



League of Women Voters/Spokane Area Handbook

**Updated January 2020
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Empower Voters. Defending Democracy.

LWVSA Diversity Policy

The League recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making and enable an organization to respond more effectively to changing social conditions and needs. The League is committed to diversity and pluralism in its membership, or its board, and all of its projects and activities. Our commitment means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any League activity on the basis of gender, race, creed, ge, sexual orientation, origin or disability.

Mission Statement

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

Vision Statement

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.

Beliefs and Intentions

The goal of the League of Women Voters of the United States is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide.

We are a non-partisan political membership organization. We:

- Act after study and member agreement to achieve solutions in the public interest on key community issues at all government levels.
- Build citizen participation in the democratic process.
- Engage communities in promoting positive solutions to public policy issues through education and advocacy.

We believe in:

- Respect for individuals.
- The value of diversity.
- The empowerment of the grassroots, both within the League and in communities.
- The power of collective decision making for the common good.

We will:

- Act with trust, integrity and professionalism.
- Operate in an open and effective manner to meet the needs of those we serve, both members and the public
- Take the initiative in seeking diversity in membership
- Acknowledge our heritage as we seek our path to the future.

Principles

- The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.
- The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.
- The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination.
- The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.
- The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems which affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy and adopt domestic policies which facilitate the solution of international problems.
- The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that the development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area By-Laws

Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall be League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area, hereinafter referred to in these By-Laws as LWVSA. This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters of Washington.

Article II - Purpose and Policy

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Article III – Membership

Section 1. Eligibility: Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2. Types of Membership:

- A. Voting Members shall be persons at least 16 years of age who join the LWVSA.
 - (1) Those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be life members excused from payment of dues.
- B. Associate Members shall be all other members and shall have no vote.

Article IV - Board of Directors

Section 1. Number, Manner of Selection and Term of Office: The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers of the League, not less than four and not more than six elected Directors and not more than six appointed Directors. At least two and not more than three Directors shall be elected by the Voting Members at each Annual Meeting and shall serve for a term of two years, or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The elected Directors shall appoint such additional Directors, not exceeding six, as they deem necessary to carry on the work of the League. The terms of office of the appointed Directors shall be one year and shall expire at the conclusion of the next Annual Meeting.

Section 2. Qualifications: No person shall be elected or appointed or shall continue to serve as an officer or director of this organization unless (s)he is a voting member of the LWVSA.

Section 3. Vacancies: Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors by reason of the resignation, death, or disqualification of an officer or elected Director may be filled, until the next Annual Meeting, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board of Directors. Three consecutive absences from a Board meeting of any Director without a valid reason shall be deemed a resignation.

Section 4. Powers and Duties: The Board of Directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the organization, with full power and authority to manage and conduct same, subject to the instructions of the general membership. It shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the Program as adopted by the National Convention, the State Convention, and the Annual Meeting. The Board shall create and designate such special committees as it may deem necessary.

Section 5. Meetings: There shall be at least nine regular meetings of the Board of Directors annually. The President may call special meetings of the Board of Directors and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of five members of the Board.

Section 6. Quorum: A majority of the members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

Section 7. Executive Committee: An Executive Committee consisting of the elected officers of the organization may meet to decide routine administrative and financial detail and may act for the Board in an emergency situation, providing appropriate program chairs have been included if program items are being considered. A majority of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum. Actions must be presented at the following Board meeting for approval.

Section 7. Consent to Electronic Communication: Board Members shall at the start of their term provide consent to receive notifications and transmissions electronically and shall advise the president and other members of any change in his/her email address. If a board member's e-mail becomes invalid and a valid one is not provided or if a board member is unable to communicate via e-mail, communication shall be made via regular mail, or via telephone with memorialization via regular mail.

Section 8. Action without a Meeting:. Any corporate action required or permitted by the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws or by the laws of the State of Washington, to be taken at a meeting of the board of directors (or its committees) may be taken without a meeting, by electronic transmission. Each matter to be voted upon must be responded to by all of the directors entitled to vote with respect to the subject matter thereof. Such consent shall have the same force and effect as a unanimous vote and may be described as such.

