

# LWVUS PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS SUMMARY

## 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.

**Campaign Finance.** Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

**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.

### Citizen Rights

#### **Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen**

**Participation.** Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen 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.

## Congress and the Presidency

**Congress.** Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision making capability and effective performance.

**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 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 and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.**

### **Natural Resources**

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.

### **Resource Management**

Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

### **Environmental Protection and Pollution Control**

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with 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 Resources.** Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

**Waste Management.** Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

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

### **Public Participation**

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

### **Agriculture Policy**

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

## **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 the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

### **Education, Employment and Housing.**

Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

### **Fiscal Policy**

**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.

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

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

**Health Care**

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and 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 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 Supply.** 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 Control**

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**

The LWVUS supports abolition of the death penalty.

**Sentencing Policy**

Oppose mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses. In general, alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime.

**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.**