

PROGRAM PLANNING FOR 2021 LWVNYS CONVENTION

Preparing for State Convention 2021

Included in this email are directions to all leagues on developing a Program, i.e. any new issues selected for concentrated study, which positions need to be updated, and which existing positions are maintained for possible action, for 2021-2023. “Program” really means positions, so this is the time to determine which positions we want to keep, delete, update/revise or even consider new studies for new positions or concurrence with existing positions of other Leagues. We hope you will review our present program and recommend any changes through the process noted in these guidelines.

Grassroots and League “Program”

In a grassroots organization, it is vital that all members have the opportunity to participate. The League “Program” is determined by members and consists of federal, state and local issues. National issues are adopted at LWVUS Convention, state issues at LWVNYS Convention and local issues at local Leagues' annual meetings. Please share the information in this report with your members and encourage member participation in the making of the LWVNYS 2021-2023 Program. This process provides every member an opportunity to influence new areas of study and the issues that will direct League action during the 2021-2023 League years.

This is the first year that local Leagues and members will also have the opportunity to suggest changes to Program through direct suggestions to the state League Board. (See attached new State Consensus, Update and Concurrence Process) This can be done at anytime, however the Program Planning process for the 2021 Convention is the only time that these suggestions can be voted on by the membership as non-recommended items. New studies recommended at other times will be considered and adopted by the state Board at its discretion.

CALENDAR FOR DEVELOPING LWVNYS 2021-2023 PROGRAM

January – February

Local Leagues review LWVNYS Summary of Public Policy Positions (and the underlying complete position in LWVNYS *Impact on Issues*) and discuss possible revisions and additions at a general membership meeting. Revisions and additions would be done through dropping positions, updating positions, or new studies/concurrences. Local League boards, using the outcome of the general membership meeting, forward their recommendations on the attached form to the state League by March 1, 2021. **This is the only method for suggesting new studies to be adopted at Convention 2021 and the March 1 deadline for submission must be met. Changes in Program cannot be suggested for the first time at Convention for adoption at Convention.**

March

State Board reviews recommendations from local Leagues and develops a Proposed Program for consideration by delegates to State Convention.

April

Proposed Program is sent to local Leagues in Pre Convention Kit. It includes recommended and non-recommended program items, submitted by the March 1, 2021 deadline. Local Leagues review the Proposed Program. They may decide, early on, to establish a League network to rally support for certain items on the recommended or non-recommended lists.

June

Convention delegates adopt a 2021-2023 Program either as proposed by the state League board or as amended by the inclusion of non-recommended items.

GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL LEAGUE PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LWVNYS 2021-2023 PROGRAM

1. Hold a general membership meeting to provide an opportunity for grassroots input. The meeting should be chaired by a local League board member with experience related to the state issues. The chair will find the following references valuable in her/his efforts to guide the discussion (attached or links provided): LWVNYS *Impact on Issue* (attached and on state League website under *Legislative Action*), LWVUS *Impact on Issues* (<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/other-issues-tools/impact-issues-2016-2018-online-edition>), LWVNYS *In League In New York State: A Guide To Managing Local Leagues* Section 8, Pages 153-180 (attached and on state League website under *Local League Resources*), LWVNYS Summary of Public Policy Positions 2019-2020 (attached). LWVNYS *Impact on Issues* has been updated as of the end of the 2020 legislative session. Information on many areas of our positions can also be found on the specific issue pages on the legislative action page of our website. **If you have any questions, please call or email the state office.**
2. Use the following guidelines to successfully develop recommendations for the 2019-2021 program:
 - a. Review LWVNYS Summary of Public Policy Positions 2017-18 and the underlying complete positions to recommend which positions should be retained, dropped, or updated. The following definitions should be used to guide these decisions.
 - i. Retain - Members are committed to the position and will actively be involved in supporting LWVNYS efforts to pursue position's goals.
 - ii. Drop - Position is no longer useful in its present form or is not supported by members. Action on this position will end. Any future action will require adoption of a new study.
 - iii. Update - A study of limited scope to reevaluate a position in light of new information, changed circumstances, and/or conflict with another position. The aim is to consider position changes.
 - iv. **The Summary of Public Policy Positions is merely a convenient way to access our full positions. Amendments to the wording for editorial purposes, clarification or emphasis may be made but may not change the scope of meaning of the underlying position as currently applied by the Board. It is recommended that such amendments be given as Direction to the Board.**
 - b. Please consider the following:
 - i. Have our goals been reached or is further action needed?
 - ii. Is there need for monitoring?
 - iii. Is member interest and understanding sufficient to continue the inclusion of this position?
 - c. Before proposing a new study, review *LWVUS Impact on Issues* to be certain we have no national position on which to base action. Note that many of our positions in LWVNYS Summary of Public Policy Positions, are based on national positions.
 - d. When considering an issue for study, answer the following questions:
 - i. Would a study of this issue result in a position that could be used to influence legislative action or state government policy?

- ii. Is there sufficient member interest in this issue, locally and statewide?
- iii. Can the League make a unique contribution by adopting this issue as a program item?
- iv. Is there leadership at the local and state League level to conduct a statewide study that would result in a valid consensus?
- v. If a valid consensus is achieved and a position on the issue developed, do we have the local and state human and financial resources to work toward achieving the goal(s) of the position?

