



# Introduction

This booklet is designed for use by all members of the League of Women Voters North Carolina (LWVNC) – members who are part of Action Teams; leaders in the League; and new and prospective members. Each group will use it in different ways and to different extents as they explore LWVNC involvement in the area of Public Policy Positions.

This document

- Describes fundamental values of LWVNC
- Outlines how the League of Women Voters (LWV) functions at the national, state, and local level
- Explains how changes in positions are adopted
- Correlates LWVUS and LWVNC issues
- Summarizes the positions of LWVNC
- Documents how LWVNC arrived at these positions over time if records can confirm
- Lists the Public Policy Positions of LWVNC approved at the most recent convention

LWV is a multi-issue and multi-level organization that acts on selected government issues at the local, state, and national levels based on informed agreement of members throughout the history of the organization. The structure of LWV at the national, state and local levels enables effective efforts to empower voters and defend democracy. It requires an understanding of the process that is used to establish positions and how national positions are used at the state and local level. A critical part of the process is making sure that members understand and agree with actions taken.

A fundamental aspect of LWV is that we are a non-partisan organization; we do not support or oppose any political party or candidate. However, LWV is a political organization that engages in activities to influence how our government functions at different levels. Politicizing issues that are clearly non-partisan (access to voting as an example) creates challenges for LWV but should not deter members from taking a clear stand. LWV at all levels engages in education of and communication with voters and policy makers through a variety of media; advocacy through public policy briefs and forums; and lobbying to influence legislation. There may also be involvement in court cases and commenting on



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regulations. Lobbying activities and voter services efforts must be kept completely separate from each other. Voters' guides and other voter services materials/publications/communications in all forms must not contain statements of League positions.

All work of LWV at every level should be done with a consideration of diversity, equity, and inclusion, often referred to as the DEI lens. Diversity includes many areas including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, (dis)ability status, socioeconomic status, language, culture, religious affiliation, and political perspective. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome. Inclusion encompasses respectfully considering perspectives and creating a welcoming environment for all. In this area, Leagues are encouraged to expand both the partner groups they work with (always being mindful of the need to be non-partisan) and their communications at all levels including the outlets used, languages employed, and images included.

Another important aspect of LWV is that it speaks with one voice. The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) is responsible for setting strategies and action policies for the entire country. State Leagues such as LWNCA are responsible for a consistent state effort. Local Leagues cooperate to ensure that regional issues are consistently addressed. Unless someone else is deliberately designated for a special situation, the president at the national, state and local League is the spokesperson for the League. However, this does not mean that all ideas must originate at the national or state level. Local Leagues may participate in state or national studies or conduct their own studies to determine a League position on issues. Local Leagues decide which of the many Public Policy Positions to focus on and how to implement actions effectively in their area.