

League Lingo and Procedures Made – Somewhat, Hopefully – Easy to Understand.

We are so excited to have so many new members. The League, like all groups, has their own lingo and own way of doing things. I know from experience that it can be difficult to understand the process of the League. Therefore I want to recap a few of the more important and most difficult to comprehend.

This information is from the LWV US “Impact on Issues” paper found here:

<https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/LWV%202018-20%20Impact%20on%20Issues.pdf>

Advocacy vs. Lobbying:

Advocacy is broader concept than lobbying. Advocacy activities are often considered “educational.” This is the case even when only one side of an issue is presented if no action on a piece of legislation is requested. Such activities can include: (1) developing public policy briefs that analyze issues and provide detailed information and recommendations for addressing them through specific reforms and (2) providing forums for discussing issues and educating policymakers and the public. Speaking in support of the organization is also advocating, i.e., for the overall cause of the organization. Lobbying is defined as an attempt to influence specific legislation, both legislation that has been introduced and specific legislation that has been proposed. Lobbying includes actions that transmit a point of view on a specific piece of legislation to elected officials or their staffs, as well as action urging the public to contact their legislators about a specific piece of legislation. It also includes communications to the general public expressing a view on a specific referendum or other ballot measure.

National policies are set by the LWVUS Board, state policies by state board and local...you guessed it ...by the local board. You will receive action alerts from LWVUS and LWV Virginia and periodically by us in Arlington. Action. Only issues that are priorities get action alerts.

If you wish the LWV US to consider Federal legislation that they have not made a priority you can fill out a Federal Action Request Form:

<https://www.lwv.org/federal-action-request-form>.

You can also email us in Arlington at lwvarlingtonva@gmail.com if you want to suggest a local (or state) issue. We will be sure to pass along your information to the LWV VA board.

Speaking with One Voice:

“Speaking with one voice” is one of the most important tenets of the League. The national League is responsible for determining strategies and action policies that ensure that the League’s message on national issues is consistent throughout the country. Similarly, state Leagues are responsible for a consistent state message, and local Leagues must cooperate with one another to ensure that regional issues are addressed in a manner consistent with neighboring Leagues. Typically, the president of the national, state, or local League is the only person who speaks for the League in an official capacity, unless another person has been designated as the official spokesperson on a specific issue.

If you are writing letters on an issue, you may reference that you are a member of the LWV, however, you may never say you are speaking on behalf of the LWV unless requested to do so by the president of your local league.

In addition, there is a chain of contacting elected officials and doing debates that is straightforward.

LWV US – deals with national candidates and officials (such as President, US Senate and House of Representatives).

LWV Virginia (or any state league) – deals with the General Assembly and Governor.

Local leagues deal with local officials. In our case, that is the County Board, Arlington election officials, etc.

Ok now for some of the lingo. I have to admit – this is not as straightforward do requires a bit of memorization.

CONCURRENCE

Agreement by League members with a position on an issue reached by another League, study committee, task force or League board.

No League works on an issue unless there is a policy on the topic. Policies come about after a League has done extensive research on the subject, and then has the policy study approved by the appropriate board. (Again, national issues go to national board, state to state, etc.) Studies are approved at the appropriate conventions.

Sometimes an issue is so important and the study done so exceptional that other leagues adopt the policy by concurrence. In essence, we do not need to do our own study on this because we concur with theirs.

CONSENSUS

Collective opinion of a substantial number of members, representative of membership as a whole, reached after objective study and discussion of an issue.

This is reaching on an agreement of a majority of the people involved in the decision.

If you like lingo – or just want to know what people are saying – you can find the entire list of LWV Virginia lingo here. Don't worry there is no test- but you can test yourself on PMP, WLRT, MOU. Hey, September IS back to school month!

<https://lww-va.org/publications/league-lingo/#concurrence>

For more detailed information on League policy adoption, please go to:

<https://www.lww.org/league-management/other-issues-tools/guidelines-lwwus-studies>

Of course, if you have any other questions just email me at LWVArlingtonVA@gmail.com