Article V – Officers

Section 1. Enumeration and Election of Officers: The Officers of the LWVSA shall be two or three Executive Officers, a Secretary, and a Treasurer who shall be elected for terms of two years by the Voting Members at an annual meeting and take office immediately. The Executive Officers may be two Co-Presidents, a President and a Vice-President, or an Executive Leadership Committee of two or three with duties divided or rotated as they determine. The Executive Officers and the Secretary shall be elected in odd-numbered years. The Treasurer shall be elected in even-numbered years.

Section 2. Executive Officers: An Executive Officer shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the Board of Directors. They may, in the absence or disability of the Treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts and notes. They shall be, ex-officio, a member of all committees except the Nominating Committee. They shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the President and perform such other duties as may be designated by the Board. In the case of Co-Presidents or Executive Officers, they shall divide the duties of the president between or among themselves as they determine.

Section 3. The Vice-Presidents: The Vice-President if any, shall possess all the powers and perform all the duties of that office serving as the President Pro-tem in the inability of the President to serve, until such time as the Board of Directors shall select one of its members to fill the vacancy

until the next Annual Meeting, selecting from elected members when possible. The Vice-President shall perform such other duties as the President and the Board may designate.

Section 4. The Secretary: The Secretary shall keep minutes of all business meetings of the League and of all meetings of the Board of Directors, shall notify all officers and directors of their election, shall sign, with the President, all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the Board, and shall perform such other functions as may be incident to the office.

Section 5. The Treasurer: The Treasurer shall collect and receive all money due, shall be the custodian of these moneys, shall deposit them in a bank designated by the Board of Directors, and shall disburse the same only upon order of the Board. The Treasurer shall present statements to the Board at their regular meetings and an annual report to the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall also keep the membership records.

Article VI - Financial Administration

Section 1. Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of the LWVSA shall be the same as the fiscal year of the LWVUS.

Section 2. Dues: Annual dues shall be determined by the Board of Directors with the approval of the membership at a general meeting, provided that twenty (20) days written notice has been given to the members.

A. Dues must be paid by September 30.

B. New members joining between February 1 and July 31 would pay one-half of the annual dues for the period to the following fall, at which time the full amount of dues would be due for the next year.

C. New members joining under the installment plan of two consecutive monthly payments, will not have voting privileges, nor will their name be sent to state or national until dues are paid in full.

Section 3. Budget: A Budget for the ensuing year shall be submitted by the Board of Directors to the Annual Meeting for adoption. The Budget shall include support for the work of the League as a whole.

Section 4. Budget Committee: A Budget Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors at least two months prior to the Annual Meeting to prepare a budget for the ensuing year. The proposed budget shall be sent to all members not less than 20 days nor more the 40 days before the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall not be eligible to serve as chair of the Budget Committee.

Section 5. Distribution of Funds upon Dissolution: In the event of the dissolution, for any cause, of the LWVSA, all moneys and securities held by the LWVSA shall be paid to the League of Women Voters of Washington after the Board of Directors has paid or made provision for the payment of all liabilities of the LWVSA.

Article VII – Meetings

Section 1. Membership Meeting: There shall be no fewer than eight meetings of the membership each year. Time and Place shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Annual Meeting: An Annual Meeting shall be held in the last quarter of the fiscal year, the exact date to be determined by the Board of Directors. The Annual Meeting shall:

- A. Adopt local program (See Article IX-Program),
- B. Elect officers, directors, and members of the Nominating Committee,
- C. Adopt an adequate budget, and
- D. Transact such other business as may properly come before it.

Section 3. Quorum: Ten percent of the membership as of January 1st of the current year, shall constitute a quorum at all business meetings of LWVSA.

Section 4. Privilege of the Floor: Privilege of the floor may be granted to National and/or State Board Members in attendance at business meetings of the LWVSA.

Article VIII - Nominations and Elections

Section 1. Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee shall consist of three or five members. The Chair and one or two members, constituting a majority of the committee, shall not be members of the Board, and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. Nominations for these offices shall be made by the current Nominating Committee. The remaining member(s), who shall be members of the Board, shall be appointed by the Board of Directors immediately following the Annual Meeting. If there is one elected member other than the Chair, the Board will appoint one member; and if two elected members, shall appoint two members. Any vacancy on the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the Board of Directors. Suggestions for nominations for Officers and Directors may be sent to this Committee by any voting member.

