs, or writing a letter to the editor also is provided.

**Legislative Action Center on the Web.** Current Action Alerts, Legislative Updates and other advocacy tools are posted on the LWVUS Web site at [www.lww.org](http://www.lww.org).

**e-Voice.** Legislative updates and advocacy information also are sent to subscribers of the LWVUS monthly e-newsletter.

**The National Voter.** Each issue's "Hill Bulletin" provides legislative information and lobbying opportunities.

The LWVUS Board annually adopts a set of advocacy priorities to guide its advocacy work in Congress. The goals are to:

- Enhance the League's effectiveness by concentrating resources on priority issues;
- Build the League's credibility and visibility by projecting a focused and consistent image;
- Ensure that the League has sufficient issue and political expertise to act knowledgeably; and
- Enable the League to manage resources effectively. In setting legislative priorities, the Board considers the following:
  - Opportunities for the League to make an impact;
  - Program decisions made at Convention and/or Council;
  - Member interest; and
  - Resources available to manage effectively.

The LWVUS Board regularly reviews the legislative priorities and is prepared to make adjustments should new opportunities for effective action emerge. In even numbered years, the LWVUS reviews its current program and positions through the program planning process. Convention delegates then vote on program content for the next biennium.

The LWVUS Bylaws provide that Leagues may act on national program only in conformity with positions taken by the LWVUS. State Leagues are responsible for determining action policies and strategies on state issues and ensuring that the League's message is consistent throughout the state. The LWVUS is responsible for a consistent national message. This helps ensure that the League speaks with one voice and is essential for our effectiveness as an advocacy organization.

Each state and local League is expected to take whatever official action is requested in response to a national Action Alert. A League board may choose not to respond to a particular call to action, but may not take action in opposition to a position articulated by the LWVUS on federal or national issues, or the state League on state issues. Individual League members of course are always free to take action on whatever they choose; as long as they do so in their own name, and **leave no impression that they speak for the League.**

**Requests from State/Local Leagues for Permission to Act at the Federal Level**

All action at the federal level must be authorized by the LWVUS board. This includes any effort aimed at influencing a decision

on a federal issue, such as communicating with an elected or appointed official, joining a coalition, taking part in a press conference or rally, or writing a letter-to-the-editor. A state or local League wishing to work in this way on a federal issue or at the national level must consult with the LWVUS about the intended action.

As part of this consultation process, the state/local League is asked to provide the following information in writing:

1. The proposed action and the message to be conveyed;
2. The LWVUS position on which the action is based; and
3. Evidence that the issue is a priority for that state or local League.

If a local League is requesting permission to contact its U.S. Senator(s) on an issue that has not been the subject of an LWVUS Action Alert, it should also provide evidence that the action has been authorized by its state League. Appropriate LWVUS Board and staff will review the action request to determine that it is consistent with League positions and that it will not interfere with LWVUS action on a priority issue. Requests should be sent to [lobbying@lww.org](mailto:lobbying@lww.org).

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# 2013 – 2015 State Program: Positions in Brief

## – Government –

**Education** Action to support in principle the Basic Education Act (1977) and the Levy Lid Act. Action to obtain a balanced tax structure and to maintain uniform assessment practices to ensure equitable and sufficient financing. Action to support adequate and stable state funding of common schools in Washington including the costs of in-service training. Action to increase visibility, accessibility and accountability of the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education. Action to support closer links between schools and social services, so that every child is ready to learn. Action to support greater involvement of parents, an increased role in decision making for teachers, and more flexible state education requirements. Action to provide greater access to public higher education to all, at whatever point in life it can be beneficial. Action to expand the definition of Basic Education to include the birth to five years.

**Port Districts** Action to encourage cooperation among port districts, but with local options for voter control over major policy and expenditure decisions.

**Privatization** Core services, functions and assets critical to the well-being of the people, should remain with government and not be transferred to the private sector. Public agencies are required to make a documented finding of adequate return on investment for the public for any government contribution of funds or assets to the private sector. Government employees and elected officials after leaving government service should be prohibited for two years from working for any private company for which they had oversight responsibilities or authority over awarding contracts.

**Representative Government** Action to facilitate changes in the state constitution to achieve a representative and effective state legislature. Action to promote an informed electorate. Action to limit methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the election process. Action to support the initiative and referendum process, adopt improvements to the process and require additional information for voters. Action to protect the interests of all affected parties in considering the formation of new counties. Action to clarify in legislation the processes in county formation and to require that the entire county have the ability to vote on separation. Action to support election methods that promote "representative-ness," citizen participation and accountability and that produce proportional representation. Action to support a majority vote requirement if achieved through a mechanism such as Instant Runoff Voting (IRV). Action to support a primary that is "open" and encourages minor party participation if a primary continues to be used.

**State Tax Policy** Action to obtain a balanced tax structure that is fair, adequate, flexible and has a sound economic effect.

**Washington State and Indian Treaty Rights** Action to enhance salmon resources, establish a procedure for retrocession of jurisdiction to the tribes and support tribal land use planning of trust lands.

## – Transportation –

**Transportation** The League supports a balanced state transportation policy that defines the role of the state and supports increases in funding to provide adequate revenue, flexibility, energy efficiency and safety in a multi-modal system of transportation.

## – Natural Resources –

**Energy** Action to support an energy policy within Washington State. Action to educate the public on energy conservation. Action to establish incentives for efficient use of current energy sources and the greater use of alternative energy sources.

**Global Climate Change** See LWVUS *Impact on Issues*.

**Resource Management** Action to obtain coordinated planning and ensure environmental quality in the use of water, air and land resources. Action to insure that forest management is carried out in a manner that will sustain healthy forests, streams and habitats.

**Waste Management** Action for coordinated control and reduction of solid waste. Action to reduce the amount of hazardous waste generated in Washington and action to promote safe management of that waste which is produced, including toxics in the home.

## – Social Policy –

**Administration of Justice** Action to ensure that our courts are fair, efficient, accessible and staffed with qualified personnel. Action to maintain a separate court system and facilities for youths that will balance the procedural rights of the adversary system with the protection of youth's basic rights. Action to realize equity in sentencing standards. Action to obtain alternatives to incarceration is of prime importance.

### **Children's Programs**

*Child Support and Custody:* The League of Women Voters supports vigorous, efficient and innovative child support enforcement methods and broad education regarding the responsibilities and consequences of parenthood. The best interest of the child should be the overriding consideration in determining custody, visitation and an appropriate level of child support. The physical and emotional security of the child should be paramount. Children are entitled to support adequate to meet basic needs commensurate with the parents' income, resources, and standard of living. Courts should have the discretion to order post secondary educational support in appropriate circumstances.

*Children's Services:* Action to support stable and adequate funding for children at risk, with priority given to prevention, early identification and intervention services, community based treatment programs, day treatment programs and residential care.

*Day Care for Children:* Action to provide for the general welfare of children in day care centers. Action to ensure that the state enforce minimum standards that include provision for a safe, healthy, clean environment. Action to support sufficient staff with emphasis on competence and ability to provide a creative, challenging and caring environment.

*Early Care and Education of Children:* Action to support the quality of early care and education, birth – 5, to maximize the child's future development. Action to support parents so all children develop to their full potential. Action to support improvements to child care programs, quality child care programs for children birth to five, increased access to preschool programs, programs for special needs children, home visiting and encouraging public-private partnerships.

**Economic Diversification** Action to ensure a balanced state economy with a strong mixture of large and small businesses. Measures to contribute to long-range planning and cooperation between all levels of government with local initiatives wherever possible.

**Gun Control** Action to provide governmental regulation of ownership and possession of firearms, and measures to limit their accessibility.

**Health Care** Action to provide universal access to affordable health services for all residents of the state of Washington and to control total system expenditures with seamless coverage regardless of ones health status.

**Human Resources** Action to achieve equal rights for all. Action to achieve equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability. Action to obtain measures that provide basic human needs for those unable to provide for themselves. Action to ensure that there are emergency support services for those involved in physical and/or mental violence.

## Summary of Current LWV Program

Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical requires competent personnel, the clear responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among agencies and levels of government, effective enforcement and well-defined channels for citizen input and review.

<b>REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT</b>	
<b>LWVWA</b>	<b>LWVUS</b>
<p><b>EDUCATION</b> Action to support in principle Basic Education Act (1977) &amp; Levy Lid Act; to obtain a balanced tax structure &amp; to maintain uniform assessment practices to ensure equitable &amp; sufficient financing; to support adequate &amp; stable state funding of common schools including costs of in-service training; to increase visibility, accessibility &amp; accountability of office of SPI &amp; State Board of Education; to support closer links between schools &amp; social services, so every child is ready to learn; to support greater involvement of parents, an increased role in decision making for teachers, &amp; more flexible state education requirements. Action to provide greater access to public higher education to all, at whatever point in life it can be beneficial.</p> <p><b>Public Education</b> 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.</p> <p><b>PORT DISTRICTS</b> Action to encourage cooperation among port districts, but with local options for vote control over major policy and expenditure decisions.</p> <p><b>PRIVATIZATION</b> <i>Core services, functions and assets critical to the well-being of the people, should remain with government and not be transferred to the private sector. Public agencies are required to make a documented finding of adequate return on investment for the public for any government contribution of funds or assets to the private sector. Government employees and elected officials after leaving government service should be prohibited for two years from working for any private company for which they had oversight responsibilities or authority over awarding contracts.</i></p> <p><b>WASHINGTON STATE AND INDIAN TREATY RIGHTS</b> Action to enhance salmon resources, establish a procedure for retrocession of jurisdiction to the tribes and support tribal land use planning of trust lands.</p> <p><b>REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT</b> Action to facilitate changes in the state constitution to achieve a representative and effective state legislature. Action to promote an informed electorate. Action to limit methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure</p>	<p>Promote open governmental system that is representative, accountable &amp; responsive.</p> <p><b>EDUCATION</b> See SOCIAL POLICY</p> <p><b>VOTING RIGHTS</b> <i>Citizen's Right to Vote.</i> Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote. <i>DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation.</i> Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government &amp; full voting representation in both houses of Congress.</p> <p><b>ELECTION PROCESS</b> <i>Apportionment.</i> Support apportionment of congressional districts &amp; elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population. <i>Campaign Finance.</i> Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure public's right to know, combat corruption &amp; undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office &amp; promote citizen participation in political process. <i>Election of President.</i> Promote election of President &amp; Vice-President by direct popular. Support uniform national voting qualifications &amp; procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.</p> <p><b>CITIZEN RIGHTS</b> <i>Citizen Right to Know/Citizen Participation.</i> Protect the citizen's right to know &amp; facilitate citizen participation in government decision making. <i>Individual Liberties.</i> Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights. <i>Public Policy on Reproductive Choices.</i> Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.</p> <p><b>CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENCY</b> <i>Congress.</i> Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision-making capability &amp; effective performance. <i>Presidency.</i> Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive &amp; legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.</p> <p><b>PRIVATIZATION</b> Ensure Transparency, accountability, positive community impact and preservation of the common good when considering the transfer of governmental services, assets</p>

<p>the public's right to know, combat undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the election process. Action to support the initiative and referendum process, adopt improvements to the process and require additional information for voters. Action to protect the interests of all affected parties in considering the formation of new counties. Action to clarify in legislation the processes in county formation and to require that the entire county have the ability to vote on separation. Action to support election methods that promote "representative-ness," citizen participation and accountability and that produce proportional representation. Action to support a majority vote requirement if achieved through a mechanism such as Instant Runoff Voting (IRV). Action to support a primary that is "open" and encourages minor party participation if a primary continues to be used. Amended position resulting from 2012 Conservation District study.</p> <p><b>STATE TAX POLICY</b> Action to obtain a balanced tax structure that is fair, adequate, flexible &amp; has sound economic effect.</p> <p><b>GUN CONTROL</b> Action to provide governmental regulation of ownership and possession of firearms, and measures to limit their accessibility.</p>	<p>and/or functions to the private sector.</p> <p><b>GUN CONTROL</b> See SOCIAL POLICY</p>
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<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	
<b>LWVWA</b>	<b>LWVUS</b>
<p><b>TRANSPORTATION</b> The League supports a balanced state transportation policy that defines the role of the state and supports increases in funding to provide adequate revenue, flexibility, energy efficiency and safety in a multi-modal system of transportation.</p>	

<b>NATURAL RESOURCES</b>	
<b>LWVWA</b>	<b>LWVUS</b>
<p><b>ENERGY</b> Action to support an energy policy within Washington; to educate public on energy conservation; to establish incentives for efficient use of current energy sources &amp; greater use of alternative energy sources. Updated in 2013.</p> <p><b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b> Action to obtain coordinated planning and ensure environmental quality in the use of water, air and land resources. Action to insure that forest management is carried out in a manner that will sustain healthy forests, streams and habitats. Additional positions resulting from 2012 Conservation District study.</p> <p><b>WASTE MANAGEMENT</b> Action for coordinated control &amp; reduction of solid waste; to reduce amount of hazardous waste generated in Washington &amp; to promote safe management of that waste which is produced, including toxics in home.</p>	<p>Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection &amp; wise management of natural resources in public interest.</p> <p><b>NATURAL RESOURCES</b> Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.</p> <p><b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b> Promote resource conservation, stewardship &amp; long-range planning with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.</p> <p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND POLLUTION CONTROL</b> Preserve the physical, chemical &amp; biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health &amp; the environment. <i>Air Quality.</i> Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.</p>



	<p><i>Energy.</i> Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.</p> <p><i>Land Use.</i> Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.</p> <p><i>Water Resources.</i> Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.</p> <p><i>Waste Management.</i> Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.</p> <p><i>Nuclear Issues.</i> Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.</p> <p><b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b> Promote public understanding &amp; participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible &amp; responsive management of natural resources.</p> <p><b>AGRICULTURAL POLICY</b> Promote adequate supplies of food &amp; fiber at reasonable prices to consumers &amp; support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices &amp; increased reliance on the free market.</p>
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<b>SOCIAL POLICY</b>	
<b>LWVWA</b>	<b>LWVUS</b>
<p><b>ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION</b> Action to ensure balanced state economy with strong mixture of large &amp; small business. Measures to contribute to long-range planning &amp; cooperation between all levels of government with local initiatives wherever possible.</p> <p><b>CHILDREN’S PROGRAMS</b> <b>Child Support &amp; Custody.</b> Support vigorous, efficient and innovative child support enforcement methods &amp; broad education regarding responsibilities &amp; consequences of parenthood. Best interest of child, including physical &amp; emotional security, should be overriding consideration in determining custody, visitation and appropriate level of child support. Children are entitled to support adequate to meet basic needs commensurate with parents’ income, resources, &amp; standard of living. Courts should have discretion to order post secondary education support in appropriate circumstances.</p> <p><b>Early Care and Education of Children.</b> Action to support programs and policies to improve the quality of child care programs so children develop to their full potential, supporting parents as a child’s first teacher, increasing access to programs for children birth to five, preschool, special needs children, encouraging public-private partnerships and expanding the definition of Basic Education to include the birth to five years.</p> <p><b>Children’s Services.</b> Action to support stable &amp; adequate funding for children at risk, with priority given to prevention, early identification &amp; intervention services, community based treatment programs, day treatment programs &amp;</p>	<p>Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.</p> <p><b>EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY</b> <i>Equal Rights.</i> Support ratification of Equal Rights Amendment &amp; efforts to bring laws into compliance with goals of ERA. <i>Education, Employment, Housing.</i> Support equal access to education, employment &amp; housing; <i>Federal Role in Public Education.</i> Support federal policies that provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12.</p> <p><b>FISCAL POLICY</b> <i>Tax Policy.</i> Support adequate &amp; flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall &amp; relies primarily on a broad-based income tax; <i>Federal Deficit.</i> Promote responsible deficit policies; <i>Funding of Entitlements.</i> Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability &amp; health insurance.</p> <p><b>HEALTH CARE</b> Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of care for all U.S. residents &amp; controls health care costs.</p> <p><b>IMMIGRATION</b></p>

