

POSITIONS IN BRIEF

These statements are summaries of our positions. Before using a LWVIL position at the local and/or regional level, Leagues should refer to the complete position printed in *Where We Stand*, including background and previous action.

GOVERNMENT POSITIONS: *LWVIL takes action on the state level in the following public policy areas based on these LWVUS positions: Voting Rights; Election Process including apportionment, campaign finance and selection of the President; Citizen Rights including citizen's right to know, citizen participation, individual liberties and public policy on reproductive choices; and Congress and the Presidency. (See LWVUS Impact on Issues.)*

CONSTITUTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION AND

AMENDMENTS: LWVIL supports implementation of provisions for governmental change in the Local Government Article, and amendments to achieve merit selection of judges; a graduated income tax; the indirect statutory initiative and the recall of elected judges. The League maintains its support for positions already achieved in the Constitution but which may require effort to preserve.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: LWVIL supports expanded citizen initiative powers to change the structure of county government. Petition requirements for citizen-initiated change should be a percentage of actual voters in a recent jurisdiction-wide election. The League supports changes in the Illinois County Executive Act to provide a clear separation of powers between the legislative and the executive branches and easily understood referendum language.

CONSOLIDATION OF GOVERNMENTAL UNITS AND SHARING OF MAJOR GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES:

The League of Women Voters of Illinois supports the efficient and effective operation of government. Consolidation of governmental units and the sharing of major governmental services may be a way of promoting the efficient and effective operation of government. In achieving this goal, the League supports a cooperative and transparent process, in which citizens have sufficient and timely information with which to make informed decisions about proposed actions, and

well-defined channels for citizen input and review. Administrative and fiscal efficiency should be included in the criteria by which local governments consider whether to consolidate or share major services. *Where We Stand* lists a series of criteria to be considered.

STATE ELECTION LAWS: LWVIL supports uniform election laws and procedures throughout the state to ensure the integrity of the election system and opposes term limits for members of the General Assembly. The League believes that a good election system should provide stability and continuity of governance and should produce a legislature that addresses the problems of society effectively. It should be resistant to both outright fraud and other forms of political manipulation.

STATE REDISTRICTING: The League supports a redistricting process which is timely, orderly, and meets the basic criteria relating to population, compactness and contiguity and the requirements of the 1965 U.S. Voting Rights Act and subsequent amendments.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS POSITIONS:

LWVIL takes action on international relations issues only at the request of the LWVUS. These positions include: United Nations, Trade, U.S. Relations with Developing Countries, Arms Control, and Military Policy and Defense Spending.

NATURAL RESOURCES POSITIONS:

The Illinois LWV takes action on the state level in the following areas based on these LWVUS positions: Agriculture Policy; Environmental Protection and Pollution Control; Natural Resources; Public Participation; and Resource Management.

LAND USE: LWVIL supports development of a comprehensive land use policy for Illinois that provides for orderly growth while preserving the environment, conserving natural resources and providing needed open space. The State should identify, plan for and have the final authority over key and critical areas within the state. Standards and guidelines for land use should be developed by the State with local governments making purely local

decisions. At every stage there should be citizen input. The State should plan for adequate supplies of low and moderate income housing with every community providing a percentage under some kind of fair share plan. The League favors regional planning agencies with mandatory and continuous funding from local, regional, and state sources. The League supports state enabling legislation for development impact fees.

LARGE-SCALE LIVESTOCK FACILITIES: The League supports strict regulation of large-scale livestock facilities on the state, regional and county levels to include statewide environmental controls, public hearings prior to siting and regional and/or county control of siting.

PESTICIDES: The League supports reduction of exposure to all pesticides. The use of non-toxic alternatives should be encouraged.

