

# SUMMARY OF PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

## League of Women Voters of the United States

### REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

#### Voting Rights

**Citizen's Right to Vote.** Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

**DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation.** Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

#### Election Process

**Apportionment.** Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

**Redistricting.** Support redistricting processes and enforceable standards that promote fair and effective representation at all levels of government with maximum opportunity for public participation.

**Money in Politics (formerly campaign finance).** Support campaign finance/MIP regulations that enhances political equality for all citizens, ensures transparency, protects representative democracy from distortion by undisclosed contributions and big money, and combats corruption and undue influence in government. Support campaign spending that is restricted but not banned. Supports public financing, full disclosure, abolishing SuperPACs, and creating an effective enforcement agency.

**Selection of the President.** Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular-vote. Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

#### Citizen Rights

**Citizen's Right to Know/Public Participation.** Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate informed understanding and public participation in government decision-making.

#### Evaluating Constitutional Amendment Proposals and Constitutional Conventions

**Amendment Proposals.** Consider whether a proposal addresses matters of abiding importance, makes our political system more democratic, protects individual rights, could be achieved by a constitutional amendment or legislative proposal, and is consistent with other League positions.

**Constitutional Conventions.** Hold Constitutional Conventions only when certain conditions are in place, such as: limited to a specific topic, full transparency, delegates selected by population, and voting by delegates not by states.

**Individual Liberties.** Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

**Public Policy on Reproductive Choices.** Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

#### Congress and the Presidency

**Congress.** Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision making capability, effective performance, and transparency.

**The Presidency.** Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

#### Privatization

Ensure transparency, accountability, positive community impact and preservation of the common good when considering the transfer of governmental services, assets and/or functions to the private sector.

## **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.**

### **United Nations**

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.

### **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.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.**

### **Resource Management & Protection**

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Promote resource conservation, stewardship, and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government. Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

**Air Quality.** Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

**Energy.** Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation, and encourage the use of renewable resources.

**Land Use.** Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

**Water.** Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater, and drinking water, and set up a process to evaluate inter-basin water transfers.

**Waste Management.** Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

**Nuclear.** Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

**Climate Change.** Support climate goals and policies that are consistent with the best available climate science and that will ensure a stable climate system for future generations.

### **Public Participation**

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

### **Agriculture Policy**

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices, and increased reliance on the free market.

**Federal Agriculture Policies.** Provide financial support to subsidize agriculture in specific instances, enforce federal antitrust laws to ensure competitive agricultural markets, and apply clean air and water regulations to all animal and

aquaculture production. The federal government should fund basic agricultural research to provide adequate safety of our food supply.

## **SOCIAL POLICY**

**Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.**

### **Equality of Opportunity**

**Equal Rights.** Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA. Support equal rights for all under state and federal law regardless of race, color gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability.

**Education, Employment, and Housing.** Support equal access to education, employment, and housing.

**Federal Role in Public Education.** Support federal policies that provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12.

### **Fiscal Policy**

**Tax Policy.** Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

**Federal Deficit.** Promote responsible deficit policies.

**Funding of Entitlements.** Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability, and health insurance.

### **Health Care**

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides affordable access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents, including behavioral health that is integrated with and achieves parity with the physical health care system.

### **Immigration**

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.

### **Meeting Basic Human Needs**

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

**Income Assistance.** Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing, and shelter.

**Support Services.** Provide essential support services.

**Housing.** Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

### **Child Care**

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

### **Early Intervention for Children at Risk**

Support policies and programs that promote the well-being, development, and safety of all children.

### **Violence Prevention**

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

### **Gun Control**

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

**Urban Policy**

Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

**Death Penalty**

LWVUS supports abolition of the death penalty.

**Sentencing Policy**

Support the exploration and utilization of alternatives to imprisonment, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

**Human Trafficking**

Oppose all forms of domestic and international human trafficking of adults and children, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

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