<p>residential care.</p> <p><b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b> Action to achieve equal rights for all. Action to achieve equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability. Action to obtain measures that provide basic human needs for those unable to provide for themselves. Action to ensure that there are emergency support services for those involved in physical and/or mental violence.</p> <p><b>HEALTH CARE</b> Action to provide universal access to affordable health services for all residents of Washington &amp; to control total system expenditures with seamless coverage regardless of ones health status.</p> <p><b>ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE</b> Action to ensure that our courts are fair, efficient, accessible &amp; staffed with qualified personnel; to maintain a separate court system &amp; facilities for youths that will balance procedural rights of adversary system with protection of youth's basic rights; to realize equity in sentencing standards; to obtain alternatives to incarceration.</p> <p><b>Sentencing Policy:</b> 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.</p>	<p>Promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises; and provide for student visas. Ensure fair treatment under the law for all persons. In transition to a reformed system, support provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.</p> <p><b>MEETING BASIC HUMAN NEEDS</b> Support programs &amp; policies to prevent or reduce poverty &amp; to promote self-sufficiency for individuals &amp; families. <i>Income Assistance.</i> Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter. <i>Support Services.</i> Provide essential support services. <i>Housing Supply.</i> Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable environment for every American family.</p> <p><b>CHILD CARE</b> Support programs &amp; policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.</p> <p><b>EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN AT RISK</b> Support policies &amp; programs that promote the well being, development &amp; safety of all children.</p> <p><b>VIOLENCE PREVENTION</b> Support violence prevention programs in communities.</p> <p><b>GUN CONTROL</b> Protect the health &amp; safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility &amp; regulating the ownership of handguns &amp; semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.</p> <p><b>URBAN POLICY</b> Promote the economic health of cities &amp; improve the quality of urban life.</p> <p><b>DEATH PENALTY</b> The LWVUS supports abolition of the death penalty.</p> <p><b>SENTENCING POLICY</b> 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.</p>
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<b>INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</b>	
<b>LWVWA</b>	<b>LWVUS</b>
	Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.
	<b>UNITED NATIONS</b>

Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

**TRADE**

Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

**U.S. RELATIONS WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

**ARMS CONTROL**

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

**MILITARY POLICY AND DEFENSE SPENDING**

Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

# Government

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## – EDUCATION –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to support in principle the Basic Education Act (1977) and the Levy Lid Act. Action to obtain a balanced tax structure and to maintain uniform assessment practices to ensure equitable and sufficient financing. Action to support adequate and stable state funding of common schools in Washington including the costs of in-service training. Action to increase visibility, accessibility and accountability of the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education. Action to support closer links between schools and social services, so that every child is ready to learn. Action to support greater involvement of parents, an increased role in decision making for teachers, and more flexible state education requirements. Action to provide access to public higher education to all, at whatever point in life it can be beneficial.*

**BACKGROUND:** The League's long-standing interest in education began in the 1930s when League worked for a non-partisan Superintendent of Public Instruction.

In the 1940s League worked for adequate funds for schools. School funding was a part of the "Fiscal Issues" study (1968) and the resulting position has been the basis for action. Delegates to the 1974 State Council adopted an emergency study of schools. On the basis of materials prepared by the Spokane Area League, LWVWA published *The Common Schools of Washington*. Consensus following the resulting study further expanded our position. The 1975 Convention adopted a two-year study, "Financing the Common Schools: Where Does the Money Come From and Where Does the Money Go?" In addition to our studies, League joined a statewide coalition to enhance our school funding lobbying efforts. Member education continued with the study: "Schools: Impact of Full State Funding" (1982).

The end of 1983 saw new alliances for the League. League worked with the Washington Roundtable Education Task Force and joined a statewide coalition on educational reform. As a member of the Citizens Education Center Northwest, the League co-sponsored "The Education Campaign."

In 1989 League voted to update the educational position through an analysis of "Programs that Work." This study resulted in additional positions in 1991, improving the

League's ability to take effective action in the state legislature.

At the 1995 state LWV convention, delegates adopted a study of "Public Higher Education in Washington State." League members reached consensus and adopted a new position titled "Higher Education." Delegates at the 1997 state convention decided to continue the study and adopted "Public Higher Education in Washington State: Part II." When an important new source of information became available to League members and the public, the co-chairs of the LWVWA Public Education Study, Part II, recommended no study report be published. Governor Locke had appointed a special commission on post-secondary education, the charge of which closely resembled the scope of the League's adopted study. Rather than publish a separate report, the LWVWA chose to monitor and report to its members on the work of the Governor's Commission.

This 2020 Commission began meeting in March 1998 and League attendance at the Commission meetings began in May.

The Commission reached consensus on a package of recommendations in four topical categories:

- Expand Opportunity
- Enhance Quality
- Increase Innovation and Productivity
- Funding and Governance

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## THE LEAGUE'S POSITIONS ON EDUCATION:

### K-12 Public Education

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*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**K-12 – 1:** The state has the responsibility to determine uniform education standards, and the means to evaluate performance, and to provide ample and equal opportunity for education in the common schools. (1968, 1977, 1991)

**K-12 – 2:** The state has the responsibility for amply funding both education, through the BEA, and those social services needed to ensure that every child regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability is ready to learn and safe in his or her educational environment. Closer

links between schools and social services should be forged. (1991, 1997)

**K-12 – 3:** All programs mandated by the legislature should be fully funded by the state. (1975)

**K-12 – 4:** Maintenance and operation costs of local school districts should be fully funded by the state. The state should also contribute to the costs of in-service training. (1977, 1991)

**K-12 – 5:** A simple majority is sufficient for passage of a special levy. Voter approval should be required

only in the case of special levies required to support special programs. (1977)

**K-12 – 6:** The position of Superintendent of Public Instruction should be an administrative position and the State Board of Education should be a policy-making body. (1975)

**K-12 – 7:** School facilities should be used to the fullest extent, including such activities as day-care programs. (1975, 1991)

**K-12 – 8:** Citizen participation should be encouraged at all levels. (1975)

**K-12 – 9:** The state should work toward facilitating more parent involvement in education. Teachers should have an increased role in decision making. (1991)

**K-12 – 10:** State education requirements need to be flexible. (1991)

The LWVWA believes the State of Washington should support:

**K-12 – 11:** Expanding the definition of Basic Education to include the birth to five years (2009)

### **Higher Education (1996)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**HE-1:** The purpose of higher education is to gain knowledge and skills that lead to enhancement of life, work and citizenship. Higher education should be available to all, at whatever point in life it can be beneficial.

**HE-2:** Public post-secondary education for qualified students must be a high state budget priority. Costs should be shared by several entities – state, federal, business, industry, and students and families – with the state bearing major responsibility.

**HE-3:** To provide greater access to higher education and absorb anticipated enrollment increases, we support:

- Modifying I-601 to raise spending limits to be more responsible to demographic needs
- Increasing student financial aid
- Enhancing distance learning opportunities through more and better utilization of technology and establishing more branch campuses and/or off-site classes.
- Improving coordination and cooperation among all institutions in the present higher education system
- Better utilization of existing facilities and equipment

**HE-4:** Higher education continues to play a necessary and important role in training and retraining the work force. While business and industry should participate in this effort, the higher education system must maintain control of curriculum development. Business and industry should work closely with the higher education system to communicate needs and to provide practicum, work study and apprenticeship opportunities.

## **– PORT DISTRICTS –**

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to encourage cooperation among port districts, but with local options for voter control over major policy and expenditure decisions.*

**BACKGROUND:** The Puget Sound LWV adopted a position statement on Puget Sound ports in 1973. The State LWV, however, did not have a unified state position until the adoption of the first part of our current position in 1989. The study was initiated because of the recent rapid expansion of shipping through Washington ports.

Traditionally ports have not received much public scrutiny. Though the responsibility for accountability lies

with the public as well as the ports, there has been a feeling that port districts could make more active efforts to involve the public and reach out with information aimed at the public.

The position adopted in 1989 was expanded in 1993 following the 1991 convention decision to further study Washington's ports, focusing on issues of governance.

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**THE LEAGUE'S POSITION ON PORT DISTRICTS:** *The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**PD-1:** The powers of and limitations on Washington's public port districts should be clearly defined and appropriate to their functions. Mechanisms for accountability must exist and responsibility for oversight must lie with the public. Local options should be made available to voters for greater control over major policy and expenditure decisions of local port districts. State enabling

legislation may be required to create these mechanisms, and they should be flexible in order to reflect the particular needs and characteristics of different ports and their communities.

**PD-2:** For purposes of marketing and advertising, we support a unified strategy. Local autonomy should be maintained in the areas of operations and

administration. In all areas cooperation should be encouraged. (1989, 1993)

## - PRIVATIZATION -

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** Core services, functions and assets critical to the well-being of the people, should remain with government and not be transferred to the private sector. Public agencies are required to make a documented finding of adequate return on investment for the public for any government contribution of funds or assets to the private sector. Government employees and elected officials after leaving government service should be prohibited for two years from working for any private company for which they had oversight responsibilities or authority over awarding contracts.

**BACKGROUND:** The Seattle-King County LWV completed a study on Privatization in 2010 and approved a position on Privatization. LWVWA concurred with the Seattle-King County position on Privatization (with minor revisions) at the 2011 Convention.

The Seattle-King County study indicates that in the United States privatization has focused on deregulation of and reduction of taxes on industry as well as a move toward privatizing government services such as education, prisons, Social Security, Medicare, and military services and parks.

The federal government's record neglect of basic infrastructure needs as well as continuing erosion of funds available for programs to support human services of the last 30 years have strained local governments to find

replacements. Loss of funds has put pressure on local governments to figure out how to make up the difference without politically unpopular increased in rates for services or increased taxation. The result has been a trend in our state, counties and cities to transfer services to the private sector.

With many examples of privatization in our region, it is time to assess. What are the basic services that must be performed by government? How do we pay for them? Which services, functions and assets could be effectively transferred to the private sector? Are there government programs that should never be transferred to the for-profit private sector – and if so, what are the criteria? These questions are critical to the creation of new League policy, positions and actions to fit the times.

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**THE LEAGUE'S POSITION ON PRIVATIZATION:** *The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**PR-1:** Core services, functions and assets critical to the well-being of the people, should remain with government and not be transferred to the private sector.

The following criteria should be the basis for decisions regarding whether government services, functions and assets should be transferred to the private for-profit sector:

Criteria: Does the proposed transfer

1. serve the public interest today as well as for future generations;
2. align with public health and safety concerns;
3. assure quality of life for residents in the region;
4. ensure adequate government control and oversight including performance audits;

5. include provisions for transparency, public involvement and competitive bidding; and
6. protect individuals from abuse.

**PR-2:** Public agencies are required to make a documented finding of adequate return on investment for the public for any government contribution of funds or assets to the private sector. Periodic performance audits should be required and made public regarding whether stated public benefits were met.

**PR-3:** Government employees and elected officials after leaving government service should be prohibited for two years from working for any private company for which they had oversight responsibilities or authority over awarding contracts.

## – REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** Action to facilitate changes in the state constitution to achieve a representative and effective state legislature. Action to promote an informed electorate. Action to limit methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the election process. Action to support access for citizens to initiate or modify legislation through the initiative and referendum process. Action to protect the interests of all affected parties in considering the formation of new counties. Action to clarify in legislation the processes in county formation and to require that the entire county have the ability to vote on separation. Action to allow more options for alternative election systems that promote "representative-ness" such as proportional representation, citizen participation and accountability and a primary that is "open" and encourages minor party participation.

**BACKGROUND:** In the early '50s, League began a study of election procedures. This study focused on districting and reapportionment. At the 1955 convention, delegates recommended that the League write and promote an

initiative to accomplish redistricting. After a difficult signature campaign, Initiative 199 was passed by the voters (1956). Though later amended by the state legislature,

League accomplished the first redistricting of the state in 27 years

The League's study of the role of the "State Constitution" began in 1955. A study and consensus relating to the legislative and executive articles followed this initial two year study. Our study/consensus of the judicial branch is now included in the Administration of Justice position. As part of the study, the "Effectiveness of the Legislative Branch of Washington State Government," the League published two "Facts and Issues" on structure, specific reforms and procedural changes (1971). A position was reached on criteria for an effective legislature.

In 1963 when national interest was focused on civil rights and non-registered voters, League responded by adopting a study of election laws and procedures. The resulting position enabled League to work for an improved voters' pamphlet, simplified procedures for registration and voting as well as shorter residency requirements. The League has long supported the "motor voter" concept, which makes it easy to register to vote at the time of car license renewal. This concept became Washington state law in 1990.

League has been actively involved in the establishment of the Public Disclosure Commission. League members have served on the Commission and League has joined the Coalition for Open Government to continue "watch-dogging" this legislation.

As a result of a study adopted at the 1983 convention, the League published the study material *Campaign Financing*. The League supported Initiative 88, a campaign finance reform measure, and participated in the signature campaign, which was unsuccessful.

The Regional Governmental Structures position is based on a Puget Sound League position, adopted by concurrence in 1981.

League was actively involved in the signature drive for Initiative 99, calling for a presidential primary, in 1988. After the required number of signatures was received, LWVWA worked for legislative approval during the 1989 session. After passage in March of 1989, the first presidential primary in Washington was held in 1992.

In 1991-92, the League led a coalition of good government groups and others in developing a campaign reform measure, Initiative 582. Unfortunately the signature campaign again fell short.

After several years of League lobbying, in 1993 the state legislature approved legislation to allow registration up to 15 days before an election instead of 30 days and to allow voter registration by mail.

In 1997 delegates to state convention concurred with the position adopted by the LWV of Snohomish County after consensus was reached on their 1996 study on the formation of new counties in Washington. This position will enable League to push for legislation to clarify the process for forming new counties and to ensure protecting the interests of all affected parties.

Senate Bill 5640 which passed the legislature in the 1999 regular session finds that:

- 1) The current statute relating to the timing of the primary election may not allow adequate time for absentee voters, especially military personnel living overseas, to review the candidates and issues appearing on the general election ballot before casting their votes.
- 2) The proliferation of permanent absentee voters presents increasing difficulties for county auditors to canvass ballots in a timely way, which in turn

may adversely affect the general election campaign of a candidate involved in a close primary race.

- 3) A delay in counting votes and processing ballots negatively impacts the public's right to timely election results and thus harms our electoral process.

A Secretary of State task force to study and make recommendations regarding the date for primary elections was established by SB5640. League was represented on the task force. The mission of the task force included, but was not limited to, a review of the issues relating to the timing of the primary elections, the canvassing of ballots, and the certification of election results. The resultant proposal made to the Legislature included several recommendations such as setting the primary date on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of June and eliminating the 30-day post session freeze on contributions to elected officials. The Legislature did not pass the proposal.

The LWVWA adopted a two-year study, "An Evaluation of Major Election Methods and Selected State Election Laws," at the 1999 state convention in Spokane, WA.

This study, completed in 2000, described a number of election systems in use throughout the world which could serve as alternatives to the system commonly used in the United States. Election methods dealing with both multi-member and single-member races were described. The study provided a list of criteria by which election methods could be evaluated, and these criteria were ranked by League members, with representative-ness, citizen participation and accountability receiving top ranking. The term "representative-ness" was coined to signify the degree to which a legislative body reflects the demographic make-up of the state (mirrors the political preferences of the voters, including ethnic, racial, philosophic, or minorities) and also to signify protection of the right to representation for ethnic, racial, philosophic and other minorities.

After reading and discussing the study, League members concluded that the State should enable jurisdictions in Washington to experiment with a variety of election methods.

In 2000, the United States Supreme Court ruled that California's blanket primary denied political parties' right to freedom of association. League members recognized that Washington's blanket primary would be affected by that ruling. They discussed whether changes to Washington's blanket primary should take the form of modifying it or eliminating it. Member preferences were evenly split between the two approaches. However, there was agreement on selected elements of a primary in the event that a primary is retained.

Recognizing the complexities of the topic of election methods, delegates at the 2001 LWVWA convention adopted a one-year continuation of the Election Methods study focusing on the three alternative election methods currently receiving considerable public attention:

- Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) for single winner offices (produces a majority vote winner.)
- Choice Voting (Single Transferable Voting) for representative bodies used to achieve proportional representation.
- Cumulative Voting (achieve semi-proportional representation)

An explanatory program was developed which utilized visual aids and mock voting using current voting methods as well as the three major alternative systems. This program



was a great help in better understanding the relationship between the election method used and election results. Members are enthusiastic about sharing this program with the public and in seeing alternative election methods adopted at the state and local level.

Delegates to the 2001 Convention also voted to adopt a one year update of the League Representative Government positions on the Initiative and Referendum Process.

