

## **LWVUS Positions GOVERNMENT**

*Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive; that has a fair and adequate fiscal basis; that protects individual liberties established by the Constitution; that assures opportunities for citizen participation in government decision making; that provides sound agricultural policy; and that preserves public health and safety through gun control measures.*

### **CITIZEN'S RIGHT TO KNOW/CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

Democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. Governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know.

### **INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES**

Individual rights now protected by the Constitution should not be weakened or abridged.

### **PUBLIC POLICY ON REPRODUCTIVE CHOICES**

Public policy in a pluralistic society must affirm the constitutional right of privacy to make reproductive choices.

### **CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENCY**

**The Congress:** Responsive legislative processes must be characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision-making capability, effective performance and open government.

**The Presidency:** Presidential power should be exercised within the constitutional framework of a dynamic balance between the executive and legislative branches.

### **DC SELF-GOVERNMENT & FULL VOTING REPRESENTATION**

Citizens of the District of Columbia should be afforded the same rights of self-government and full voting representation in Congress as are all other citizens of the U. S.

### **APPORTIONMENT**

Congressional districts and government legislative bodies should be apportioned substantially on population.

### **CAMPAIGN FINANCE**

Methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process.

### **SELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT**

The direct popular vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The National Popular Vote Compact is one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular election of the President until the abolition of the electoral college is accomplished. There should be uniform national voting qualifications and procedures and efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues and the selection process itself.

### **VOTING RIGHTS**

Voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed.

### **PRIVATIZATION**

When governmental entities consider the transfer of governmental services, assets, and/or functions to the private sector, the community impact and goals of such transfers must be identified and considered. Further, transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good must be ensured.

## **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

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

### **ARMS CONTROL**

Arms control measures are essential to reduce the risk of war and increase global stability.

### **MILITARY POLICY AND DEFENSE SPENDING**

The U.S. government should work to protect its interests at home and abroad through the use of non-military measures, including diplomacy, mediation, and multilateral cooperation. Military force should be

viewed as a tool of last resort. Nuclear weapons should serve only the limited and specific function of deterrence until such time as these weapons are eliminated through arms-control and disarmament agreements. Defense spending should be examined in the same way as spending for other national needs.

#### **TRADE**

U.S. trade policy should be based on long-term public interests, not on special interests, and should advance the achievement of other important policy goals.

#### **UNITED NATIONS**

A strong, effective United Nations promotes international peace and advances the social and economic well-being of the world's people. The U.N. should be an important component of U.S. foreign policy with full and active participation in the U.N. system to strengthen the U.N.'s capacity to solve global problems and promote prosperity throughout the world.

#### **U.S. RELATIONS WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

U.S. interests in developing countries should reflect the reality of global interdependence.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

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

#### **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Resource management decisions must be based on a thorough assessment of population growth and of current and future needs. Responsibility for protection and management of natural resources is shared by all levels of government.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & POLLUTION CONTROL**

The physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem should be preserved with maximum protection of public health and the environment. Environmental protection and pollution control should be considered a cost of providing a product or service.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Public understanding and cooperation are essential to the responsible and responsive management of our nation's natural resources.

#### **AGRICULTURAL POLICY Updated 2014**

Federal agriculture policy should support disaster assistance, crop insurance, need-based loans and incentives to adopt best management practices for the environment. The policy should support increased competition in agricultural markets, increased research of new technologies and provide for adequate enforcement of regulations, including food safety and product labeling.

### **SOCIAL POLICY**

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

#### **CHILD CARE**

The LWVUS supports programs, services and policies at all levels of government to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it in order to increase access to employment and to prevent and reduce poverty.

#### **DEATH PENALTY**

The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty.

#### **EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN AT RISK**

The LWVUS supports policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development, and ensure the safety of all children.

#### **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

The LWVUS believes that the federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing for all persons in the U.S. regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability. Employment opportunities in modern, technological societies are closely related to education;

therefore the League supports federal programs to increase the education and training of disadvantaged people. The League supports federal efforts to prevent and/or remove discrimination in education, employment and housing and to help communities bring about racial integration of their school systems. The League supports equal rights for all regardless of sex. LWVUS supports legislation to equalize the legal rights, obligations, and benefits available to same-gender couples with those available to heterosexual couples.

#### **FISCAL POLICY**

The LWVUS supports adequate, 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; responsible deficit policies; and a federal role in providing mandatory, universal old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

#### **GUN CONTROL**

The LWVUS supports strong federal measures to limit and regulate the ownership of weapons by private citizens.

#### **HEALTH CARE**

The LWVUS supports availability of a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost for all US residents. The League favors a national health insurance plan financed through general taxes in place of individual insurance premiums.

#### **IMMIGRATION**

The LWVUS believes that immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the U.S.; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the U.S on student visas. All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

#### **MEETING BASIC HUMAN NEEDS**

The LWVUS believes that one of the goals of social policy should be self-sufficiency for individuals and families, and that the most effective social programs are those designed to prevent or reduce poverty. Persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate, or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, and access to health care.

#### **URBAN POLICY**

The LWVUS believes that it is in the national interest to promote the well-being of American cities.

#### **VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

The LWVUS supports violence prevention programs in all communities. **FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION**

The 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 a civil right.

#### **HUMAN TRAFFICKING Adopted 2014**

The LWVUS opposes all forms of domestic and international human trafficking of adults and children. Every measure should be taken and every effort should be made through legislation and changes in public policy to prevent human trafficking. Extensive essential services for victims should be applied where needed. Education and awareness programs should be established in our communities and in our schools.

For more information: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)