Section 2. Report of the Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor: The report of the nominating committee of its nominations for Officers, Directors and the succeeding Nominating Committee shall be sent to all members not less than 20 days and not more than 40 days before the date of the Annual Meeting. Immediately following the presentation of this report at Annual Meeting, nominations may be made from the floor by any voting member providing the consent of the nominee shall have been secured.

Section 3. Elections: The election shall be by ballot, provided that when there is but one nominee for each office, the election may be conducted by a show of hands approving the proposed slate. A majority vote of those qualified to vote and voting shall constitute an election. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

Article IX – Program

Section 1. Authorization: The governmental principles adopted by the National Convention and supported by the League as a whole, constitute the authorization for the adoption of Program.

Section 2. Program: The Program of the LWVSA shall consist of:

- A. Action to implement the Principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States,
- B. Those local governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action.

Section 3. Program Adoption: The Annual Meeting shall adopt a Local Program using the following procedures:

- A. The Board of Directors shall consider the recommendations sent in by voting members resident within the jurisdiction of the local government(s) concerned two months prior to the annual meeting and shall formulate a proposed program.
- B. The proposed program shall be sent to all members not less than 20 days nor more than 40 days before the Annual Meeting.
- C. Subjects in the proposed program as presented to the Annual Meeting by the Board of Directors shall require for adoption a majority vote of voting members resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned, present and voting, followed by a majority vote of the concurrence by voting members, present and voting, residing outside the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned.
- D. Recommendations for program submitted by voting members resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned two months prior to the Annual Meeting but not included in the proposed program recommended by the Board of Directors may be considered by the Annual Meeting provided that:
 - (1) The Annual Meeting shall order consideration by a majority vote of voting members resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned and present and voting, and
 - (2) The Annual Meeting shall adopt the item by two-thirds vote of the voting members resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned and present and voting, and followed by a two-thirds vote of concurrence of the voting members resident outside the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned and present and voting.
- E. Changes in the Program, in the case of altered conditions, may be made provided that:
 - (1) Information concerning the proposed changes has been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to a general membership meeting at which the changes are discussed;
 - (2) Final action by the membership resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned is taken at a succeeding meeting with concurrence by the membership residing within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s). At Annual Meetings, discussion and final action shall take place at that one meeting. A two-thirds vote of those present and voting is required for passage.

Section 4. Member Action: Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters only when authorized to do so by the proper Board of Directors. They may act only in conformity with, and not contrary to, a position taken by the LWVSA, the League of Women Voters of Washington and the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Article X - National Convention, State Convention and State Council

Section 1. National Convention: The Board of Directors at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the national office shall select delegates to that Convention in the number allotted the LWVSA under the provisions of the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Section 2. State Convention and Council: The Board of Directors at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the state office shall select delegates to the Convention or Council in the number allotted the LWVSA under the provisions of the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Washington.

Article XI - Parliamentary Authority

Parliamentary Authority: The rules contained in “Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised” shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these By-Laws.

Article XII – Amendments

Amendments: These By-laws may be amended by two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at the Annual Meeting, provided that amendments were submitted to the membership in writing at least one month in advance of the meeting.

Amended 5/2006 Printed October 2006 amm Amended 5/14/08 amm Amended 5/17/12 amm Amended 5/12/17 jlc

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LWVSA – 2019-2020 Position Statements

Local League positions are adopted at Annual Meeting each year and that adoption sets the course of League study and action for the ensuing one or two-year period and is the final step in the program-making process. In reviewing the local program please keep in mind that the amount of action depends on current priorities and the people power available.

Natural Resources

Planning (1970, 1971, 1974)

1. Support for broader representation on planning boards. Among the factors to be considered for appointments of members should be variations of occupation, age and geographic representation. (1970)
2. Support for the determination of zoning regulations as an implementation tool of a

- comprehensive plan. Support for a strong Regional Planning Conference and adequate planning. (1971)
3. Take into consideration the effect on environmental quality whenever state and local governments and their agencies make decisions. Environmental impact statements for all land use decisions by governmental bodies should be mandatory and well publicized.

Planning for environmental quality should take into account all human needs - recreational, industrial, economic, food for population, housing, disposal of waste, transportation and aesthetics. Planning enforcement should be the responsibility of the levels of government which can do so most effectively in each case. Uniform guidelines and procedures should be established at the state level for local planning and implementation. The state should have the authority to designate areas of critical concern and require that the use of such areas conform to statewide guidelines. State planning should be coordinated and interdisciplinary in nature. All governments and groups involved must cooperate to resolve conflicts and eliminate inconsistent policies.