The update is presented in the publication, "Direct Democracy" produced in the fall of 2002. It includes a review of recent initiative/referendum history and a study of requirements and regulations adopted by other states and of proposals that might work to improve the process in Washington. As a result of League discussions based on this publication, additions were made to League positions on initiative and referendum procedures.

Concerns about the accuracy of election results, the security of new electronic voting machines and the requirements established in the national Help America Vote Act (HAVA) led the delegates to the 2003 convention to adopt a two year study called "Voting Inside & Outside the Box." In the winter of 2003 "Voting Equipment and Procedures on Trial" was published. It includes an analysis of HAVA, a definition of terms, a summary of new technology for casting and tallying votes and arising security issues, as well as absentee/vote by mail. "Voting Inside and Outside the Box" followed in the fall of 2004. It updated implementation of HAVA in Washington State, and looked into the certification of voting equipment, the statutory timelines for elections and continued presenting issues involved when conducting a vote by mail. New positions

resulting from these studies were adopted by the 2005 League Convention.

Delegates to the 2005 Convention voted to continue for two years the examination of our election system and of ways to improve it when they adopted "Election Reform". The scope includes all issues involved in improving elections in Washington State, Status of the state's implementation of HAVA and changes made by the 2005 legislature. A new position resulted from the study.

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## THE LEAGUE'S POSITIONS ON REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT:

### **Campaign Financing (1985)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**CF-1:** The enforcement powers of the Public Disclosure Commission should be strengthened. This includes the ability to assess higher fines. The funding level of the PDC should provide for sufficient staff to audit all appropriate reports including those of lobbyists. Public education should be a funded function of the PDC.

**CF-2:** Campaign contributions should be limited. These limits should apply to both instate and out-of-state contributions. The PDC should implement laws pertaining to these limitations.

**CF-3:** The length of political campaigns should be shortened.

**CF-4:** Related position: See the fourth item under Election Laws and Procedures, below.

### **Election Laws and Procedures (1964-67, 2003-04, 2005-07)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**EL-1:** The Voters Pamphlet performs a valuable service in promoting an informed electorate and

should be continued at state expense. The intent and effect of each ballot issue should be clearly set forth in language readily understandable by the voter. A clear distinction should exist between explanation and argument and the term "official" should apply only to the former. Obvious untruths and emotionalism should be eliminated.

**EL-2:** Voting procedures should serve the voter with a maximum of convenience, simplicity and efficiency while insuring that the requirements of secrecy, accuracy and impartiality are maintained.

**EL-3:** Permanent, personal registration should be continued. Lists of voters should be accurate and current. Registration should be simple and convenient for voters while ensuring accuracy. The Voter Registration State Database (VRSD) should not be used to deny people the right to vote. No proof of citizenship other than the sworn signature on the registration form should be required for Voter Registration. Random audits of all ballots, with the percentage of ballots audited to be determined by a statistician. The mail-in ballot postmark deadline should be Election Day. Provision should be made for absentee registration when registration is otherwise impossible.

**EL-4:** Regular and full disclosure of campaign finances for both ballot issues and candidates is necessary before primary and general elections.

**EL-5:** Political parties should play an important role in election campaigns by recruiting, helping to finance and campaigning for qualified candidates.

**EL-6:** Validation of excess levy elections should not be based on a percentage of voter turnout in a previous election. This permits those who do not exercise their franchise to vote to determine the outcome of an election. In order to authorize an excess levy it should not be required that 3/5 of those voting on the proposition must vote in favor. Although there may be justification for requiring an extraordinary majority for voter approval when long-range or fundamental changes are involved, there is no justification when excess levy elections are necessary for maintenance of current services.

*League of Women Voters of Washington supports:*

**EL-7:** Verifying the accuracy of election equipment by providing independent, voter verifiable ballots that can be recounted when a recount is needed

**EL-8:** Automatic, mandatory audits of election results of randomly selected precincts

**EL-9:** Extending HAVA deadlines and the protection and provision of HAVA funds to the states

**EL-10:** The present system, allowing voters in most counties the choice of voting by mail or going to a polling place

**EL-11:** Certification of Washington State election equipment using Washington State certification methods. Washington State should be able to certify and use equipment whether or not it is in use in another state

### **Election Methods (2000, 2002, 2012)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington:*

**EM-1:** Supports state election laws allowing for more options for alternative election systems in governmental jurisdictions at both the state and local levels.

**EM-2:** Believes that consideration should be given, when evaluating election systems, to how well they promote "representative-ness", citizen participation and accountability, as well as keeping the cost of elections within range by holding them in regularly scheduled General or Special Elections.

**EM-3:** In the event that the primary continues as a part of Washington's election system, (LWVWA) supports a primary that has the following elements: is an "open" system not requiring advance party registration, keeps voters' party preferences from becoming a matter of public record and encourages minor party participation.

**EM-4:** Supports a presidential primary only if the results play a decisive part in selecting party nominees.

**EM-5:** Supports adoption of election methods that produce proportional representation when electing representative government bodies such as councils, legislatures and Congress.

**EM-6:** Supports the concept of a majority vote requirement for winners of single offices such as mayor or governor, as long as it is achieved using a voting

method such as the Instant Runoff Vote, rather than a second, separate runoff election.

### **Formation of New Counties (1997)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**NC-1:** Education is a required component of protecting the interests of all affected parties in considering the formation of new counties. Educational methods should include public hearings, forums, speaker's bureau involvement, use of voter's pamphlet. The media should be encouraged to inform the public on the fiscal impact of new counties on services and taxes, and to use educational material including a background of the law, constitutional and statutory, relative to the formation of counties.

**NC-2:** General Law should be enacted by the legislature to clarify the processes in county formation. Clarifying legislation should address the following topics: the definition of a petition; the definition of a voter; identification of the fiscal rights and responsibilities of the parent and seceding county/counties; requirement that the entire county have the ability to vote on separation.

### **Initiative and Referendum (1995, 2003)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**IR-1:** Initiative and referendum processes in Washington, which provide access for citizens to initiate or modify legislation.

**IR-2:** Use of the emergency clause to prohibit referendum only when strong criteria have been met.

**IR-3:** Raising the filing fee for initiatives and referenda to a minimum of \$100.

**IR-4:** Changes that would:

- Provide information to citizens, including, but not limited to, sponsors and major financial supporters of the measure through the Voters' Pamphlet and other outlets;
- Place restrictions on paid signature gathering;
- Require clear and accurate ballot titles, summaries and a clear statement of intent;
- Require initiative sponsors to suggest ways in which revenue losses or budget increases might be covered, either through program cuts or increases in revenue sources;
- Provide information on projected financial impacts on revenue and budgets to be published in the Voters' Pamphlet;
- Provide an advisory opinion as to the constitutionality of an initiative after it has been certified to the ballot;
- Encourage use of the indirect initiative process; that is, initiatives to the legislature.

### **Redistricting and Reapportionment (1955, 1958, 1959, 1975)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**RR-1:** Both houses of the state legislature should be apportioned substantially on population. Districts

should be convenient, contiguous and specific standards for fair representation should be assured.

**RR-2:** The responsibility for redistricting and reapportioning should rest with an agency independent of the legislature. The alternate agency should not be a court, but a judge may be a member. Definite provisions should be made for compensation and staff services of the alternate agency. Power of initiative and referendum should be reserved to the people.

**RR-3:** Machinery should be provided to affect automatic, compulsory, periodic redistricting and reapportioning. Measures to enact this machinery should include authority, enforcement powers, time schedule and funding. The specific measure may take the form of a constitutional amendment, legislation, initiative and/or referendum.

**RR-4:** Specific provisions should be made for court review of redistricting and reapportioning measures and for courts to require the alternate agency to act.

**RR-5:** The state should be redistricted and reapportioned every ten years as soon as possible after taking the census. Definite time limits should be set for an agency to act after decennial federal census figures are available. Time limits should be set for initiating court action for review of constitutionality of measures.

### **Regional Governmental Structures (1981)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**RG-1:** Any regional governmental structure must have a legally assured base of revenue and appropriate enforcement powers.

**RG-2:** Policy planning, coordination and data collection should be regional in scope.

**RG-3:** Open governmental processes and improved media coverage are essential to develop citizen understanding and participation in regional issues.

### **State Constitution (1966-67)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**SC-1:** A constitution should be brief, concise, flexible, clear and free of obsolete provisions. It should be an expression of fundamental law and should be free of statutory law.

**SC-2:** The process for amending the constitution should require more than a simple majority but not the 2/3 legislative majority presently required. A process should exist to provide for partial revision by article, section and/or subject ("gateway amendment").

### **Washington State Legislature (1973-75)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**LE-1:** The length and operation of the state legislature should encourage the participation of "citizen" legislators. The legislature should have the power to convene itself.

**LE-2:** An effective state legislature should be efficient and operate with a minimum of conflict, wasted time and duplication of effort.

**LE-3:** To ensure accountability, procedures should be open and understandable. Legislators must have access to objective information and should be responsive to the views of all the citizens of Washington State.

**LE-4:** The responsibility for setting legislative salaries should lie with an independent commission. The compensation for legislators should be adequate and encourage the participation of "citizen" legislators.

## – STATE TAX POLICY –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to obtain a balanced tax structure that is fair, adequate, flexible and has a sound economic effect.*

**BACKGROUND:** League records indicate that state taxes have been on the agenda since 1953.

During the '50s the legislature increased the sales tax, business and occupation tax and cigarette tax creating a renewed interest in the tax structure. A study based on the League's publication, *The Tax Primer* (1957), produced a position favoring an income tax and repeal of the sales tax on food (1959). We have continued to update and expand our positions with studies of property taxes, assessments, state expenditures, state and local fiscal relations, exemptions and in 1980-1981 a review of state tax policies. The delegates to the 1981 convention voted to delete the 1959 position statement relating to the state's fiscal management processes since LWV's recommendations have been implemented. Study of and action on the state tax positions has been continuous.

In 1981-1983 state revenue collections were below projections. This led to the re-imposition of a tax on food and an increase in most tax rates and fees. League joined with other concerned citizens in pointing out that the crisis emphasized flaws in the tax system. Per capita income rose but business and personal spending, which are the basis for excise taxes, declined. The League believed that the state's unduly heavy reliance on excise taxes is not appropriate and would be improved by the addition of a tax on personal and corporate income. Recommendations made by the Governor's Tax Advisory Council were not acted upon and a proposal for a constitutionally limited income tax was not reported out of committee.

Nearly every year since then, proposals for some kind of tax based on ability to pay have been introduced into the legislature. Many of its members and the Governor campaigned on tax-reform platforms. Yet, by 1987, the tax structure had received only minor modifications, primarily additional tax exemptions. League's exemption positions are limited to those on the property tax.

The 1985 League convention called for an update of positions that was accomplished through articles in the *VOTER*.

In 1989 the League cooperated with Governor Gardner's task force to push for tax reform. This effort never got out of the Senate. It was clear that the 1989 political climate made any tax increase unpopular.

In 1991 delegates to the state LWV convention again called for an update. In 1992 *The Basic Tax System in Washington* was published in the Spring *VOTER*.

In 1993, LWV convention delegates resolved to oppose Initiatives 601 and 602, which would severely limit the legislature's ability to impose taxes to support programs.

The League has continued to work for its goal of a balanced, adequate, fair, flexible and economically sound tax system by self-education and discussion of tax issues, by monitoring legislation and taking appropriate action, and by participation in People for Fair Taxes.

A one-year study, "A Comparison and Contrast of Tax and Revenue Systems in Washington Counties", was adopted at the 1999 State Convention. This educational report provided detail on the funding of local county governments and was published in partnership with the Institute for Washington's Future.

The 2001 LWVWA Convention authorized a study as an update of the 1992 tax structure study. That was postponed because of the work of the Washington State Tax Structure Study Committee (the Gates Committee), commissioned by the legislature. The Gates study was presented to the legislature in 2002, but received no action.

In 2003 the LWVWA Convention authorized a two year program – an updated study and materials for a public education program. The updated study was published in 2004 in full length format and in executive summary, and is available on the LWVWA website. The education program, developed in 2005, has included a Speakers Bureau, a speakers kit containing a Power Point CD, transparencies, and commentary; and, materials for mass distribution including a Tax Facts tri-fold, Tax Bucks, and a brochure advertising the Speakers Bureau.

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### THE LEAGUE'S POSITIONS ON STATE TAX POLICY:

#### **Property Tax Administration (1965)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**PA-1:** Specific figures and details such as assessment levels, mileage limit and classification should be left to legislative determination according to the needs of the time.

**PA-2:** Constitutional provisions should be enforced with effective penalties or regulation from the state level.

**PA-3:** Equity and uniformity both within and among counties in the administration of the property tax are of major importance. The state should have a primary role in regulation and enforcement to ensure uniform assessment levels and adherence to laws and standards of performance.

**PA-4:** Training and quality of personnel, adequate budgets and staff should be a concern at both state and local levels.

**PA-5:** The assessor should be a technical administrative officer and should not have tax policy-making powers. Qualifications should be set for the position of assessor. The decision as to whether or not the assessor's position is elected or appointed should be determined by the legislature and not specified in the constitution.

**PA-6:** The taxpayer should have a greater role in the taxing process. Information should be understandable and readily available.

**PA-7:** More information should be included on or along with the tax statement. True and fair value (100% value) should be listed on the tax rolls and tax

statement. Each property owner should receive tax statements.

**PA-8:** The appeals procedure should be simple, convenient and responsive to the taxpayer. The taxpayer should be notified of revaluation in ample time to appeal should s/he desire to do so. Appeals boards, courts or boards of equalization should be separate, qualified bodies at county and state levels.

### **Property Tax Exemptions (1969, 2005)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**PE-1:** Exemptions from property tax should be limited but may be valid when used to further public policy such as encouraging education, cultural or humanitarian causes.

**PE-2:** Property tax exemptions should not be used to encourage location of industry or as a reward for public service. Property of private or nonprofit groups used for business activities should not be exempt.

**PE-3:** The state should assume the responsibility for revenue lost to local governments because of property tax exemptions granted by the state. Property otherwise exempt should pay for direct public services such as fire and police protection.

**PE-4:** When exemptions are used, the state must assure uniform application. Exemption provisions should be carefully and periodically examined. There should be a periodic inspection of exempt property to assure compliance with the law. Exempt property and its valuations should be listed. The list should be made available to the public.

**PE-5:** Property on which the tax is unduly difficult or expensive to administer should be taxed in some other way, for example: income tax on intangibles, excise tax on boats and cars.

### **Tax Structures (1959, 1965, 2005)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**TS-1:** Inequities in the distribution of the tax burden should be removed. Ability to pay is an important criterion. Flexibility and recognition of changing times and needs is important in tax policy. Only broad general principles of taxation should be included in the constitution. Income should be part of the tax base preferably through a graduated net income tax. The sales tax should not be levied on food. Business should be taxed on net income rather than gross receipts.

### **General Tax Exemptions (2005)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**TE-1:** Any tax exemption proposal should be carefully evaluated for purpose, benefit and cost; and, all tax exemptions should be periodically reviewed.

## **–WASHINGTON STATE AND INDIAN TREATY RIGHTS –**

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to enhance salmon resources, establish a procedure for retrocession of jurisdiction to the tribes and support tribal land use planning of trust lands.*

**BACKGROUND:** Following the Boldt Decision (U.S. vs. Washington) in 1974, it became obvious that many Washingtonians did not understand Indian treaty rights and their impact. In 1979 a study was adopted whose goal was to provide more knowledge of treaty rights and to implement the national Human Resources position (“support of equal rights for all regardless of race or sex”). A “Facts and Issues,” *Washington State and Indian Treaty Rights*, was published in August 1980, and a state position was reached in 1981. Under this position, League has co-sponsored or attended meetings and workshops, joined the coalition for Cooperative Fisheries Management in an attempt to defeat Initiative 456 and supported efforts of the state and the tribes to reach an agreement with Alaska and Canada to save the Northwest salmon. A treaty between the United States and Canada resulted.

The League supported a bill for retrocession of criminal jurisdiction to the Colville Tribe in 1986, and another returning child custody decisions to the tribes in 1987. Both passed.

In 1993 the League supported the successful passage of retrocession of jurisdiction to the Quileute, Chehalis and Swinomish tribes.

In the 1995 legislative session the League supported bills of retrocession for the Muckleshoot and Tulalip tribes, and both passed.

Fifteen Western Washington Indian tribes finally secured their right to harvest half of the naturally occurring shellfish in Puget Sound when the U.S. Supreme Court on

April 5, 1999 refused to review an appellate court ruling against the state et al.