SOCIAL POLICY POSITIONS: *LWVIL takes action on the state level under the LWVUS Social Policy position to secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. The LWVUS position promotes social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.*

LWVIL takes action on the state level based on the following LWVUS Social Policy positions: Equality of Opportunity including ratification of the Equal rights Amendment; Support for equal access to education, employment and housing; Fiscal Policy; Health Care, Immigration, Meeting Basic Human Needs, Child Care, Early Intervention for Children at Risk, Violence Prevention, Gun Control and Urban Policy.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES: The League believes that the State should play the leading role in meeting the needs of children and their families.

This responsibility applies across systems of care regardless of age or legal status. The State has the primary role in funding to ensure that quality services are equitably available throughout the state. The League supports a continuum of community-based services that strengthens and preserves families and fosters healthy growth and development of children. Prevention and early intervention should have high priority. The League supports a juvenile court system that provides opportunities for effective protection,

treatment, and rehabilitation. Detention should be reserved for delinquent children who meet professional screening criteria and provided separately from adult programs. The League opposes the automatic transfer of children to the criminal court and the death penalty for children.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE: LWVIL supports the increased use of intermediate sanctions in the community. Judges should retain discretion to choose between imprisonment and probation for most offenses. The League supports a sufficient number of trained probation officers and other court personnel, prompt trials, enforcement of jail standards and a bail system that does not rely on financial ability as a criterion for pretrial release. Correctional services should conform to national professional standards and offer programs and services for self-improvement. The justice system must be adequately funded to carry out its goals. State funds should emphasize community sanctions over the construction of prisons. LWVIL supports expanded prevention and treatment programs to ease the burden on the criminal justice system.

DEATH PENALTY ABOLITION: The League supports abolition of the death penalty in Illinois.

GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION:

LWVIL supports legislative controls to stop the proliferation of handgun ownership and irresponsible use; and restricted access to automatic and semiautomatic assault type weapons.

IMMIGRATION: The League supports

- State and local community efforts to provide orientation and counseling services for all immigrants.
- 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 the undocumented immigrants.
- extending the right to vote to the undocumented immigrants.

INCOME ASSISTANCE: The League supports income assistance and supportive services for all low-income individuals and families.

MENTAL HEALTH: The League supports a comprehensive and coordinated system of treatment and rehabilitation services for adults and children with mental illness. There should be adequate funding, planning, program standards, and personnel training requirements for both state facilities and community programs. The League supports a broad array of adequate and accessible community services. Although primary responsibility should rest with the state, funding from local, federal, and non-governmental sources should be encouraged. A system of local boards to levy taxes, administer all funds, and to plan and coordinate services should be required throughout the state. The State should require local governments to provide in their zoning ordinances for residential programs for persons with mental illness.

SCHOOLS: LWVIL supports a system of high quality elementary and secondary schools for all children in Illinois, which provides for local control of school program and budget within minimum program requirements set by the State. The State should provide leadership to local communities for program development and should set standards for recognition and accreditation of schools. Educational programs' effectiveness should be evaluated regularly. The League favors minimum standards for graduation and promotion of students. LWVIL supports increased professionalism for teachers including stringent teacher preparation standards, comprehensive teacher and principal evaluations, changes in tenure, and increased teacher compensation. The State should assume the major responsibility for funding public schools and guarantee an adequate level of financial support. Schools should be provided stable, reliable, and adequate revenue through a combination of federal, state and local sources.

LWVIL supports accountability, transparency, and equity in the use of public funds for education, including charter schools. Charter school authorizers should evaluate the performance of existing charters before granting new charters or approving additional campuses. The authority for approving and renewing charters should reside exclusively in the local school board.

STATE FISCAL POLICIES: The League supports a diversified revenue system, relying principally on a combination of broad-based taxes and user fees, that is equitable, progressive, stable, responsive and simple.

LWVIL Action Foci for 2015-2017

Adopted by Delegates at the June 2015 Convention

- * Criminalization of Mental Illness
- * Gun Violence Prevention
- * Fiscal Policy – with a focus on education and social needs
- * Redistricting
- * Water – with a focus on nutrient loss