4. Machinery should be provided to encourage citizen involvement in policy decisions. (1974)
5. The League agrees that fairness, predictability and citizen input are essential and concur that after the Urban Growth Boundary is modified and signed by County Commissioners there should be a six-month waiting period prior to applying zoning and new mapping to the newly designated area. This would provide for citizen appeals to be filed if there was disagreement about the new boundary. Those wishing to develop in the new area would wait six months before submitting an application for construction in the rezoned area. This would meet the criteria for 'concurrent' land use designations and allow predictability for developers as well as community members. It would also reduce or prevent the unintended consequences of no remedy and projects being out of compliance with the final resolution of land use designation (2015)

Air and Water Pollution (1970, 1974, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1985)

1. **Aquifer**

- a. Support aggressive action to achieve government policies which will provide maximum protection to the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer.
 - (1) Implementation of the 208

Recommendation should receive strong support for the sewerage of the Priority Sewer Service in both unincorporated and incorporated jurisdictions. When sewers are in place, hook-ups should be required.

- (2) Public information activity should have a high priority.
- (3) Aquifer management should be completed as soon as possible, and be coordinated with the Spokane County Comprehensive Land Use Plan. (1977)
- b. Local areas should dovetail and not be allowed to misuse the state or regional resource.
 - (1) Work to explode the myth of abundant pure water for everyone.
 - (2) Work for local citizens on a water district-size level assessing basic needs and quality goals to be used in a drainage basin area type plan and then integrated into a regional plan.
 - (3) Work for strengthening existing laws on water quality and quantity and adequate funding to implement.
 - (4) Help existing agencies with water authority to begin inter-department and inter-agency coordination and co-relation. (1978)

2. **Sewering**

- a. Utilize our national position on water resources to support sewerage of the urban areas with emphasis on a regional approach to problems, as governmental boundaries are arbitrary. The national LWV position includes the following:
 - (1) Support of national policies and procedures which promote comprehensive long-range planning for conservation and development of water resources.
 - (2) Support of limited federal financial assistance to industry as a means of expediting abatement of water pollution. Although the LWV thinks that costs of pollution abatement are a responsibility of the polluter, it acknowledges that some help should be made available because of the urgency and immediacy of the

problem, and the immense costs involved. (1970)

- b. Support preparation of a general comprehensive land use plan developed with broad based citizen participation, and backed by strong zoning laws for the north Spokane area. There is a genuine and pressing need for a comprehensive sewer plan for the north Spokane and Whitworth areas.

- (1) Because of the major impact of sewers on land values and on housing and land use patterns, the comprehensive sewer plan should be directly related to, and supportive of, the land use. (1974)

3. **Solid Waste** (1985)

- a. The League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area supports measures to achieve wastereduction and recycling of solid waste as a first priority. We support a waste-to-energy facility provided that public health and environmental safe-guards are adequate, and substantial waste reduction and recycling are not adversely affected.

- (1) We recognize that a landfill will always be necessary for safe disposal of materials that cannot be recycled or incinerated. All landfills must be sited using the latest technology.
 - (2) Spokane County governments should provide a leadership role in recycling. The governments' role should include guidelines for a recycling program and incentives for citizens to participate. In addition, a continuing effort to inform the public on solid waste issues should be implemented.
 - (3) We support an ongoing Citizen Advisory Committee on all solid waste issues.
 - (4) We strongly support a hazardous waste disposal site in Spokane County if environmentally possible. If a disposal site is not possible, a transfer station to receive hazardous waste should be sited.

4. **Air Pollution**

- a. Support the adequate staffing of the Spokane County Air Pollution Control Authority.

- b. Support the expansion of local enforcement boards and agencies to include representation from the public and the scientific communities, with appointments for a specified period of time.