Legal maneuvering leading up to the shellfish ruling began in 1989 when the fifteen tribes went to court asserting that the treaties of the 1850s giving the Native Americans the right to fish and hunt in their usual and accustomed places applied to shellfish as well as anadromous fish. In December, 1994 Judge Edward Rafeedie ruled in favor of the tribes except for those beds staked or cultivated by citizens.

In December, 1995 all sides - waterfront owners, commercial growers, the state and the tribes - appealed Judge Rafeedie's ruling to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Its decision, in January of 1998, extended tribal harvesting rights to half of the natural shellfish production on commercial shellfish beds. Special provisions apply to private beaches and to artificially created oyster beds.

State Attorney General Christine Gregoire has declared it in the state's best interest to cooperate with the tribes to preserve and enhance shellfish beds. The League of Women Voters of Washington's study material of 1980 provides background information that remains highly relevant. Among the positions reached is, “It is the state's responsibility to enhance the salmon resource by protecting the fish habitat”. The courts' decisions and the attorney general's response compel the state to enhance shellfish beds as well.

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**THE LEAGUE'S POSITION ON WASHINGTON STATE AND INDIAN TREATY RIGHTS:** *The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**IT-1:** A special relationship exists between the United States government and Native American tribes. This relationship recognizes the dependent sovereignty of the latter and the constitutional recognition of treaties made between the U.S. and tribal governments.

**IT-2:** It is the state's responsibility to enhance the salmon resource by protecting and improving the fish habitat and to establish a procedure for retrocession of jurisdiction to the tribes as authorized by federal civil rights legislation.

**IT-3:** Tribal governments have sole jurisdiction of land use planning of trust land on Indian reservations.

**IT-4:** State and local governments must cooperate with tribal governments in matters of land use and zoning on fee patent land within reservation boundaries.

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# Transportation

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**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *The League supports a balanced state transportation policy that defines the role of the state and supports increases in funding to provide adequate revenue, flexibility, energy efficiency and safety in a multi-modal system of transportation.*

**BACKGROUND:** A “Study of Transportation Planning, Administering and Financing” was adopted at the 1973 convention. The LWVUS and the Puget Sound Leagues (PSL) had previously developed positions on transportation. PSL with concurrence from the local Leagues had lobbied the legislature for a department of transportation and for tax money for public transit. In 1974 members studied modes of travel, funding and governmental structure. At a later date a survey of highway planning, energy considerations, alternatives to existing systems and planning issues was undertaken. Transportation action often interfaces with other state and national program positions particularly land use and air quality.

In 1992 the LWV King County Coordinating Committee established a Puget Sound Transportation committee, which includes LWV representatives from the Leagues in King County and from Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties. During the 1997 legislative session, League helped to defeat bills that would have undermined the Regional Transit Authority and weakened the Regional Transit System Plan in central Puget Sound, as well as a measure that would have diverted funding for transit agencies in our state to other programs. We supported a gas tax increase that was not adopted.

Transportation legislation will continue to become a higher priority as transportation funding moves closer to a crisis point. League continues to support balanced transportation policy and increased funding that provides revenue and flexibility for diverse modes of transportation.

In 1998 the state League opposed Referendum 49 which approved funding for \$2 billion in transportation improvements because of its reliance on long-term bond funds for short-term projects and did not provide for a balanced system including transit.

In 1999 the League opposed Initiative 695 which established license tab fees at \$30 per year and abolished the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET). (The initiative also required voter approval of any tax or fee increase proposed by any government entity in Washington State.) League participated in a court challenge and submitted an amicus curie brief. The State Supreme court declared I-695 unconstitutional. However, the Legislature rescinded the state MVET and implemented the \$30 car tab fee. A Superior Court judge found the local MVET still in effect. LWVWA opposed the efforts of the Legislature to do away with the local MVET should the decision be upheld by the State Supreme Court. In 2000 the League worked with other groups to defeat I-745 which, if enacted, would have required 90% of all transportation funding to be used on roads. League supported a portion of the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Transportation Commission two-year report recommending 1/3 of all new funding to be for transit. We supported regional transportation bills that protected the Growth Management Act and followed representative governance principles.

Delegates at the 2001 convention adopted by concurrence the update of the LWVWA transportation position proposed by LWV Seattle after a two year study on Transportation and Land Use and as amended and recommended by the LWVWA Board of Directors.

League supported the RTA (Regional Transportation Authority) enabling Sound Transit to propose and pass a plan for light rail, bus and heavy rail for commuters in the central Puget Sound area. It passed in 1996 and is regionally financed in an area covering portions of King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. League lobbied the state legislature to support Sound Transit when efforts were made to “kill” it. After a shaky start Sound Transit also received federal dollars amounting to \$5 billion over time.

Initiative 776, opposed by LWVWA, was passed in 2002, designed to remove the MVET (motor vehicle excise tax) used to regionally help finance Sound Transit. It also cut other transit agencies funding. A Court decision allowed Sound Transit to continue to collect the MVET because it was committed to pay for bonds already issued until the year 2028.

In 2002 LWVWA helped campaign for Referendum 51, a transportation package for roads and transit, including a 9 cent gas tax increase. It was passed by the legislature and put to a vote by the citizens. It failed and the infrastructure improvement was again delayed. In 2003, a bipartisan vote of the legislature passed a 5 cent increase in the gas tax. (Gas tax is constitutionally restricted to roads only use). It was implemented by designating specific projects constructed by the “nickel tax” at work.

A long held League position was accomplished when the 2005 Legislature passed a bill that authorized the Governor to appoint a Secretary of Transportation to serve directly under her/him.

In 2005 the transportation infrastructure was still under funded. Based on our positions for adequate funding as well as our support of a balanced transportation system, we supported a transportation package that included a 9.5 cent gas tax increase phased in over 4 years. It also included a new automobile and truck weight fee schedule providing flexible funding for rail, transit, vanpools, etc. It was passed by a bipartisan vote by the legislature in April. By November an effort, Initiative 912 to rescind the gas tax, was vigorously opposed by LWVWA as well as by environmental and business groups. Fortunately, it was defeated and plans can proceed to implement needed projects.

Delegates at the 2005 Convention approved a two-year study on the ferry system in Washington state. A new position resulted from the study.

Delegates at the 2009 Convention approved as amended concurrence with LWV/Tacoma-Pierce County position on transporting of freight. The amendment was to replace the words “lessen the amount” with the words “reduce the number”.

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**THE LEAGUE'S POSITION ON TRANSPORTATION (2001, 2005-07, 2009):** *The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**T-1:** Transportation projects and programs should be prioritized to develop a balanced and seamless transportation system. Population, topography, location of transportation facilities, community livability and character, jobs/housing balance, environmental impacts, social factors, energy consumption and political realities must be considered.

**T-2:** Transportation is an important basic public planning tool, and should be consistent with regional and local long-range growth management plans and adopted local land use plans.

**T-3:** Transportation is a state, regional and local responsibility that requires coordination, cooperation and communication to develop regional plans.

**T-4:** There is a need to define the state's role and to develop and adopt complementary regional plans and transportation improvement programs.

**T-5:** Effective transportation financing will require that any earmarking of funds should be statutory rather than constitutional. In addition, the Constitution should be changed to allow use of gas tax funds for balanced transportation. Funding for all modes of transportation should be adequate and predictable. Appropriations by the Legislature should follow cost/benefit budgetary review of alternative modes. The cost/benefit analysis should include transportation demand management strategies as well as financial incentives and disincentive programs that reduce solo trips and encourage transit and other transportation options.

**T-6:** Ferries in Washington State are part of the highway system and should be funded as such. Passenger-only ferries should be funded as are other modes of public transportation. The fare box should not be expected to totally fund ferry operations in Washington State.

**T-7:** Transportation systems dependent on public financing should be publicly controlled. Transportation should be considered a public service with capital, maintenance and operating costs subsidized consistent with the subsidization of the operating costs of other public services.

**T-8:** Prior to revising highway corridors, cities and other jurisdictions that are adversely affected by the increased capacity must have the choice to plan and adequately finance integrated and sustainable transportation systems.

**T-9:** A single agency should be established to plan and coordinate the efficient, economical movement of people and goods consistent with adopted regional and local growth management plans. The agency should be administered by a director appointed by the Governor and serving at his/her pleasure. An appointed commission should determine policy with

regional input from citizens and guidance by the Legislature.

**T-10:** Effective citizen participation requires comprehensive and consistent communication between the governmental sponsor and its constituents. There should be opportunities for public comment from the institution of the plan, consideration of alternatives, development of the project or program, and throughout implementation. State and regional plans and projects for managing congested major urban corridors should be integrated with local and regional growth management plans and coordinated with regional and local governments, employers, businesses, freight and public transportation agencies.

**T-11:** State transportation policy should promote development in centers, manage and reduce single occupant vehicle use on highway facilities and shift solo trips to alternative modes.

**T-12:** (From "Energy" positions) In the event that energy shortages force the imposition of a government administered allocation program, across-the-board cuts should be made in all areas of energy use. Following the initial cutback, highest priority should be given to life-supporting industries that produce essential goods. The private vehicle should receive lowest priority. (Allocation Program - 1976)

**T-13:** We support the transporting of freight via rail, including laws and subsidies to that effect in order to reduce the number and size of trucks on the freeways. We support this move for energy efficiency as well as safety reasons.





# Natural Resources

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## – ENERGY –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to support an energy policy within Washington State. Action to educate the public on energy conservation. Action to establish incentives for efficient use of current energy sources and the greater use of alternative energy sources.*

**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. In the following years much action was taken.

The 1990 legislature passed the tough new energy conservation code that had been developed under a 1983 congressional mandate, becoming the first Northwest state to do so. New residences would be required to have more efficient windows and doors and more insulation in the walls, floors and ceilings. Builders of electrically heated homes would receive subsidies from utilities compensating them for the added costs of energy-saving features. The gas and electricity saved will be substantial, and in the case of electricity, the number of new power plants needed will be reduced.

In 1992 League members served on the Governor’s Energy Strategy Commission. The state League, under contract with the Department of Ecology, coordinated 14 public meetings around the state, providing citizens with an opportunity to review and comment on proposed legislation.

The League urged the Legislature to proceed with caution in exploring possible electricity deregulation in the 1997 and 1998 sessions. Although ultimately deregulation was not enacted in Washington, it did occur elsewhere, causing BPA and other utilities to cut investments in conservation and renewable energy. These utilities felt the need to reduce costs in anticipation of competition created by cheaper power from deregulated states. Citing support for renewable energy and conservation, League opposed these cuts.

In 1999 League supported bills clarifying the ability of utilities to offer low-income rate assistance and requiring fuel mix disclosure to customers. In 2000 League opposed legislation granting a sizable tax break to natural gas companies generating electricity. At the League’s urging this bill was vetoed by the Governor. We successfully lobbied for a net metering bill allowing generators of small amounts of energy from solar, wind or landfill generation to place excess power on their utilities’ grid in exchange for credit towards future power use.

In 2001 League supported legislation extending tax credits for renewable energy projects to smaller scale systems and fuel cells. League also supported a bill which

1. Gives tax credits to utilities offering reduced rates to low-income households,
2. Requires state buildings and schools to audit energy and install energy efficiency measures,
3. Requires most electric utilities to offer customers a voluntary option to purchase renewable energy.

However, League opposed the portion of this bill raising the siting threshold triggering regulatory control by the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council.

In 2005, the League was successful in lobbying for the passage of legislation which did the following:

- Authorized investment cost recovery incentives to support renewable energy projects. Individuals, businesses, or local governments who generate electricity, on their own property, with an anaerobic digester or a wind or solar energy system, may apply to their light and power provider for the incentive payment. (SB 5101)
- Reduced the business and occupation tax for Washington businesses that manufacture solar energy systems or the silicon components of these systems. This B & O tax exemption extends to the year 2014. (E2SSB 5111)
- Mandated that minimum standards and testing procedures be established for twelve electrical products that are not covered by federal law. (ESHB 1062)
- Authorized municipalities to conduct energy audits and implement cost-effective energy conservation measures across multiple governments, placed various aggregate biennial reporting requirements upon the cities, and enabled financing of conservation measures with bonds issued by Washington Economic Development Finance Authority (WEDFA).

After unsuccessfully lobbying for many year for a energy portfolio standard, in 2006 the League helped to pass Initiative 937 which requires certain electric utilities with 25,000 or more customers to meet certain targets for energy conservation and use of renewable energy resources, as defined, including energy credits, or pay penalties. In 2006 the legislature passed a bill that gives tax exemptions for the sale of solar hot water equipment and for the labor for installing them.

In 2007 the legislature passed HB1929 authorizing cities and towns to use offset (or other means) to mitigate the environmental impacts (for example, greenhouse gas emissions) of operating the utilities: water, sewer, storm water, sewer water or solid waste. The bill also authorizes counties to mitigate the environment impacts of operating their utilities and to mitigate environmental impacts of conducting other ratepayer funded activities.

Since the 1977 energy study, extensive research has clearly shown that the earth’s climate is warming and that a major cause of this warming is the increase of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. Conversion from use of fossil fuel to renewable energy sources would decrease the rate of increase of atmospheric carbon dioxide and therefore would decrease the rate of global warming. In the past decade, technologies have changed because of research and development, consumer demand, and government policies -- including biomass projects.

Local leagues were reviewing proposed biomass projects in their communities and a variety of proposed biomass legislation with some voicing their concerns about the technology and its impacts on the environment As a result, in 2011-12, LWVWA studied alternatives to fossil fuels, called renewable energy, to consider the costs, capacity and impact of a wide array of renewable energy

sources, including biomass projects. Included in the study were ways of delivering energy including green energy programs, the present electric grid, and the potential of the Smart Grid. New energy positions were adopted in 2013.

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**THE LEAGUE'S POSITION ON ENERGY (1976-77, 2013):** *The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**EN-1:** In the event that energy shortages force the imposition of a government administered allocation program, across-the-board cuts should be made in all areas of energy use. Following the initial cutback, highest priority should be given to life-supporting industries that produce essential goods. The private vehicle should receive lowest priority. (Allocation Program - 1976)

**EN-2:** State government, through an intensive public education program, should articulate a new energy ethic based on conservation. Energy conservation methods to be encouraged should include promotion of: a) thermal efficiency in buildings and residences through building code provisions and fiscal incentives for weatherization; b) energy-efficient movement of people and goods through subsidies for public transportation, vehicle taxes related to energy consumption and strict enforcement of reduced speed limits; c) recycling; d) pricing policies which reward low use of energy and e) limits on non-essential uses of energy such as excessive outdoor lighting. (Conservation - 1976)

**EN-3:** Energy facility siting decisions should be made in conformance with a comprehensive, long-range state or regional energy plan. An adequate demonstration of the need for energy from a proposed new facility should be prerequisite for site approval. (Energy Facilities - 1977)

**EN-4:** A state energy policy should be formulated with particular regard to encouraging changes in lifestyle including changes in transportation and land-use patterns; maintaining human health and safety; preserving the environment and conserving natural resources. (Energy Policy - 1977)

**EN-5:** When an energy source is chosen, the efficiency of the source selected should be an important consideration. The League favors further research and development of renewable power sources such as solar, wind and tidal. Additionally, the League supports the production and use of solar, wind and hydro power. Reliance on additional nuclear thermal plants as a major source must answer the public's concern about adequate and safe nuclear waste disposal. (Amended 2013)

**EN-6:** The state's short-term 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 renewable energy

systems such as solar, wind and recovery of energy from wastes should be actively encouraged. (Energy Sources - 1977. Amended 2013)

**EN-7:** The protection of the marine environment should be the prime consideration when decisions are made regarding the movement of crude oil into or through the state of Washington. Protection of land areas through which a pipeline might pass is also of concern. Meeting state and national needs for petroleum is important but not at the expense of the environment. The state should work closely with federal agencies and take other appropriate steps to ensure the protection of Washington waters against oil pollution. (Oil Transport - 1977)

**EN-8:** A single state energy agency should have the responsibility for coordinating and implementing the state's energy policy. The duties of the energy agency should include long-range planning, data collection and analysis and dissemination of the information to energy users. (State Agency - 1976)

**EN-9:** League members support the development and implementation of a smart grid with the active participation of consumers. (Renewable Energy - 2013)

**EN-10:** League members support a range of practical and currently available methods to conserve energy both in their homes and when making transportation choices and to support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. (Renewable Energy - 2013)



## - GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE -

In 1998 LWVUS published a Question & Answer (Q&A) document that stated that the climate scientists' premise that rapid increase in global warming gases over the last 200 years is due primarily to human activities, such as deforestation and the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas) for energy and transportation. Global warming was identified as a Level Two Legislative Priority with the 106th Congress (in 2000). LWVUS stated in 1998 and in the 2006-2008 *Impact on Issues* that "The U.S. government should move ahead immediately...on initiatives to reduce emissions of heat-trapping gases; such actions will reduce the threat of global warming, combat air pollution, increase energy security and create new jobs."