The guidelines cited above are not meant to discourage the recommendation of new studies but rather to encourage careful consideration. The League is a grassroots organization with tremendous credibility, due in large part to its reputation for conducting valid studies resulting in positions that represent our grassroots. As times change, the League must change but change should not result in a loss of quality. It is also imperative that we remember that studies increase visibility and that when visibility is in the positive vein it should increase membership. So, if your local League, after answering the above-cited questions, decides to recommend a study, or a concurrence, your state board will review it thoroughly and consider its impact on all fronts.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

LWVNYS

2019-2020

ELECTION LAW

UNDER LWVUS POSITIONS Support of measures to protect, extend and encourage the use of the franchise, including paperless and Election Day registration, no-excuse absentee and in-person early voting. Restore integrity to the election process – specifically support for uniformity in election laws and procedures in their implementation and enforcement; promote measures that ensure the integrity of all ballots; support ballot access and fair campaign practices.

Support comprehensive campaign finance reform, including public financing of campaigns.

Opposition to term limits for members of the NYS Legislature.

Opposition to term limits for NYS statewide elected officials.

Support the continuation of Fusion Voting in New York State whether or not Wilson-Pakula is repealed.

GOVERNMENT

UNDER LWVUS POSITIONS Support of citizen rights, including reproductive rights.

Support of effective regulation of lobbying and ethics.

Support of standards to ensure equitable representation in the State legislature and Congress.

Support for staggered four year terms for both houses and the limiting of outside income for legislators, preferably on the federal model using a percentage of base income.

Support of improved measures to provide representation for legislative districts in case of a vacancy.

Support of responsive and responsible legislative processes which increase the role of the individual member and the committee system.

Support of procedural reforms in the constitutional convention process to promote openness and nonpartisanship.

Support of the consolidation of government/shared services when it promotes effective and efficient operation of government.

HEALTH CARE

Support of measures to assure a basic level of quality physical and mental health care, including regulatory incentives to encourage development of cost-effective alternative methods of delivery; funding for health promotion and disease prevention programs; provisions for effective citizen participation in health policy decisions.

Support of measures that enable individuals to assume responsibility for their own health and to participate in decisions, including extraordinary life-extending procedures.

Support for uniform eligibility and coverage of basic health care costs through public financing with single payer concept as an acceptable approach to implementing League positions on equitable access and cost containment.

Support for the option of medical aid in dying for the terminally ill.

JUDICIAL

Support of a unified state court system with improved provisions for judicial selection.

Support of statewide guidelines for law enforcement at all levels to prevent racial and economic profiling.

Support of measures to improve pretrial procedures in the criminal courts.

Support of measures to promote a fair and efficient jury system.
Support the rights of indigent defendants to representation at public expense.
Support of alternatives to incarceration.
Opposition to the death penalty, with life without parole as the primary alternative.

NATURAL RESOURCES

UNDER LWVUS POSITIONS Support for protection and management of New York's natural resources in the public interest, including energy conservation and energy options from renewable sources.

Support for measures to achieve watershed protection including limiting pesticide use and applying Best Management Practices.

Support for a state-established, intergovernmental system for land resource management.

Support for a proactive role for New York State in regional land use planning, containing urban sprawl and protecting sensitive areas.

Support of reconditioning of the New York State Erie/Barge Canal System and its development for recreational uses.

Support for preserving and enhancing the environmental integrity and quality of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Ecosystem.

SOCIAL POLICY

UNDER LWVUS POSITIONS Support for equality of opportunity, meeting basic human needs, childcare, energy-efficient and environmentally sound public transit, and gun control.

Support measures to meet the needs for affordable and accessible housing through use of state funds and incentives to localities

Support of a livable wage for all localities in New York State

STATE FINANCES

Support reforms for greater equity in education financing (K-12) for both pupils and taxpayers.

Support raising funds to provide New York's children with a sound basic education through increases in the New York State personal income tax, implemented in a progressive fashion.

Support for the replacement of the existing local residential property tax relief programs in which relief goes to all with programs based on need, with annual cost of living adjustment.

Oppose in principle the use of public funds to support non-public schools (K-12).

Oppose any increase in the maximum number of charter schools without improvements to the Charter School Act.

Support the funding of public higher education and the existing formula for financing the community system, 1/3 tuition, 1/3 state aid, and 1/3 county support.

Support a uniform equitable assessment and property tax system.

Support of measures to provide for openness and accountability in the operation of the New York State public authority system.

Support of a timely and responsive state budget.

WOMEN'S ISSUES

Support of measures that hold marriage to be an economic partnership with a presumption of equality between the spouses.

Opposition to measures that contain a presumption of joint custody of the children.

Support for equity in employment laws and practices and equal pay for jobs of comparable worth.

Support of measures to reduce the incidence and effects of domestic violence.

LWVNYS STATE PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2021-2023
RECOMMENDATION(S) SUBMITTED BY LWV OF: _____

NAME: _____ **TITLE:** _____

TELEPHONE: _____ **E-MAIL:** _____

1. Number of members participating in program-making meeting(s)? _____

2. Does your League wish to retain the current program as it is? _____

3. Does your League wish to update any item(s) in the current program? _____

Please specify: _____

4. Does your League wish to drop any item(s) in the current program? _____

Please specify: _____

5. Does your League wish to propose a new program item for study or concurrence? _____

Please describe: _____

PLEASE USE THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS FORM IS NECESSARY

DUE March 1, 2021

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW YORK STATE**

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Website: www.lwnvy.org