Transportation (1971, 1979, 1986)

- 1. Support study by the city of innovative methods of transportation.
- 2. Support total improvement of all means of transportation for Spokane region. (1986)
- 3. Support and promotion of non-motorized forms of transportation (1971, 1987)

Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces (1983)

- 1. **City & County Parks** - Support for levies or bond issues provided sufficient information is available and they are consistent with other League positions. (1970)
- 2. **County Parks** - LWV supports a county park department structure that includes a citizen advisory board with geographically balanced representation.
- 3. **City Parks** - LWV supports the current city park structure and the autonomy feels there should be increased emphasis on board representation and citizen participation.
- 4. **Pools**- LWV supports levies, bond issues and other means of taxation to renovate and maintain pools. When user fees are charged, there should be special consideration to low-income families.
- 5. **Riverfront Park** - LWV supports preserving all existing green and open space in Riverfront Park. We support efforts to improve commercial development in existing facilities. We encourage citizen participation at all levels of decision making. If necessary, LWV supports additional taxation rather than expansion of commercial development.
- 6. **Open Spaces** - LWV supports use of open space tax benefits as a means of providing recreation and open space land. We support more public information regarding tax benefits. LWV supports state legislation that will allow local government to require compensation or set-asides for park land.

Social Policy

Human Resources

A. Housing (1969, 1970)

1. Support for a minimum maintenance housing code for the city, which will
 - a. help to prevent further deterioration and
 - b. make possible a wide variety of solutions to current housing problems.
2. Support for the establishment of a basic information center to serve all groups and persons concerned with housing.
3. Support for those housing programs within Spokane County which substantially satisfy the following criteria:
 - a. Are the program goals clearly stated?
 - b. Is the program primarily intended to serve at least one of the groups known to be in need?
 - c. Is the program part of a comprehensive overall plan or does it lend itself to comprehensive planning?
 - d. Is the program flexible? Can it be adjusted to meet individual needs?
 - e. Does the program contribute to a substantial increase in the supply of standard housing of low and moderate cost?
 - f. Does the program involve local residents in the planning and policy making, including representatives of the people to be served?
 - g. Does the program encourage fiscal responsibility by the recipient?
 - h. If the program involves displacement, is an adequate plan for relocation included?
 - i. Does the program contain provisions for objective, periodic evaluation? (1969)
4. Support for a Housing Authority in Spokane County. (1970)

B. Welfare (1973, 1985, 1997)

The League of Women Voters of Spokane Area in Spokane, at its 1997 Annual Meeting,

adopted by concurrence LWV/WA 1996 updated Welfare position.

The League of Women Voters of Spokane believes: Policies eliminating disincentives to work and implementing the social goals of preventing and reducing poverty should make it possible for individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency. These policies should be implemented at federal, state and local governmental levels. Programs must be efficiently administered and evaluated periodically. We support state government programs that, alone or with private efforts:

1. increase job opportunities;
2. provide opportunities and incentives for education and training for employment at wages sufficient to support a family and that include support services such as quality child care, health care, transportation, counseling and job placement;
3. emphasize life skills such as family planning and parenting, as well as work skills;
4. are tailored to meet the needs of the individuals;
5. decrease the incidence of teenage pregnancy.

Persons who are unable to work whose incomes are inadequate, or for whom jobs are not available, should be assured of public assistance and services sufficient to meet their needs for food, shelter and health care. When the federal government does not provide sufficient resources to meet these basic needs, state government must assume that responsibility. In times of budgetary constraints, our state government's highest priority must be to meet people's basic needs for food, shelter and health care, with a special emphasis on protecting and nurturing children. We support:

1. adequate funding of income maintenance programs (cash grants) measured by a realistic and regularly updated standard of need, and
2. continued eligibility for "in kind" assistance (food stamps, food and nutrition programs, housing and health care, and preventive services).

We also support a goal of achieving statewide, a continuum of family support services

maintained and delivered by public and private entities. Supportive services should be integrated with those available to the general public with charges based on ability to pay.

C. Day Care For School Age Children (1983)

Support for establishing community use of schools by citizens of all ages when time and space are available.

Spokane County Health District (1981)

- A. The delivery of public health care in Spokane County requires an effective Health Board, committed to clear goals and policies, and public involvement in the establishment of those policies.
- B. Clear standards and guidelines for personnel qualifications and performance are necessary at all staff levels.
- C. The Health Board can increase its effectiveness by:
 - 1. A comprehensive orientation and on-going educational program conducted by staff members.
 - 2. Preparation for Board meetings through adequate advance information and briefing sessions.
 - 3. Establishment and enforcement of local policy on attendance requirements.
 - 4. Establishment of specific Health District goals and policies.
 - 5. Encouragement of participation and commitment of Health Board members through either:
 - a. Creation of a citizen advisory committee, or
 - b. Restructuring of the Board by changing state law.
- D. The Health Board can perform more effectively by increasing public knowledge of Health District policies and programs through:
 - 1. Advance dissemination of information.
 - 2. Meeting times convenient to the public.
 - 3. Encouragement of media coverage.
 - 4. Active pursuance of citizen participation.