In 2007 LWVUS established a Climate Change Task Force in response to the Board designating climate change as a priority for advocacy. The task force was charged with researching and writing substantive supporting materials for the LWVUS action on climate change and for use, as desired, by local and state leagues. In addition the task force will provide research and respond to specific issues, including questions arising with federal climate change legislation.

LWVWA took steps consistent with LWVUS positions in 2000 for the purpose of bringing Global Climate Change issues to members, other citizens and legislators' attention for action. League members recognized that this topic is inextricably linked with energy, water, transportation, forests, clean air and other issues on which the League has positions and takes action. An off board portfolio chair was established to address Global Climate Change. Since then, LWVWA has joined local and regional groups with similar goals. This collaboration has resulted in a number of climate change legislative successes in Washington to include:

- Washington Climate and Rural Energy Development Center was established in 2002.
- The Biodiesel Fuel Package passed in 2003 to provide tax incentives for farmers to grow biodiesel crops and for entrepreneurs to process and distribute biodiesel fuels throughout the state.
- Also in 2003 a neighborhood electric vehicles law passed to provide a more efficient, cleaner mode of travel for the multitudinous short trips taken daily.
- League members participated in a stakeholder process that culminated in a carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) mitigation bill for all new power plants over 25 megawatts in 2004.
- In 2005 a Clean Cars bill, originally passed in California, passed that requires all cars to emit less CO<sub>2</sub> after 2008. Similar bills have now passed in 12 states. Auto industries sued to prevent this bill from becoming law, but lost in 2007; however, the EPA has not authorized CA or any state to enforce this stricter air pollution statute.
- The Green Buildings law passed in 2005 requires all future state buildings to be more efficient in the use of water, energy and materials.

- A tax incentive for clean and alternative fuel vehicles also passed in 2005.
- In 2006, laws were enacted to require all diesel fuel and gasoline sold in WA to contain between 2% and 2 1/2% biofuel content by 2009.
- Legislation passed in 2007 to mitigate the impacts of climate change through emissions reduction and clean energy usage with the following goals set for the state:
  - By 2020, reduce emissions from climate pollution to 1990 levels
  - By 2020, triple the number of 2004's clean energy jobs bringing total to 25,000
  - By 2035, reduce emissions from climate pollution to 25% below 1990 levels
  - By 2050, reduce emissions from climate pollution to 50% below 1990 levels

This law requires several emissions reduction mechanisms to be established: a load-based cap and trade system; regulations and incentives for electric utilities; methods to increase use of landfill gas and geothermal resources; a process to replace old power plants with cleaner technologies; and an emissions performance standard (EPS) that goes into effect on July 1, 2008 limiting pollution from power plants to 1100 lbs per megawatt hour (achievable now) and ramps up the standard to further reduce the pounds per megawatt hour in 2013.

State legislation nationwide to reduce greenhouse gas pollution has steadily strengthened over the last five years. League members' efforts to educate the public and legislators are an integral part of this change in awareness and action in Washington. The decision of the 2008 LWVUS Convention committee to include a plenary panel on climate change reflects the growing concern with this issue.



## – RESOURCE MANAGEMENT –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to obtain coordinated planning and ensures environmental quality in the use of water, air and land resources.*

**BACKGROUND:** State action on natural resources during the '50s and '60s was based on LWVUS positions. "Conservation: A Study of Water Resources" was the first study item (1956). A Task Force was formed by the Leagues of the Columbia River Basin: Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. In 1959, the Task Force published *The Great River of the West* that was used as a study resource. From this study came a position that supported an interstate compact.

Between 1967 and 1977 League studied state and regional agencies involved in environmental planning and arrived at a position that was the basis for actions supporting environmental quality.

In 1977 a new water study was adopted that included a survey of water uses, an explanation of the interrelationship of state and federal water regulations and agencies, and an examination of Washington state water rights. Two publications were produced: *Water Management* and *Water Rights*.

During the 1978 and 1979 meetings of the Columbia River Task Force, it became apparent that many similarities existed among the four states in the use and management of the water resources of the Columbia River. Action was taken at the 1979 convention to strengthen the Columbia River Task Force due to the continuing interstate conflicts and issues. In 1980 after state board concurrence, a position was announced that called for coordinated management at all three levels of government — federal, state and local — and for comprehensive planning for sound basin development. Citizen participation was called for in this position. In June 1985 a regional conference on ground water was held in Tacoma.

In 1989 a new structure was established for regular cooperation. The three state leagues (Oregon, Idaho and Washington) will meet annually at the LWVUS convention or council to determine regional issues. The first such meeting was in the spring of 1989.

Another important addition to League's environmental positions occurred at the 1981 convention when positions of the Puget Sound Leagues of Women Voters were adopted and incorporated into state positions. These include: Agricultural Lands; Parks, Open Spaces and Green Belts; the Nisqually Delta; and new statements on air quality, planning and land use.

This broad range of positions includes nearly every aspect of air, land and water resources. Following are highlights of League action in these areas:

- **Air Quality:** Lobbying continued to gain industrial compliance with CO2 emission standards. There are no national CO2 emission standards. The state CO2 standards for new energy facilities were legislated in 2004. Testimony was given at EPA regional hearings on proposed standards for arsenic emissions. The ASARCO smelter, a target for arsenic emission controls before a standard was adopted, closed in 1985. League supported Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance in Seattle and Spokane.

- **Land Use:** Revisions to the State Environmental Policy Act were passed by the legislature in 1982, followed by development of implementing rules to be in effect by 1984. League participated in each phase, calling for early and meaningful citizen input. In 1984, we co-sponsored a public information seminar on the new rules.

In 1990 and 1991 LWVWA convened a broad-based group of business, environmental, government, and community leaders who successfully proposed amendments that influenced the development of the 1990-91 growth management legislation. Since that time we have lobbied vigorously against weakening amendments and for full funding of the Growth Management Act (GMA).

In the fall of 1992, LWVWA co-sponsored a major conference on the interface between the Growth Management Act and the State Environmental Policy Act. In 1992 and 1993, LWVWA provided advice, assistance and support to local Leagues monitoring and shaping action by their local governments in planning under the Growth Management Act.

In 1995 several amendments to GMA were adopted. The land use permit process was streamlined; environmental and land use laws were consolidated. Best Available Science requirement was added to the development of critical areas ordinances. Goals and policies of Shoreline Management Act were added as the fourteenth goal of the GMA. League was actively involved in the Land Use Commission, reviewing and supporting these proposed changes.

Despite these changes, in 1995 the Legislature enacted I-164 into law. Proponents of I-164, an initiative to the Legislature, had claimed it was needed to protect the property rights of citizens whose property lost value through the effects of regulation. League and many others opposed this initiative because it would have severely restricted governments' ability to regulate land use by requiring governments to pay for ANY reduction in property value brought about by regulation, no matter how beneficial the regulation to the community. Believing that the public should have a right to vote on this measure, League joined with a variety of groups to file Referendum 48, and gathered sufficient signatures to place the measure on the November 1995 ballot. League then campaigned actively against the measure and it was soundly defeated.

During the latter part of the 1990's League fought efforts to weaken the Growth Management Act while supporting practical modifications to make it more workable. In 1997 League sponsored a program of growth management awards to bring public recognition to many successful actions taken by local officials and citizens to implement GMA.

At its convention in 2005 LWVWA adopted a one-year study of growth management in Washington State. In August 2006 this study produced the report, *The Growth Management Act of Washington State: Successes and Challenges*. The report is a guide to the Growth Management Act, what it is and how it works, a retrospective look at some of its history, an examination of some current issues, and a look forward. This report was

intended for use in educating League members and the public about growth management issues in Washington.

In November 2006 another property rights initiative was on the ballot. LWVWA opposed I-933 for reasons similar to its opposition to I-164 and Referendum 48 in 1995. LWVWA was part of a large coalition that resoundingly defeated I-933.

- **Shorelines:** During 1983-84 League members assisted the Department of Natural Resources in their review and revision of harbor area and aquatic lands management policies. In 1983 the League won a contract with Washington Department of Ecology to assess statewide public perception of the ten-year old Shoreline Management Act. This six-month study used local Leaguers to conduct a League-designed telephone survey of state citizens. Results were then analyzed and reported to the state agency. During the 1995 legislative session, LWV worked with the Governor's Task Force on Regulatory Reform to insure that the Shoreline Management Act was not weakened. League has continued to monitor and to speak out against efforts to weaken protections provided in the SMA. In 1999-2000, after 27 years, the Department of Ecology sought comments on major revisions to the Master Program Guidelines of the Shoreline Management Act (SMA). These guidelines are the basis for over 250 city and county shoreline master programs that affect streams over 20 cubic feet per second, marine waters, lakes over 20 acres in size, and associated wetlands. The state league has been represented on task forces and governor-appointed commissions that provided guidance to Ecology on the rule adoption and participated in public hearings around the state as well as providing written comment on this major revision.

In December 2000, the rules were adopted by Ecology and appealed to the State Shoreline Hearings Board by business and development interests. League joined with other organizations and private individuals under the leadership and legal representation of Washington Environmental Council (WEC) as intervenors in the lawsuit. In August 2001 the rule was remanded to Ecology largely on procedural grounds with the substantive portions of the bill affirmed by the State Board. The guidelines have now been appealed to Superior Court with League again joining the WEC and other intervenors. Negotiations are in process to resolve the appeal with a League representative on the negotiation team headed by WEC and in conjunction with the Department of Ecology.

Another aspect of shoreline protection is the state's aquatic reserve system. Established in 1971, the Commissioner of Public Lands is given authority for certain of the state's aquatic lands that have special educational, scientific, or environmental importance to be withdrawn from conflicting uses. Responding to challenges to the continuation of the program, LWVWA wrote letters in 2000 and 2001 supporting its continuation.

- **Water:** The League has been represented on state policy committees for water supply, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and water quality and more recently the Department of Ecology Water Resources Advisory Committee and the Department of Health Water Supply Advisory Committee. In the Yakima River basin, League participated in two 1982 grant projects — water

rights adjudication information workshops and overall basin resource enhancement. In 1983 public attention began to focus on Puget Sound when the legislature established the Puget Sound Water Quality Authority. A conference in September 1983, including League as a co-sponsor, addressed many issues about the health of Puget Sound. League joined in one citizen action opposing EPA-granted waivers to municipalities from secondary water treatment requirements.

A drought in 1987-88 and a drop in the snowpack gave notice that water resources, so long considered plentiful in the state, were threatened. Three measures became law: Safe Drinking Water, Waterfront Sewer Systems, and Water Use Efficiency. The last measure requires new construction and remodeling to use more efficient plumbing fixtures starting in July 1991 and raises the requirement beginning July 1993, to 1.6 gal/flush toilets and 2.5 gal/min faucet and showerhead flows. The Department of Ecology was directed to develop an efficient water use public education program.

A constitutional amendment on water conservation was passed by the voters in November 1989. Local governments were to be permitted to finance from public money or credits derived from the sale of water, the acquisition by private persons of water conservation materials and equipment. No tax dollars would be involved and the program would be limited to the purchase and installation of cost effective equipment, plumbing fixtures and systems.

At the League Convention in May 1989, a two-year study of water use was passed. This resulted in a new position on "Water Use Efficiency" in 1991.

In 1991 LWVWA received a grant from the LWVUS and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a ground water project that included workshops in Thurston County as part of "The National Conference on Aquifer and Well-head Protection." This project also saw publication of *Speaking of Ground Water* . . . In 1993 LWVWA and several local Leagues participated in an EPA sponsored conference on ground water held in Couer 'd Alene, Idaho. Several recent State Supreme Court cases have demonstrated the inadequacy of current state water policy to address the complex issues of growing communities and the increasing demand for out of stream water use while maintaining instream flows for the needs of endangered fish and other natural system needs. The recent summer droughts and record low water levels on both Eastside and Westside rivers of the state as well as the uncertainties of climate change have intensified these issues. The Governor has committed his office to addressing the water problems in the state, focusing on instream flows, growing communities, relinquishment and water storage. The 2001 legislative session began this effort with the passage of the Omnibus Water Bill.

State action on national issues affecting state natural resource management has included support for reauthorization of the Clean Air and Water Acts, continued Superfund authorization and appropriations and reauthorization of the Coastal Zone Management Act to protect funding for local shorelines programs. We also testified for passage of the Washington Wilderness Act and for establishment of a Columbia Gorge Scenic Area with National Forest Service management authority. Delegates to state convention in 1997 adopted a new study of forest issues in Washington, reviewing current forestry plans and practices as governed by state and county regulations.



A forest position resulted from consensus reached on the state League 1997-1998 study, "Washington's Dynamic Forests", and was adopted by the board May 14, 1999. The position was approved by the 1999 State Convention delegates. The League of Women Voters of Washington supports laws and policies to insure that forest management is carried out in a manner that will sustain healthy forests, streams and habitats.

Delegates to the 1999 State Convention adopted the study, "Washington's Dynamic Forests: A Study of Forests and Forest Issues, Phase II, which examined pressures on Washington State forests that diminish our ability to pass on to future generations all the benefits of healthy forest ecosystems.

This portion of the consensus was sent as an advisory letter to the LWVUS Trade Taskforce:

- The World Trade Organization (WTO) must not be given authority to supercede our national or state priorities, especially legally enacted environmental protections.
- Trade agreements must go beyond economics to include conservation, environmental protection, impact on climate change, sustainable forest management, endangered species and wildlife habitat protection.
- An appeals process should be available and transparent.

The LWVWA supported the Northwest Ecosystem Alliance campaign to protect forests by purchasing (July, 1999) 25,000 acres of mostly roadless virgin forestland in the Loomis State Forest located in North Central Washington. The 134,000-acre Loomis State Forest provides important wildlife habitat for lynx, grizzly, marten, fisher, wolverine, and other imperiled species.

In 1999 the LWVWA opposed Initiative 696, a ban on all commercial net, troll, and trawl fishing in Washington state fresh and marine waters, except tribal fisheries conducted under a valid treaty right. This initiative did not take a comprehensive approach, singling out non-tribal commercial fisherman and harvest issues, and had little support from any group except sports fishermen.

**Conservation Districts:** In 2011, the League studied the Washington State Conservation Commission and Conservation Districts, non-regulatory local government entities that work with landowners to help them protect water quality, improve fish and wildlife habitat and resource conservation, while sustaining the vital agricultural community. The study considered the process of electing the Conservation District supervisors, the history, funding, and the structure of the commission and districts.

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## THE LEAGUE'S POSITIONS ON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

### **Agricultural Lands (1981)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington supports:*

**AL-1:** A flexible combination of governmental programs to prevent a non-reversible alteration to lands with prime or productive soils.

**AL-2:** The principal use of these lands for food production with highest consideration given to the preservation of the most productive soils, agriculture and related industries.

**AL-3:** Policies and programs that recognize the value of private and public land ownership.

any level is unsuccessful, it should be mandatory that another level assumes the responsibility.

**AQ-6:** A single state agency to have responsibility for coordination of efforts to control all forms of environmental pollution including air, land and water.

**AQ-7:** Determination of regional authority boundaries primarily by weather patterns and topography and secondarily by political considerations such as boundaries of existing governmental units.

**AQ-8:** State authority to institute emergency air pollution control measures in times of air episode conditions.

### **Air Quality (1971)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington supports:*

**AQ-1:** Coordinated action by all levels of government to control, limit and reduce air pollution.

**AQ-2:** Efforts to continue to make the public aware of the dangers of air pollution in order to gain broad support for efforts to reduce pollution.

**AQ-3:** Establishment of minimum federal standards with state and regional authority to set more stringent standards.

**AQ-4:** States to have the primary responsibility for development of regulations. This would not preclude establishment of more restrictive regulations by regional or local authorities.

