

# BRIEF SUMMARY OF PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS – LWV 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 enhance political equality for all citizens, ensure transparency, protect representative democracy from distortion by undisclosed contributions and big money, and combat corruption and undue influence in government. Support campaign spending that is restricted but not banned. Support public financing, full disclosure, abolishing super PACs, 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.

**Voter Representation/Electoral System.** Support electoral systems at each level of government that encourage participation, are verifiable and auditable, and enhance representation for all voters.

### Citizen's 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.

**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.

### 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, including limited to a specific topic, full transparency, delegates selected by population, and voting by delegates not by states.

### 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 government services, assets, and/or functions to the private sector.

### Digital Equity

High-speed affordable internet access is an essential service that should be readily available to all US residents and businesses.

### Decline of Local News and Its Impact on Democracy

Support credible and ethical journalism as essential to our democracy.

## **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 US trade policies that reduce trade barriers; expand international trade; and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental, and social goals.

### Developing Countries

Promote US 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

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.

### Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

The League supports the preservation of the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the ecosystem and 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 of solid and hazardous wastes and promote their reuse and recycling.

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

### Transfer of Federal Public Lands

Promote policies that keep federal public lands under the jurisdiction of the federal government.

### 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.

### Federal Agriculture Policies

Support environmentally sound farm practices, and increased reliance on the free market while promoting adequate supplies of food at reasonable prices and regulations to all animal and aquaculture production. Enforce federal antitrust laws to ensure competitive agricultural markets, provide financial support to subsidize agriculture in specific instances. Support the federal government's funding of basic agricultural research to ensure 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.

### Criminal Justice

Support a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and that fosters public trust at all stages, including policing practices, pre-trial procedures, sentencing, incarceration, and re-entry.

### 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 from pre-K through grade 12.

### Fiscal Policy

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

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

**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.

### Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides affordable access to a basic level of quality care for all US 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 State; be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises; and provide for student visas. Ensure fair treatment under the law for all person. In transition to a reformed system, support provisions for individuals already living in the country without legal permission 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 Policy

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

Support 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. Oppose 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.*