- E. The roles and duties of the Health Officer and the Health Administrator should be clearly defined. An assessment should be made by the Board to evaluate the need for both positions.

Administration of Justice (2000)

- A. The League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area believes that effective rehabilitation is society's best protection.
- B. We support the Spokane County Drug Court as an effective alternative to incarceration. The Drug Court has proven to be preventative, rehabilitative, and cost-effective.
- C. We encourage increased financial support for drug courts from all levels of government. Funding for alternatives to incarceration should be a Legislative priority. Local government should provide funding to ensure adequate financial support for drug courts.
- D. We support the establishment of a Juvenile Drug Court as an alternative to incarceration for juvenile drug offenders.

Local Government

Spokane County has 8 cities and 5 towns, governed by Title 35 RCW or Title 35A RCW. City of Spokane is a First Class City, operating with a City Charter. The remaining cities are Code cities.

Municipal (1969, 1980, 2007)

1. Government

- a. Support measures to maintain the mayor-council-manager form of government for the city of Spokane.
 - (1) Separation of Powers: the legislative and administrative branches are separate and should remain so.
 - (2) Responsibility is clearly fixed: the council is politically responsible to the electorate who are elected by district. The manager serves with a no-term employment contract and is immediately responsible to the council for performance of duty. The city manager should be selected for his training,

experience and ability in municipal administration.

- (3) Short Ballot: where representation is of primary importance, the position should be elective. Where specialized training is of primary importance, the position should be appointive. This permits the voter to concentrate on major issues.
 - (4) Personnel: the city's personnel system should be geared to the development of policies and methods that would ensure the highest level of performance in city service, as well as adequate incentive and opportunity for those who choose public service as a career.
 - (5) Management Principles: sound management practices should be applied to city operations in order to ensure maximum efficiency and economy.
 - (6) The printed budget should be considered a public information document and should include comprehensive explanation of the city's schedule programs. (1969)
- b. Support a City Charter for the City of Spokane, briefly and clearly written, and has as its purpose an overall comprehensive framework of government.
- (1) Support an Administrative code that will give the city council flexibility in responding to complex problems.
 - (2) Support the city manager form of government and endorse the accountability of the manager to the council.
 - (3) Support mandatory city residency for the mayor, council members and the city manager.
 - (4) A prime concern is open communication between citizens and city officials. (1980)
- b. Support the following principles for cities/towns in Spokane County.
- (1) Support an Administrative code that will give the city council flexibility in responding to complex problems.
 - (2) Where there is a city manager form of government, endorse the accountability of the manager to the council.
 - (3) Support mandatory city residency for the mayor, council members and the city manager (where applicable).
 - (4) A prime concern is open communication

between citizens and city officials. (2007)

2. Planning

a. Support of measures to the orderly development and growth of the cities in the Spokane area.

- (1) Long range planning should be of the greatest consideration.
- (2) Elimination of duplication of services should be effected wherever possible. Encouragement of cooperation with Spokane County to consolidate services.
- (3) Successful planning for the orderly physical growth of the cities of the Spokane area can be effective only if there is wide-spread citizen understanding and active citizen participation in formulating the plans. (1969)

County (1973. 1979. 1984. 1986. 1988. 1992)

1. Government

a. Support a reorganization of County Government based upon consideration of:

- 1) Utilization of comprehensive long-range planning.
- 2) Consolidation of services, including cooperation and contracting of services, to eliminate over-lapping and duplication.
- 3) Deletion of unnecessary and outmoded units of government.
- 4) Adoption of County Charter.
- 5) Inclusion of local League criteria for governmental structure.
 - a) Separation of executive and legislative functions with a chief executive.
 - b) Appointment of professionally trained management.
 - c) A legislative body large enough to provide adequate representation.
 - d) A personnel system for county staff with clearly defined standards and policies and a board of appeal.
 - e) Appointment of all department heads possible under state law.
 - f) A system of checks and balances.
 - g) A single comprehensive budget.