**AQ-5:** Regional authorities to function as primary enforcement agencies. Enforcement of regulations relating to mobile sources, such as vehicles, should be the responsibility of the state. If enforcement at

### **Columbia River Task Force (1980)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**CR-1:** In order to meet present and future water needs within the Columbia River Basin, comprehensive basin-wide planning must occur for optimum utilization, conservation, development and management of water resources. Machinery is needed to provide coordinated planning, administration and conflict resolution among the federal, state and other agencies. Procedures should be established to provide information and citizen participation in policy decisions affecting water resource development. The federal government has a necessary role in financing water resource development but state and local governments as well as private users should share in these costs as far as

possible based on benefits received and ability to pay.

(Regional Position) *The League of Women Voters of Idaho, (Montana,) Oregon and Washington believe that:*

**CR-2:** Wise planning for the use of water in the Columbia River Basin requires an inventory of the basin water resources. This inventory should include water-related information such as ground and surface water sources, viable water rights, current use and projected future needs. This information should be readily available to concerned agencies and the general public.

**CR-3:** Minimum stream flows should be established as a public right and maintained on all streams in the Columbia River Basin and all other river basins in the state.

### **Conservation Districts (2012)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington*

**CD-1:** Believes that Conservation Districts have a unique role with landowners to encourage conservation of all resources and the League supports that independent role.

**CD-2:** Supports any independent group, separate from the state regulatory departments, which supports and encourages landowners' conservation work and assists landowners' efforts to develop sustainable business practices.

### **Land Use (1968, 1969-73)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**LU-1:** The effect on environmental quality must always be considered whenever state and local governments and their agencies make decisions. It should be mandatory that governmental bodies prepare and publicize environmental impact statements for all land use decisions. (1970)

**LU-2:** All known factors should be considered in making land use decisions and first consideration should be given to the effect on natural elements. Those activities that are dependent upon natural elements must be balanced with the needs of people including recreation, employment, food, shelter, waste disposal, transportation, aesthetics and economics. Uniqueness or scarcity, importance to the community as a whole, promotion of health, safety and welfare as well as the irreversibility of the decisions should be considered in resolving conflicts in each case. (1973)

**LU-2:** Local land use plans must be comprehensive and should consist of policies, goals and a current inventory of pertinent planning elements. All local governments should be required to have a valid land use plan and to regulate land use consistent with such a plan. Provisions should be made for another agency to prepare plans for governments that are unable or unwilling to do so. Exceptions to some planning requirements should have to be substantiated by the responsible government and

granted conditionally and for cause. (Local Planning 1973)

**LU-3:** A comprehensive statewide land use plan must address urban growth as well as long-range land use goals, policies and guidelines. All decisions made by other state agencies should be consistent with this plan. Individual citizens and representatives from local and regional governmental bodies should participate in the formulation of the state land use plan. Planning should be coordinated and interdisciplinary in nature. The state should have the authority to designate areas of critical concern and require that the use of such areas conform to statewide guidelines. (State Planning 1972 - 1973)

**LU-4:** Uniform guidelines and procedures should be established at the state level for local planning and implementation. State planning assistance to local governments should include information services, technical assistance and adequate financial resources. (State-Local Planning 1972 - 1973)

**LU-5:** Regional authorities within the state are useful in resolving problems, which transcend the boundaries of smaller jurisdictions. To be effective, regional authorities should have the ability to resolve conflicts among jurisdictions and implement plans of regional scope. Regional authorities should involve all levels of government with responsibilities clearly defined. All governments and groups involved must cooperate to resolve conflicts and eliminate inconsistent policies, unnecessary duplication, wasted resources and irrevocable decisions on a patchwork basis. Planning and enforcement should be the responsibility of the level or levels of government that can do so most effectively in each case. (Regionalism and Inter-Local Cooperation 1968, Reworded and amended 1972)

**LU-6:** The state should have one uniform code for planning and land use decisions. The code should be consistent yet allow flexibility to meet unique decisions and should provide for due process with the right to appeal. (State Planning Law 1973)

**LU-7:** Tax policies should not be contrary to land use policies. (Tax Policies 1973)

**LU-8:** The public should be involved at all stages of the planning process but most importantly in setting policies and selecting goals. Participation should be continuing and representative of the community as a whole. (Citizen Participation 1973)

**LU-9:** Effective land use management requires adequate financing, involvement of professional planners and increased public information. (Funding 1968)

### **Nisqually Delta (1981)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**ND-1:** Policies and procedures to preserve a natural estuarine environment for the Nisqually Delta should be supported.

**ND-2:** Any land or water uses which affect the Delta should be compatible in type and intensity with its ecological balance.

**ND-3:** Changes to the ecosystem of the Nisqually River basin, Delta and Nisqually Reach should be made only after their effect upon the Delta is considered.

**ND-4:** The state should assume primary responsibility for developing management goals and strategies for this area of statewide concern.

**ND-5:** Priority must be given to implementation of a comprehensive, region-wide plan for the management of the area. Any mechanism for planning, management and enforcement should recognize natural values over economic interests, long term effects over short term interests and statewide over local interests.

### **Parks, Open Spaces and Green Belts (1981)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington supports:*

**PO-1:** Comprehensive planning, acquisition, development and preservation of parks, open spaces and green belts both public and private, to provide a wide variety of facilities for all age groups.

**PO-2:** Increased coordination among departments and all units of government involved as essential for economy, efficiency and effective implementation of open space programs.

**PO-3:** Citizen information, education and participation in city, county and regional park and open space programs to ensure that present and future needs are met.

**PO-4:** Priorities for open space that are based upon the character and needs of the population. Land should be acquired now in developed areas and reserved in undeveloped areas for future growth. Natural topography should be utilized wherever possible as buffer zones between development, i.e. river valleys, flood plains, slide and steep slopes.

### **Water Management (1979, 1991, 2003)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington supports:*

**WR-1:** Strict enforcement of laws affecting water quality and quantity management in Washington State. Enforcement requires emphasis upon cooperation and coordination among the many agencies as well as funding levels adequate to accomplish effective controls. Water claims under the jurisdiction of the State of Washington should be quantified. Water quality and water quantity programs should be integrated.

**WR-2:** The League of Women Voters of Washington believes:

- Water use efficiency practices are essential to maintain state water resources.
- Differential rates, technical assistance, and education are the most effective ways to achieve municipal and industrial water use efficiency.
- Regulation, technical assistance, and education are the most effective ways to achieve agricultural water use efficiency.
- Minimum stream flows should be established as a public right and maintained on all streams

in the Columbia River Basin and all other river basins in the state.

### **Forests (1999, 2001)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington finds*

**FO-1:** That all benefits of the forests - ecological, human and economic - are inextricably interconnected. Healthy forests are essential to habitat for a diversity of plant and animal life, to the hydrologic cycle, and to carbon storage to mitigate global warming. In addition, healthy forests are essential to a forest products industry with the jobs and goods they provide, and to the economic and aesthetic values of their recreational opportunities.

Therefore,

*The League of Women Voters of Washington supports*

**FO-2:** Laws and policies to insure that forest management (for timber extraction, recreation or any other activity) is carried out in a manner that will sustain healthy forests, streams and habitats.

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that the following are essential elements of an adequate forest practices policy:*

**FO-3:** The public must be informed and involved in the decision-making process in the development of regulations. There must be adequate public notice of forest practices permit applications, hearings, meetings and proposed actions. Public review and comment at each phase of policy and regulation development should be required. Citizens and stakeholders must be represented on the decision-making bodies.

**FO-4:** There must be authority and funding for enforcement of regulations. Existing land use and forest practices regulations must be monitored and enforced, and should be responsive to changing scientific knowledge. There must be coordination of regulations for public and private lands among governmental entities.

**FO-5:** Riparian zones are an integral part of the forest ecosystem and must be regulated adequately to protect the streams and the wildlife dependent upon the streams.

**FO-5:** Education should be made available to timber owners on scientifically sound forest practices with the establishment of a small landowners' agency for this purpose.

**FO-6:** Environmental values of the lands proposed for trade must be considered before the economic values. Trained appraisers, with public oversight, must be used.

The right of appeal must be available to the public.

**FO-7:** Full accounting of all costs, including cumulative ecological impacts, of timber harvests and other forest uses must be considered in forest activity decisions.

**FO-8:** Forest management must be responsive to scientific research and knowledge and should include:

- mapping, classification and protection of all streams,
- more and better data - including total watershed analysis,
- evaluation of cumulative effects of various activities in the forest in the consideration of individual forest practice permits, and

- planning for sustainability of forest ecosystems.

**FO-9:** The State should consider ecological protections the most important factor in deciding which activities to allow on state forest lands.

**FO-10:** Motorized activities should be restricted and in separate areas from non-motorized activities.

**FO-11:** Forest roads must be built, maintained and decommissioned to have the least impact on the forest ecosystems. Some areas on state lands should be roadless.

**FO-12:** Educate consumers about the human and ecological values of our forests as well as the

opportunities and benefits of more efficient use of forest products, recycling and the use of alternatives to wood.

**FO-13:** Fund independent scientific research that would include improved forest practices and ecologically sound alternatives to the use of wood.

**FO-14:** Tax benefits and compensation should be considered to encourage small landowners to manage their forests in an ecologically sustainable manner.

**FO-15:** Washington schools must be fully funded with less reliance on timber harvests.

**FO-16:** Trust lands should remain in public ownership.

## – WASTE MANAGEMENT –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action for coordinated control and reduction of solid waste. Action to reduce the amount of hazardous waste generated in Washington and action to promote safe management of waste produced, including toxics in the home.*

**BACKGROUND:** In 1981, delegates adopted a study of hazardous wastes. A publication, *Hazardous Waste in Washington State*, was prepared in 1982. The 1983 position called for specific and safe management practices for the regulation of existing state landfills and for a facility siting process for new landfills. During the 1983 legislative session, the LWVUS positions were used in calling for stricter regulations over waste management operations. Highly visible LWVWA action during the 1984 and 1985 sessions helped pass bills on new management practices and a recommended facility siting process that is comprehensive, spells out decision making authority and provide for citizen participation.

At the state League convention in 1985 members requested additional information on nuclear waste. The result was a booklet, *Nuclear Waste in Washington State*, published in May of 1987.

Weary of the legislature's failure to enact toxic waste cleanup measures, the League and other environmental groups took matters into their own hands with Initiative 97, a tough stand on cleaning up toxic waste sites by taxing the generators of pollutants to establish a Superfund. Pressured by the big corporations, the legislature enacted a similar, but less stringent, law in a special session, and called it 97B. In November 1988, the voters were given an opportunity to choose between the two measures. I-97 became law. In 2001 LWVWA joined with nineteen other groups in the filing of an amicus brief in support of the Dept. of Ecology in the case of Department of Ecology v. Asarco. This case involved a challenge to the state's Model Toxics Control Act that sought to weaken and eliminate its key provisions. A decision is pending in this case.

The League's position on solid waste management as stated in 1972 foreshadowed the legislative action that followed 17 years later. The Waste Not Washington Act became law in April 1989, with much bipartisan support, following two years of work by the Joint Select Committee on Preferred Solid Waste Management. The priorities for solid waste management were listed as follows: 1) waste reduction; 2) recycling, with source separation or recyclable materials as the preferred method, both economically and environmentally; 3) energy recovery, incineration, or landfilling of separated waste; and 4) energy recovery, incineration, or landfilling of mixed wastes. A state goal of 50% recycling rate by 1995 was set. County governments were given increased authority in handling the waste streams. Local cities and counties are to set up waste management programs in accordance with guidelines developed by the Department of Ecology. Markets for recyclables are to be developed, as are uniform policies for governmental purchase of recyclables, packaging standards and the use of recycled materials in manufactured products. Education of the public, especially school children is an important element in the program.

A League representative served on the Washington State Solid Waste Planning Advisory Committee, which helped develop the 1991 Washington State Solid Waste Management Plan.

At the 1991 convention members adopted by concurrence the position of the League of Women Voters of

Seattle on "Toxics in the Home." The material used to reach that position was printed in the 1991 summer State *VOTER*.

The Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) represents all stakeholder interests and continues to monitor the U.S. Department of Energy's progress on decontaminating and clean up of the Hanford Site. The Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) is a legally binding agreement negotiated between the regulators, EPA, Washington State and the responsible party, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The agreement was signed ten years ago and contains milestones for measured progress. Two major efforts will determine clean up progress in the near future.

- 1) The Groundwater/Vadose Zone Integration Project attempts to characterize the underground storage tank leaks and also assesses groundwater contamination at the tank farm.
- 2) A vitrification plant to transform the high level waste from the storage tanks into more stable, safer glass rods.

The LWVWA has a representative on the HAB, which continues to follow the clean up efforts closely while keeping the DOE and regulators accountable for a meaningful public involvement process.

The League has also worked with other organizations to press the DOE to initiate a National Equity Dialogue with stakeholders from sites across the country to plan together for equitable storage and disposal of all nuclear material. The DOE agreed to fund four regional "pilots" to provide models for the full national Dialogue. LWVWA applied for and received a pilot grant. Workshops were held in September 1997 in Washington and Oregon to enable citizens to identify the values and concerns for the Northwest and to influence the DOE's decisions on the ultimate fate of plutonium, highly enriched uranium, and other nuclear waste materials.

Toxic wastes disposed of in fertilizers (a legal practice) came to public attention with a Seattle newspaper series in 1997. Following a legal challenge by several Seattle groups to the Environmental Protection Agency on this issue, the parties settled the case and EPA began developing in earnest its rules to provide more regulation over this practice. The only public hearing on the proposed rules was held in Seattle in 2001. LWVWA testified in support of even greater regulation than was proposed with a long-range goal of phasing out altogether the disposal of toxic wastes in fertilizers. LWVWA has been working with Washington Toxics Coalition and several other groups for the phase-out and eventual elimination of persistent bioaccumulative toxins (PBTs). These substances, including arsenic, lead and dioxin, persist in the environment, build up in the bodies of plants, animals and humans, and are highly toxic. In 2000 Dept. of Ecology produced its final Strategy which was presented to the Legislature; in 2001 funding was approved by the Legislature to implement the first steps in this phase-out of PBTs. Washington is the first state in the country to have such a strategy.

In 2005 we worked with the American Lung Association of Washington (ALAW), Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility (WPSR), and Washington Toxics Coalition (WTC) to get the Dept. of Ecology to plan for the phase out of flame retardants, and to pass a Mold

Notification bill that requires the owners of rental property to notify renters of the health effects and causes of mold as well as what they can do to control mold. Landlords and anyone can download this information from [www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/IAQ/Got\\_Mold.html](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/IAQ/Got_Mold.html)

In 2005 we supported I-297, which passed, concerning "mixed" radioactive and nonradioactive hazardous waste mandating cleanup of contamination before additional waste is added, prioritizing cleanup, providing for public participation and enforcement through citizen lawsuits.

In 2007, the League took a leading role in lobbying and passage of a Budget Proviso for \$466,000 to help over 620 low income children on Medicaid with mild to severe asthma

in King County. Qualifying children have two or more symptom days every week. It is estimated that by spending \$736 per child for home visits by trained community health workers to reduce exposure to allergens in the home, there will be a saving of \$2238 in reduced Medicaid expenses for hospitals, emergency care of the children, and other medical expenses. The \$1500 net savings per child per year amounts to a \$930,000 reduction in Medicaid expenses. Some 50% of these savings belong to the State. The other 50% will go the federal government. There are 39,000 children with moderate to severe asthma in the State.

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## THE LEAGUE'S POSITIONS ON WASTE MANAGEMENT:

### **Hazardous Waste Management (1983)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**HW-1:** To protect the public health and the environment, the State of Washington must enforce strict regulation of the treatment, transportation and disposal of hazardous waste. Funding must be adequate and may include a tax on generators of such waste.

**HW-2:** Regulations and incentives should encourage the following practices in order of priority: Waste reduction; recycling and reprocessing; detoxification and incineration as applicable. The least desirable management is any disposal that threatens the waters of the state, especially the ground water.

**HW-3:** The government must assume responsibility for research and long-range planning for facilities that will treat hazardous wastes, reduce travel distances and minimize the need for storage and landfill. Facilities should be sited based on environmental criteria and with effective public participation.

**HW-4:** Citizen awareness of the problems and their involvement in decision-making is essential.

### **Solid Waste (1972)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**SO-1:** State laws pertaining to solid waste should be coordinated and include guidelines for local implementation. Such laws could include tax incentives and penalties, financial assistance to local government and support of research.

