

## **LWVIL SOCIAL POLICY POSITION: IMMIGRATION**

**The League supports state and local community efforts to provide orientation and counseling services for all immigrants. The League supports provisions for educational programs and materials on rights in the workplace for all workers, driving certificates for undocumented workers and the availability of auto insurance for holders of certificates. The League opposes deputizing state and local police to enforce immigration laws, and ordinances that penalize landlords for renting to or prohibit issuance of business permits to undocumented immigrants. The League opposes extending the right to vote to undocumented immigrants.**

### **IMMIGRATION (2007):**

- The League of Women Voters of Illinois believes that the State of Illinois should promote local community efforts to provide orientation and counseling services for immigrants regardless of documentation status. The State of Illinois should support funding efforts for these services by encouraging federal funding and by the use of funds from the state and local governments as well as from the private sector.
- The League of Women Voters of Illinois believes the State of Illinois should promote and fund educational programs and materials that seek to inform all workers, including documented and undocumented immigrants, of their rights in the workplace.
- The League of Women Voters of Illinois believes the State of Illinois should provide "driving certificates" or some other form of proof of driving validation to undocumented drivers, allowing those drivers to drive legally and ensuring that they would have passed a state driving test. The LWVIL also believes the State of Illinois should permit and encourage auto insurance providers to issue insurance coverage to holders of such driving certificates.
- The League of Women Voters of Illinois opposes the deputization of state and local police to enforce immigration laws in Illinois.
- The League of Women Voters of Illinois opposes legislation or ordinances at the state and local level that would penalize landlords for renting to undocumented immigrants.
- The League of Women Voters of Illinois opposes legislation or ordinances at the state and local level that would prohibit the issuance of business permits to undocumented immigrants.

- The League of Women Voters of Illinois does not support extending the right to vote to undocumented immigrants.

**Background** The position on immigration was reached in 2007 after a statewide study.

The topic of immigration had crept up the “awareness ladder” in the United States. Specifically, in Illinois, a state with one of the largest immigrant populations in the country, this topic was and continues to be debated regularly in the media as well as by our elected local and state officials. Because of the federal government’s inability to pass enforceable immigration laws, legislation was and still is being introduced by state legislators, and communities have been considering local ordinances to address immigration issues. While the LWVIL cannot yet address immigration from the national perspective, pending results of a current national immigration study adopted in June 2006, there are state and local issues the LWVIL could address if there was a LWVIL immigration position.

The scope of the June 2005 adopted study was: “How should Illinois respond to the challenges and opportunities of immigration in the areas of economic policy, social policy which includes education, and the governmental process?” Following the two year study funded through the generosity of local Leagues, the study committee narrowed the focus of the consensus questions to what could be addressed at the state level. In addition to those questions where there was consensus and that now make up the immigration position, the LWVUS and LWVIL have existing positions on fiscal policy and social policy to include education and healthcare that do not specify citizenship as a prerequisite to application as needed.