- h) Provision to guarantee citizen participation and protection of citizen rights. (1973)
- (6) Standards for the delivery of governmental services that include:
 - a) Support the public transit benefit area and financing for it.
 - b) School and park planning that is coordinated with a County use plan.
 - c) Compensation requirements from new development for acquisition of school and park land.
 - d) Annexation policy that provides for balanced growth within the framework of a comprehensive plan.
 - e) A strong Regional Planning Conference and adequate staffing. (1981)

City -County (1969, 1975)

1. Fiscal Resources and Expenditures
Support measures which will promote greater citizen interest and participation in the total budget making process on the local level. (1975)
2. Public Information
There is an obvious need for effective two-way communication between city and county officials and the public. This is a dual responsibility

Port District (1981, 1989)

The League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area supports a Spokane County District for Economic Development.

Local Citizen Participation in the Governmental Process

The League believes citizen participation is a desirable mechanism in the decision making process whether initiated by citizens or government. It should be pursued whenever appropriate. Participation should be representative and involve citizens throughout all program phases. Those citizens who serve should have access to adequate information and their participation should be given value and meaning.

Public Schools - Local (1965, 1968, 1979, 1984)

- A. Maintain present programs of education and encourage methods by which the program might be expanded and improved. (1965)
- B. Support measures which will maintain and improve standards of education and which will provide adequate facilities in the Spokane area schools which the League has studied. (1966)
- C. Support improvement of communication among the school board, the school administration, the school personnel and the public. Make every effort to inform the electorate about school policies, program and finances the year round. (1969)
- D. Support establishment of community use of the school by citizens of all ages, when time and space are available. (1979)
- E. Support coordination of school and park planning with a County land use plan.
- F. Support compensation requirements from new development for acquisition of school and park land. (1979)

Law Enforcement Accountability (2008)

The LWVSA favors formation of an oversight system for law enforcement. To be effective said system would need to have:

- Independence
- Sufficient and clearly defined scope
- Adequate resources
- Access to department records, yet maintain confidentiality and anonymity
- Adequate authority, including some authority to investigate
- Ability to compel cooperation and testimony of officers
- Community involvement.

The preferred model would be a hybrid that would include an ombudsman and a citizen advisory panel. *Adopted at Annual Meeting, May 2013*

LWVWA 2019 – 2021 Positions in Brief

– Government –

EDUCATION

Action to support in principle Basic Education Act (1977) & Levy Lid Act; to obtain a balanced tax structure & to maintain uniform assessment practices to ensure equitable & sufficient financing; to support adequate & stable state funding of common schools including costs of in-service training; to increase visibility, accessibility & accountability of office of SPI & State Board of Education; to support closer links between schools & social services, so every child is ready to learn; to support greater involvement of parents, an increased role in decision making for teachers, & more flexible state education requirements. Action to provide greater access to public higher education to all, at whatever point in life it can be beneficial.

Public Education

League of Women Voters believes that the federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12. A quality public education is essential for a strong, viable and sustainable democratic society and is a civil right.

PORT DISTRICTS

Action to encourage cooperation among port districts, but with local options for vote control over major policy and expenditure decisions.

PRIVATIZATION

Core services, functions and assets critical to the well-being of the people, should remain with government and not be transferred to the private sector. Public agencies are required to make a documented finding of adequate return on investment for the public for any government contribution of funds or assets to the private sector. Government employees and elected officials after leaving government service should be prohibited for two years from working for any private company for which they had oversight responsibilities or authority over awarding contracts.

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Action to facilitate changes in the state constitution to achieve a representative and effective state legislature. Action to promote an informed electorate. Action to limit methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat undue influence, enable candidates to

compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the election process. Action to support the initiative and referendum process, adopt improvements to the process and require additional information for voters. Action to protect the interests of all affected parties in considering the formation of new counties. Action to clarify in legislation the processes in county formation and to require that the entire county have the ability to vote on separation. Action to support election methods that promote “representative-ness,” citizen participation and accountability and that produce proportional representation. Action to support a majority vote requirement if achieved through a mechanism such as Instant Runoff Voting (IRV). Action to support a primary that is “open” and encourages minor party participation if a primary continues to be used. Amended position resulting from 2012 Conservation District study.