**SO-2:** Consumers should share in the costs of local waste collection and disposal.

**SO-3:** Legislation to discourage littering and encourage recycling could include requiring deposits on beverage containers and discouraging unnecessary packaging as well as promoting educational efforts.

### **Toxics in the Home (1991)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington supports:*

**TM-1:** Measures to reduce the exposure of the population to toxics in the home. Research and education should be emphasized.

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# Social Policy

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## – ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to ensure that our courts are fair, efficient, accessible and staffed with qualified personnel. Action to maintain a separate court system and facilities for youths that will balance the procedural rights of the adversary system with the protection of youth's basic rights. Action to realize equity in sentencing standards. Action to obtain alternatives to incarceration is of prime importance.*

**BACKGROUND:** The League's Administration of Justice position has its root in a 1939 study, "Needs of Delinquent and Dependent Children." This position established our support for the adequate protection of juveniles. As part of a study of the state constitution (1965), the League focused on the judicial branch. From this study came our position on an intermediate appellate court. The League was present to see the culmination of its efforts when the twelve judges of the three divisions of the Court of Appeals were sworn in (August 1969).

League members were active in the Citizens' Conference on Washington Courts. Our position was updated in 1973, and in 1975 Administration of Justice was adopted as a separate program item. League undertook a study of judicial reforms including court jurisdiction, selection and tenure of judges, the penal system and juvenile justice.

In 1979 the League adopted a study of the adult corrections system. The publication *Corrections?* and the 1980 consensus on the correction system were a result of this study. The League helped write legislation to remove juvenile offenders and boat and game offenders from adult jails (1984).

The League's initial study on juvenile justice focused on the Juvenile Court. Our 1976 position was the basis for our lobbying efforts in opposition to the incarceration of dependent youth in state facilities for delinquents (SB 3116). In 1981 League adopted by concurrence with the Thurston County LWV a position relating to the housing of juveniles and dependent children within the justice system. As a member of the Judicial Administration Commission (1984), the League was involved in studying Washington's court system: its funding, structure and operations.

In coalition, League has lobbied successfully to prevent the reintroduction of criminal sanctions for status

offenders (runaways, truants). During the 1995 legislative session we opposed locking up non-offender runaway youth. We only partially succeeded in that the governor vetoed six-month involuntary incarceration of non-offender youth.

During the 1997 legislative session, League successfully lobbied against bills that would have made 16- and 17-year-olds eligible for the death penalty. League also opposed legislation, which did pass, that will turn over to adult court some 16- and 17-year-olds who commit violent crimes.

In 1991 the LWV Seattle studied drug abuse and developed a position that supported measures to expand drug abuse prevention education and treatment programs. In 2000 the King County Bar Association began the Drug Policy Project a unique partnership of lawyers, doctors, scholars, other professions and citizen groups. The LWV of Seattle has participated on the Drug Policy steering committee as publications were researched and published. The first publication "Is It Time to End the War on Drugs" was summarized and printed in the LWV Seattle September 2003 *VOTER* in order to update members. The Drug Policy Project promotes a public health approach to drug abuse, stressing a shift of resources to research, education, prevention and treatment as an alternative to the continued use of criminal sanctions.

The 2005 Convention of the LWVWA adopted by concurrence the LWV Seattle position on Drug Abuse and will be supporting legislative efforts that support the public health approach to the problem of drug abuse.

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### THE LEAGUE'S POSITIONS ON ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE:

#### **Adult Corrections (1981)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**AC-1:** A system of sentencing should provide accountability, equity and uniformity among courts and jurisdictions. Flexible guidelines should take into account the diversity among individuals and situations. There is a need for compromise between determinate and indeterminate sentencing.

**AC-2:** In the case of determinate sentencing where there is no role for the parole board, a support and/or review board should exist.

**AC-3:** A separate Department of Corrections should be established thereby enhancing visibility and accountability.

**AC-4:** New facilities are needed. Small prisons should facilitate the separation of offenders needed for security and offer the maximum rehabilitation opportunities.

**AC-5:** Funding for alternatives to incarceration should be a Legislative priority.

**AC-6:** Effective rehabilitation is society's best protection. Changes within the penal system should improve conditions and strengthen opportunities for vocational and educational activities.

Women and men should be treated equally.

### **Court System (1968 - 1977)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**CS-1:** The judicial article of the State Constitution should establish a system of courts with specific details to be determined by the legislature. (Judicial Article 1968)

**CS-2:** There should be a two-level trial court composed of a Superior Court and a District Court. Both should be courts of record. (Trial Courts 1977)

**CS-3:** The essential functions of an appellate court are to maintain uniform administration of the law, eliminate undue delay in processing appeals and to provide guidance and assistance to the lower courts. Review of Intermediate Appellate Court decisions should be at the discretion of the Supreme Court. Cases involving death penalty, life imprisonment and constitutional questions should be appealed directly from the Superior Court to the Supreme Court. Location and operation of the Intermediate Appellate Court should be flexible enough to respond to changing population and caseloads. Panels should have an uneven number of judges, preferably three but no more than five judges. Provision should be made for the rotation of judges and for the addition of new judges and panels when and where needed. (Appellate Court 1968, 1969)

**CS-4:** The reception and processing of cases should be simple and orderly. All cases should be determined promptly. Fair consideration should be given to each type of case. Policies, procedures and rules should be uniform throughout the state. The court systems should be designed to attract the best judicial and non-judicial officers and they should be paid accordingly. The courts should have competent supporting staff and appropriate facilities. Our court system should be flexible in order to respond to changing needs and demands of the times. (Standards 1977)

**CS-5:** A non-partisan nominating commission composed of both lawyers and laymen should present names of judicial candidates to the Governor for appointment. Voters should have the opportunity for periodic review of judges appointed through the nomination process. Until Washington has a merit system for selecting judges, mid-term vacancies in judicial positions should be filled by Governor's appointment from a list proposed by an impartial group of lawyers and laymen. A judicial qualifications commission should be comprised of members of the judiciary, bar and non-attorney citizens and should be broad-based in representation. (Selection of Judges 1977)

### **Juvenile Justice (1976)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**JJ-1:** Youth should be entitled to basic legal rights (notice of charges, right to confront and cross

examine witnesses, privilege against self-incrimination, right to an attorney) as set down by the U.S. Supreme Court. These rights should not include the right to jury trial or to bail.

**JJ-2:** Basic human rights for youth should include education, health care, a stable home environment, counseling, protection from abuse and neglect and rehabilitation.

**JJ-3:** Society is entitled to protection of life, property and other rights as guaranteed by law, regardless of the age of the offender.

**JJ-4:** Juveniles should not be incarcerated for status offenses. Delinquent children may have to be incarcerated in certain cases but this should occur only when all other resources have been exhausted or when the crime is so serious that there is no other way to protect society.

**JJ-5:** Youth must accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions. At the same time, however, age, intellect and mental capabilities of the child must be considered. Home, school and community must share in the guidance and teaching responsibility.

**JJ-6:** Juveniles should not be kept in the same facilities as adults. Dependent children should not be kept in the same facilities as delinquents. (1981)

**JJ-7:** There should be some authority in the Juvenile Justice Law to oversee its implementation.

Certain first and minor offenders should be diverted from the court system and their problems handled by the community.

**JJ-8:** The law should provide facilities and personnel for mentally and emotionally disturbed juveniles as well as for problems arising from alcohol and drug abuse.

### **Drug Abuse (2005)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington supports measures to expand and fund drug abuse prevention education and drug abuse treatment programs as a means to reduce the demand for drugs.*

**DA-1:** Expanding and funding for school programs to prevent drug abuse and establishing of programs to reach school drop-outs.

**DA-2:** Public education in family management, parenting, job skills, and evaluating of commercial media which enhance drug use.

**DA-3:** Integrated services as appropriate, including long-term treatment, counseling and mental health services, to all drug abusers and to meet the needs of individuals with co-occurring disorders.

**DA-4:** Support of community involvement to provide alternative behavior opportunities for potential drug abusers. Citizen block watch assistance for neighborhood police in crime prevention.

**DA-5:** Strict enforcement of penalties for drug traffickers. Periodic evaluations of drug programs and of interagency coordination and cooperation.

**DA-6:** There should be periodic evaluations of drug programs and of interagency coordination and cooperation.



## – CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *The League of Women Voters supports vigorous, efficient and innovative child support enforcement methods and broad education regarding the responsibilities and consequences of parenthood. The best interest of the child should be the overriding consideration in determining custody, visitation and an appropriate level of child support. The physical and emotional security of the child should be paramount. Children are entitled to support that is adequate to meet basic needs commensurate with the parents' income, resources, and standard of living. Courts should have the discretion to order post secondary educational support in appropriate circumstances.*

*Action to support stable and adequate funding for children at risk, with priority given to prevention, early identification and intervention services, community based treatment programs, day treatment programs and residential care.*

*Action to provide for the general welfare of children in day care centers. Action to ensure that the state enforce minimum standards that include provision for a safe, healthy, clean environment. Action to support sufficient staff with emphasis on competence and ability to provide a creative, challenging and caring environment.*

**BACKGROUND:** Born out of the suffrage movement, the League early on addressed existing social problems. Child labor laws were a state program item in the '20s. The League focused on adoption procedures in the '40s. In 1983 League adopted by concurrence the position of the Seattle League on "Day Care." This concurrence was subject to subsequent study and approval by local Leagues (1984).

The League has testified on the critical need for day care services. Local Leagues were encouraged to develop data on availability, costs and conditions of local day care centers.

League successfully supported the passage of the "Trust Fund Bill" that established a tax on marriage licenses, with the funds raised earmarked for addressing child abuse problems. League played an important role in the 1984 legislative session lobbying for improved children's services. League was also involved in successfully lobbying for the reauthorization of the Washington Council on Child Abuse and Neglect and the implementation of the Children and Family Services Act.

In 1985 and 1986, League conducted an extensive statewide study of the effectiveness of services for at-risk children — those who are abused, neglected, truant, runaway, emotionally disturbed or substance abuser. On the basis of interviews by local Leagues in twenty communities, the League issued a report on services for children at risk that formed the basis for a new League position and expanded lobbying efforts on behalf of children. In 1987, League lobbied for increased appropriations for children's services, including increases in day care reimbursement rates, supported measures to reduce the child welfare caseload, to increase legal protections for abused children, and to establish a Governor's Commission for Children.

At the 1991 convention a new study was adopted to examine Washington child custody and support laws and guidelines. The 1992 study, which included a survey of members of the judicial system, has been received with acclaim throughout the state.

In 1995 League closely watched the passage of a child abuse prevention bill to provide family preservation services to avoid out of home placement of abused and neglected children.

League's major effort in the 1997 legislative session was to extend the First Steps program to children up to age three. The legislation did not pass, but we plan to bring it back in 1998. Passage would have meant a significant step forward in prevention of child abuse and neglect for some 8,200 children born to families where there is high risk of abuse. League helped to defeat legislation that would have eliminated protections for young workers as well as parental

"rights" bills aimed at giving parents more control by cutting youngsters off from needed help from the community.

In 1998 and 1999, increased help for programs for young children was slim. Mostly LWV sought to avoid deep cuts and save some programs. A slight increase in funding and improvement in providing assistance and information for foster parents were gains. Funding to identify policies to encourage higher rates of kinship care placements was provided. Safety of young children was improved by HB 1898 authorizing "Crisis Nurseries". We will continue to work for child safety programs such as controlling bullying and SB5236, to decriminalize the act of transferring a newborn to a qualified person at an appropriate location. SB 5606 required Background checks for DSHS workers, but more is needed to protect children in non-licensed/in home, state subsidized facilities.

The 2005 Legislature passed SB5441, creating the Washington Learns and led by Governor Gregoire. After over a year of intensive study of the structure of our education system and its funding, a final report was developed with comprehensive, long-term recommendations for creating a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system for Washington. The Early Learning Council served as one of the advisory councils to the Washington Learns Steering committee.

The Early Learning Council was established by the legislature in 2005 to provide leadership and direction for the realignment and expansion of early learning services. It recommended the creation of the Department of Early Learning

In 2006 Governor Gregoire signed into law the bill creating the Department of Early Learning. The Department administers existing programs such as child care licensing and subsidies, ECEAP contracts, the Head Start Collaborative Office, and the Early Reading Initiative. It also works with Thrive by Five, the public private sector to build a comprehensive system of Early Learning.

The legislature in 2007 created an advisory Council to DEL. In addition it created a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), a child care information system, new duties supporting parents, assigned duties to the private public partnership and directs DEL to review and revise child care provider rules.

Home visitation services were also funded in the 2007 legislature to contract to WCPCAN (changed name to Parent Trust of Washington) for the purpose of improving parenting skills and outcomes for children.

In 2008 the League study *Early Care and Education of Young Children Birth to Five* was approved, updating the LWV earlier positions on "Day Care". Also in 2008, the LWV became a partner in the statewide Early Learning Action Alliance advocating for improved early care and education opportunities for all children.

In 2009 HB 1943 requires the Professional Development Consortium in collaboration with the Department of Early Learning to develop recommendations for a comprehensive statewide system of preparation and professional development for early learning and before and after school workforce. Final recommendations must be

presented to the Governor and Legislature by December 31, 2010.

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## THE LEAGUE'S POSITIONS ON CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS:

### **Child Custody and Support (1993)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**CC-1:** The best interest of the child should be the overriding consideration in determining custody, visitation and an appropriate level of child support. The physical and emotional security of the child should be paramount. All parties involved should work to reduce any adversarial aspects of the proceedings. In establishing child support, courts must ensure that deviations from the standard calculation do not place children in poverty.

**CC-2:** Children are entitled to support [that is] adequate to meet basic needs, which include the normal and reasonable costs of food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental expenses, child care, education and incidental needs. Child support should be commensurate with the parents' income, resources, and standard of living. Courts should have the discretion to order post secondary educational support in appropriate circumstances.

- The parents' child support obligation should be divided on a non-discriminatory basis in proportion to their incomes.
- In determining an appropriate level of child support, income should be defined broadly to include income from any source. Children from earlier relationships should not be penalized due to support obligations owed to children from subsequent relationships.
- For purposes of calculating child support, income should not be imputed to a parent who remains home to care for young children or children with special needs. Staying home to care for children should have monetary value attached to those services.

**CC-3:** The League of women Voters supports vigorous, efficient and innovative child support enforcement methods. An effective enforcement program should include non-judicial dispute resolution alternatives and incentives to ensure that parents voluntarily fulfill their child obligation.

**CC-4:** The League of Women Voters supports broad education regarding the responsibilities and consequences of parenthood.

### **Children's Services (1987)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington supports:*

**CH-1:** Stable and adequate funding for a coordinated continuum of services for children at risk. Priority should be given to prevention, early identification and intervention services, community based treatment and day treatment programs and funding for residential care.

### **Early Care and Education of Young Children (2009)**

**DC-1:** The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:

- The quality of the child's early care and education, birth – 5, is critical to maximizing the child's future development.
- Parents are a child's first teacher.
- The State of Washington has an important role in assisting parents to ensure that all children have the opportunity to develop to their full potential.

The LWVWA believes the State of Washington should support:

- Home visiting and other educational programs for parents with young children
- Programs for children with special needs
- Increasing access to preschool programs for children age 3 – 5
- Quality child care programs for children age birth - 5
- Improvements to child care programs
- Encouraging public- private partnerships to expand the early care system

### **DC-2: (1984)**

In order to provide for the general welfare of children, the state should maintain and enforce minimum standards for day care. Minimum standards should include provision for a safe, healthy, clean environment; creative and child oriented activities; competent caring providers and sufficient staff for the number of children in care.

## – ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to ensure a balanced state economy with a strong mixture of large and small businesses. Measures to contribute to long-range planning and cooperation between all levels of government with local initiatives wherever possible.*

**BACKGROUND:** The 1989 convention voted to “Examine the ways in which Washington state local economies may be affected by changes in the defense budget, our natural resource base, international trade and other factors.” After the study was completed in 1991, *Targeting Tomorrow: Washington’s economy adjusts to the ‘90s* was printed to share the information gathered with the public. This

publication was supported by the State of Washington Department of Community Development.

Soon after, the governor appointed an Economic Diversification Committee with appointed members from all sections of the state, and from diversified walks of life. The committee met regularly, encouraged diversification in the economy with some success, until it disbanded in 1994.