STATE TAX POLICY

Action to obtain a balanced tax structure that is fair, adequate, and flexible & has sound economic effect.

WASHINGTON STATE AND INDIAN TREATY RIGHTS

Action to enhance salmon resources, establish a procedure for retrocession of jurisdiction to the tribes and support tribal land use planning of trust lands.

– Transportation –

TRANSPORTATION

The League supports a balanced state transportation policy that defines the role of the state and supports increases in funding to provide adequate revenue, flexibility, energy efficiency and safety in a multi-modal system of transportation.

– Natural Resources –

ENERGY

Action to support an energy policy within Washington; to educate public on energy conservation; to establish incentives for efficient use of current energy sources & greater use of alternative energy sources. Updated in 2013.

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

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Action to obtain coordinated planning and ensure environmental quality in the use of water, air and land resources. Action to ensure that forest management is carried out in a manner that will sustain healthy forests, streams and habitats. Additional positions resulting from 2012 Conservation District study.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Action for coordinated control & reduction of solid waste; to reduce amount of hazardous waste generated in Washington & to promote safe management of that waste which is produced, including toxics in home.

– Social Policy –

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

Action to ensure balanced state economy with strong mixture of large & small business. Measures to contribute to long-range planning & cooperation between all levels of government with local initiatives wherever possible.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Child Support & Custody. Support vigorous, efficient and innovative child support enforcement methods & broad education regarding responsibilities & consequences of parenthood. Best interest of child, including physical & emotional security, should be overriding consideration in determining custody, visitation and appropriate level of child support. Children are entitled to support adequate to meet basic needs commensurate with parents' income, resources, & standard of living. Courts should have discretion to order post-secondary education support in appropriate circumstances.

Early Care and Education of Children. Action to support programs and policies to improve the quality of child care programs so children develop to their full potential, supporting parents as a child's first teacher, increasing access to programs for children birth to five, preschool, special needs children, encouraging public-private partnerships and expanding the definition of Basic Education to include the birth to five years.

Children's Services. Action to support stable & adequate funding for children at risk, with priority given to prevention, early identification & intervention services, community based treatment programs, day treatment programs & residential care.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Action to achieve equal rights for all. Action to achieve equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability. Action to obtain measures that provide basic human needs for those unable to provide for themselves. Action to ensure that there are emergency support services for those involved in physical and/or mental violence.

HEALTH CARE

Action to provide universal access to affordable health services for all residents of Washington & to control total system expenditures with seamless coverage regardless of one's health status.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Action to ensure that our courts are fair, efficient, accessible & staffed with qualified personnel; to maintain a separate court system & facilities for youths that will balance procedural rights of adversary system with protection of youth's basic rights; to realize equity in sentencing standards; to obtain alternatives to incarceration.

Sentencing Policy: The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

GUN SAFETY

Action to provide governmental regulation of ownership and possession of firearms, and measures to limit their accessibility.

LWVUS

Summary of Public Policy Positions 2018-2020

Representative Government

Promote open governmental system that is representative, accountable & 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 & full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

ELECTION PROCESS

Apportionment. Support apportionment of congressional districts & 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). Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure public's right to know, combat corruption & undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office & promote citizen participation in political process.

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

CITIZEN RIGHTS

Citizen Right to Know/Citizen Participation. Protect the citizen's right to know & facilitate citizen 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.

The Presidency. Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive & 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.

U.S. RELATIONS WITH 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 & wise management of natural resources in public interest.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & PROTECTION

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems—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 the 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 & participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible & responsive management of natural resources.

AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Promote adequate supplies of food & fiber at reasonable prices to consumers & support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices & 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 Equal Rights Amendment & efforts to bring laws into compliance with goals of ERA.

Education, Employment, Housing. Support equal access to education, employment & 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 & flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall & 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 & health insurance.

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HEALTH CARE

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of care for all U.S. residents & controls health care costs.

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 & policies to prevent or reduce poverty & to promote self-sufficiency for individuals & 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 environment for every American family.

CHILD CARE

Support programs & policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality childcare for all who need it.

EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN AT RISK

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

VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

GUN CONTROL

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

URBAN POLICY

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

DEATH PENALTY

The LWVUS supports abolition of the death penalty.

SENTENCING POLICY

The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The 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.

LWVUS – 2018-2020

Complete position statements available at www.lwv.org