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**THE LEAGUE’S POSITION ON ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION:** *The League of Women Voters of Washington:*

**ED-1:** Recognizes that a strong mixture of large and small businesses is necessary for a balanced state economy, and supports measures that encourage both large and small business with the following recommendations:

- The quality of the environment should be a prime consideration when making economic decisions. The environment should not be permitted to degrade.

- Small businesses and rural businesses should be especially encouraged until such time as there is a better mix of small, medium, and large businesses to make up to a balanced economy in all areas of the state.

**ED-2:** Support measures that contribute to long-range planning and cooperation among all levels of government. Such measures should encourage local initiatives wherever possible. (1991)

## – GUN CONTROL IN WASHINGTON –

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Government should regulate ownership and possession of firearms and limit their accessibility.*

**BACKGROUND:** The 1990 League of Women Voters national convention adopted a position on Gun Control by consensus. A study was adopted by LWVWA in 1993 to examine and evaluate existing Washington state gun control laws and their enforcement. The scope of the study further called for a review of current laws in other states and Canadian provinces, and an assessment of gun control issues.

In 1997, after several years of lobbying unsuccessfully for legislation to implement our position, the League endorsed Initiative 676, the Handgun Safety Act, and worked in coalition with Washington Ceasefire and other groups to gather enough signatures to place the measure on the November ballot. The act would require that all handguns be sold with trigger-locking devices for safe storage and that handgun owners be required to obtain a safety license to indicate that they have been trained in the safe operation, handling and storage of handguns.

The Handgun Safety Initiative 676 supported by LWVWA did not pass in 1997. Since that defeat we have continued to work on legislation regarding the safe-storage

of guns and for closing the gun show loophole involving the sale of guns without the regulations required of licensed gun dealers.

The federal assault weapon ban, enacted in 1994, expired in September of 2004 because Congress failed to extend it. However, Washington State could join seven other states by enacting an even more effective ban on assault weapon and high capacity magazines. Other legislative priorities are closing the gun show loophole and to require the safe storage of firearms.

The 108<sup>th</sup> Congress also passed a bill in 2005 that granted the gun industry immunity from lawsuits although lawsuits are the only means of holding reckless dealers and manufacturers accountable.

In 2005 The Washington State legislature passed HB1687, strengthening provisions concerning the possession of firearms by persons found not guilty by reason of insanity.

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**THE LEAGUE’S POSITION ON GUN CONTROL (1994):** *The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**GC-1:** Government should regulate ownership and possession of firearms and limit their accessibility.

**GC-2:** Firearms should be regulated by government through measures which may include the following.

- Federal: applications to purchase; registration; manufacturers' and dealers' license fees; restrictions on owning, transporting and distributing; prohibition on types and places allowed, extended waiting periods (as consistent with LWVUS Gun Control position).
- State: licensing to purchase; issuance of state and local ID cards; registration; manufacturers' and dealers' license fees; restrictions on owning, carrying, transporting and distributing; prohibition on types and places allowed; extended waiting periods.
- Local: prohibition on places allowed.

**GC-3:** Taxes and license fees should be increased to help pay for:

- education about firearm safety
- background and verification checks for gun purchasers
- violence prevention programs and measures
- investigation and prosecution of illegal trafficking in firearms.

**GC-4:** Measures should be taken to limit young people's access to firearms. These should include the following:

- gun-free zones in school areas
- an age limit of 18 for the use and possession of guns
- requirements for safe gun storage

**GC-5:** civil and criminal parental liability under certain circumstances.

## – HEALTH CARE–

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to control total system expenditures and to provide universal access to affordable health services with seamless coverage regardless of one's health status.*

**BACKGROUND:** Following the establishment of the State of Washington Health Care Commission in 1990, the League actively monitored its public hearings, provided input, and attended meetings on state health care reform across the state. Since 1992, LWV representatives in Olympia have testified on behalf of our state positions during legislative sessions. The League collaborated with two coalitions—one supporting health care reform policies in concert with our positions and another working to ensure the inclusion of long term care.

The Washington State Health Services Act of 1993, one of the most sweeping health care reform acts in the nation, was mostly repealed by the 1995 legislature. Financing was a major stumbling block, as was the model for health care delivery, which was an employer based, managed competition, multiple sponsor model of health care reform. During the next ten years, multiple initiatives were undertaken to expand access to health care as the crisis in coverage escalated, with fewer people being covered by insurance and for those with coverage, erosion in the adequacy of that coverage. Cost was the culprit—cost of care and of pharmaceutical benefits.

The state League Board voted to become a member of the Washington Coalition for Insurance Parity in 1998, when this coalition sponsored Senate Bill 5425. The Coalition and this legislation called for parity for mental health benefits in health plans that do not self-insure. It took another eight years, until the 2006 legislative session, to get a bill passed and signed by the governor that will assure people with mental illness will have deductibles and co-pays on a par with the other illnesses covered by their policies if their policies offer coverage for mental illness. In 2007, mental health parity was extended to the individual and small group health plans and to disability insurance contracts.

In 2000, a high risk insurance pool was established to provide coverage for the costliest 8% of individuals seeking health insurance coverage in the individual market.

This resulted from the total lack of affordable coverage for the sickest and most severely injured people needing health insurance as individuals. The League did not support this legislation because it segments the very ill and injured from the rest of the population. The individual insurance market continues to be a source of legislative attention.

Health care access was a significant focus in the 2007 Washington Legislature. Many bills were passed that directly affect access to care. The Northwest Health Law Advocates (NoHLA) prepared an excellent summary of these bills in May 2007. This report excerpts from that summary and acknowledges with thanks the work done by NoHLA in its preparation.

Highlights of the bills passed include the following (in addition to the mental health parity provisions noted above): providing a Medicare Part D copayment program for people who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid; expanding DSHS requirements to provide affordable medical coverage to children under 19 with family income below 250% of federal poverty, increasing to 300% of federal poverty in January, 2009; extending Medicaid coverage for former foster youth from age 18-21; providing for the development and implementation of an evidence-based children's mental health system, based on a wraparound model of integrated children's health services, and including coverage of outpatient and family therapy, effective July 1, 2008, with revisions to access to care standards and benefit packages to be developed by July, 2009.

Two significant initiatives were enacted that undertake the reform of the health care system in Washington State. E2SHB 1569—Reforming the Health Care System in Washington State—creates the Washington Health Insurance Partnership (WHP), governed by a statewide public-private partnership board, to simplify and improve the purchase of health insurance for small business employees, with the intention of including other markets in the partnership in 2009. E2SSB 5930—Providing high

quality, affordable health care to Washingtonians based on the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care Costs and Access—provides a plan implement the Commission's recommendations. Both of these bills and their translation into action are works in progress.

Other bills affecting the insurance industry, hospitals, and quality of care were also passed in the 2007 legislature. The momentum is clearly building for significant improvement in reaching the goal of guaranteed, affordable quality health care.

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**THE LEAGUE'S POSITION ON HEALTH CARE:** *The League of Women Voters of Washington supports:*

**HC-1:** Policies, as part of comprehensive reform of the existing health system, which:

- Ensure universal access for all residents to a comprehensive, uniform, and affordable set of health services. These services shall be available regardless of one's health status (i.e., pre-existing conditions) or financial status.
- Provide "seamless" coverage and continuity of care, to the extent possible, regardless of

changes in life circumstances such as change in employment, marital status, financial status, or health status.

- Establish a mechanism to adequately control total system expenditures for health services while maintaining quality standards of care.
- Assure that no one shall be forced into poverty because of medical or long-term needs. (1992)

## – HUMAN RESOURCES–

**POSITION IN BRIEF:** *Action to achieve equal rights for all. Action to achieve equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability. Action to obtain measures that provide basic human needs for those unable to provide for themselves. Action to ensure that there are emergency support services for those involved in physical and/or mental violence.*

**BACKGROUND:** From its inception League has worked for equal rights and social reforms. At the 1969 convention a study was adopted which focused on discrimination in housing and the need for and availability of low-cost housing. The resulting position was adopted at council in 1970. In conjunction with the national welfare study, the state began a study of state welfare programs. In 1971, convention adopted a study on the status of women. After the adoption of a position in 1972, members throughout the state campaigned successfully to place the Equal Rights Amendment (HJR 61) in the state constitution. The Human Resources position was expanded in 1979 when convention adopted by concurrence a position on Domestic Violence based on a Cowlitz County League study.

League lobbied with partial success to prevent the curtailment of available services and the closing of several Human Rights Commission offices. League also participated in the campaign to defeat Initiative 471 which would have deleted all Medicaid funding for abortions. In 1984 we joined with other interested groups to increase public awareness of social problems including domestic violence, comparable worth and chemical dependency. The programs highlighted the effects of these problems on youth, women and sexual or ethnic minorities. League sponsored two all-day workshops to discuss educational equity, comparable worth, day care and children's services.

In 1985 we supported a low-income housing trust fund, and in 1987 we lobbied for funding for the trust fund. In 1987 we helped amend the Family Independence Program (FIP) for welfare reform into acceptable form, which was enacted into law.

In 1993 the convention adopted a position on welfare to replace the original position adopted in 1971. This rewritten position combines those from LWV of Washington and LWV of the United States. League has continued to

actively lobby for adequate funding for programs covered by the positions below.

The 1995 legislative session, with many new representatives in the House, saw an orchestrated attack on the state's handling of welfare, on spending for a wide spectrum of human services, and on the civil rights of non-offender youth and homosexuals. We responded, with very moderate success.

During the session League did successfully support a domestic violence prevention bill (SB 5219). Three main goals of this legislation were to improve victims' access to the courts; to improve systems and procedures so courts, police and prosecutors can do their jobs better; and to improve enforcement mechanisms to improve victim protection.

At the 1995 state LWV convention, delegates adopted a study of "Public Assistance as Social Policy." Consensus reached after discussion of the study in the fall of 1996 resulted in adoption of the revised position on Welfare printed below in time for action during the 1997 legislative session. Congressional welfare reform, signed by the president in 1996, ended the 60-year entitlement of aid to poor families with dependent children, and passed on to the states the task of implementing the federal reform. The state legislation that eventually passed was originally a stingy, punitive measure by League standards, but it improved somewhat during the session, and some of the more onerous provisions were vetoed by the governor. Among the issues the League lobbied for with some success was guaranteed child care (without a high co-payment) for every participant who must go to work and general assistance for legal immigrants.

League has continued to lobby for approaches to welfare more attuned to the needs of recipients and their dependent children. In November 2001,,,, Gov. Gary Locke

announced a new policy. About 96 percent of Washington families receiving cash benefits would be exempt from the 5-year cutoff of August, 2002. Those who will be permanently exempted from the limit include parents with mental or physical disabilities too severe to work grandparents over 55 caring for grandchildren and relatives caring for a disabled child. Temporary exemptions up to one year will be granted for parents who have faithfully participated in WorkFirst but have been unable to find a job.

From 1992-1997 LWVWA relied upon League principles and LWVUS positions in successfully opposing legislation and the five initiatives that would have legalized discrimination against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals in our state. Delegates at the 1997 state convention adopted an amendment to our positions on Education and Human Resources to clarify our long-standing commitment to equal rights for all people and to be consistent with LWVUS positions.

In 1997 League endorsed Initiative 677, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. This initiative to the people would prohibit employers, employment agencies and labor organizations from discriminating based upon sexual orientation.

In the 1998 election, the LWVWA unsuccessfully opposed Initiative 200 which made discrimination illegal but effectively did away with Affirmative Action.

From 1998 through 2001 the League lobbied for the "Safe Schools Bill", which requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop criteria for school districts to develop their own anti-harassment policies and to establish training program guidelines for

districts to address harassment and intimidation against all children, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. Due to an evenly split House the bill was not able to move out of committee. At the 2001 Convention the League passed a resolution supporting "a well-written Anti-Bullying Bill".

In 1999 League supported a bill to develop a grant program to fund public educational activities regarding the events around the forced internment of civilians of Japanese ancestry. Also, the League supported a bill which would enable employers to file a lawsuit on the basis of employment discrimination regardless of the number of persons employed by the employer. In 1999, 2000 and 2001 the League successfully opposed a bill that limited benefits of state employees to lawful spouses and dependent children. The State Board provided health insurance to partners of gay and lesbian employees in 2001.

In 2001 the League also supported a transgender hate-crimes bill, and a bill to study the implementation of the death penalty, but neither of these bills passed. However we successfully opposed a bill that would allow the Boy Scouts to receive state funds while discriminating against gay scouts and leaders.

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## THE LEAGUE'S POSITIONS ON HUMAN RESOURCES:

### **Discrimination (1997)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**DI-1:** All levels of government share the responsibility to provide equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing for all persons regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability.

### **Domestic Violence (1979)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**DV-1:** Shelter services should be staffed 24 hours a day. **DV-2:** Day care should be provided which includes appropriate structured activities which deal with the emotional needs of the children involved.

**DV-3:** Both professional and peer counseling should be offered within a counseling program. Referral services should be available. Opportunities should be provided to improve self-esteem, assertiveness, parenting skills and career planning.

**DV-4:** Education should be offered to acquaint the community at large with the philosophy and services of the program. It is important to increase the understanding of the community regarding domestic violence, its impact on people and the potential role of the community in seeking solutions.

**DV-5:** Legislative and administrative requirements should be minimized. Local policy-making boards

should be developed and local control should be encouraged when possible. Advisory boards should be composed of concerned citizens, social service professionals with experience in working with victims of family violence and past users of emergency shelter services.

**DV-6:** Provisions should be made to offer legal services and legal counseling. Whenever possible and appropriate, paraprofessionals may be used. A close liaison with law enforcement agencies should be encouraged. This may include specialized training for police officials, refinement of existing laws and/or support for new laws that address more effectively the circumstances surrounding family violence.

### **Housing (1970)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**HO-1:** All levels of government and the private sector share the responsibility to help alleviate the housing shortage in the low income sector. Identifying housing needs and planning to meet these needs is best done at the local level. The state should set minimum standards for safe and decent housing and provide for their enforcement. Policies should be formulated to allow for maximum use of available federal funding as well as encourage the participation of industry, business, local and nonprofit groups in meeting housing needs. The state government

should provide information, assistance and coordination for housing programs at all levels.

### **Status Of Women (1972)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:*

**SW-1:** State government shares with other governmental levels the responsibility to enact laws and regulations which provide women, regardless of marital status, rights and responsibilities equal to those held by men. Strong enforcement powers as well as adequate funding should be provided.

**SW-2:** Procedures for divorce should be simple, equitable and as inexpensive as possible. Divorce law should include the no-fault concept. There should be provision for counseling; conciliation is to be encouraged and the rights and welfare of children are to be protected. **SW-3:** Settlements should be based on individual need and the ability to pay.

**SW-4:** Employment laws and regulations should encourage practices which are fair to individuals of both sexes. Job-related benefits should be extended to workers regardless of sex.

**SW-5:** Every individual should have the right to choose his or her legal domicile regardless of marital status.

### **Welfare (1993, 1996)**

*The League of Women Voters of Washington believes:*

**WE-1:** Policies eliminating disincentives to work and implementing the social goals of preventing and reducing poverty should make it possible for individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency. These policies should be implemented at federal, state and local governmental levels. Programs must be efficiently

administered and evaluated periodically. We support state government programs that, alone or with private efforts:

- increase job opportunities;
- provide opportunities and incentives for education and training for employment at wages sufficient to support a family and that include support services such as quality child care, health care, transportation, counseling and job placement;
- emphasize life skills such as family planning and parenting, as well as work skills;
- are tailored to meet the needs of the individuals;
- decrease the incidence of teenage pregnancy.

**WE-2:** Persons who are unable to work, whose incomes are inadequate, or for whom jobs are not available, should be assured of public assistance and services sufficient to meet their needs for food, shelter and health care. When the federal government does not provide sufficient resources to meet these basic needs, state government must assume that responsibility. In times of budgetary constraints, our state government's highest priority must be to meet people's basic needs for food, shelter and health care, with a special emphasis on protecting and nurturing children. We support:

- adequate funding of income maintenance programs (cash grants) measured by a realistic and regularly updated standard of need, and continued eligibility for "in kind" assistance (food stamps, food and nutrition programs, housing and health care and preventive services).

**WE-3:** We also support a goal of achieving statewide, a continuum of family support services maintained and delivered by public and private entities. Supportive services should be integrated with those available to the general public with charges based on ability to pay.