

LWVUS PROGRAM PLANNING

What is Program Planning

Program, a three-part process that is core to League's mission, is composed of *program planning, study and consensus, and advocacy*. While it is extremely important for *every* League to hold a Program Planning meeting to discuss possible issues for study at the national level, it is not essential for every League to select an issue.

Members evaluate possible issues by asking, for example:

- Is there widespread member interest?
- Is this a timely issue?
- Is government action the most effective way to address the problem?

Resources and Volunteer Time

Before recommending a study, review or a concurrence, members need to consider the resource commitment required for their own League as well as for the national League.

A recommendation of a new study, review or concurrence is a request to give the recommendation a high priority for the biennium at both the local and national League levels. If a recommendation is adopted, local Leagues and the LWVUS, with limited resources – money and, even more importantly, volunteer time – probably will find it necessary to drop other activities in order to participate.

Although technology has made it possible to reduce expenses, an increase in PMP may be required to help fund the work at the national level.

New Study/Program Item

To propose a new study, you need a brief statement (25 words or less) concerning the scope of the study. A statement of scope lists the areas to be explored, the emphasis on a particular aspect of the issue and the parameters of the study.

Review

Following an earlier decision by Leagues, Program Planning includes a systematic review of all LWVUS positions. Leagues may select one LWVUS position for consideration for review each biennium. If adopted, a Review Committee will be appointed to examine the position and, if appropriate, suggest changes and updating.

Concurrence

This year's Program Planning includes the option of proposing a program item for concurrence. You need to provide the title and scope of the position your League proposes for concurrence as well as the name of the League that did the original study.

Timeline

- January 2008 – LWVCA Units discuss program and return responses to Program Development Committee (PDC)
- February 2008 – PDC and Board make recommendations based on unit discussions.
- March 1, 2008 – Deadline for receipt of all Report Forms to LWV-US.
- March 27-30 – 2008 LWVUS Program Planning Committee analyzes Report Form responses and drafts proposal for LWVUS Board review.
- April 2008 – LWVUS Board considers draft and approves a Proposed Program for the 2008-2010 biennium.
- May 2008 – Proposed program is sent to all Leagues for review.
- June 2008 – After debate and discussion, Convention delegates adopt 2008-2010 LWVUS program as well as any not-recommended items granted consideration by Convention.
- July 2008 to June 2010 – LWVUS Board implements the adopted program

2007 ADVOCACY BY LWVUS

(Each of these represents multiple separate actions including testimony, letters, lobbying, events and publications)

- Presidential Funding Act of 2007 for Bipartisan public financing of presidential elections. Seek federal public financing program for senatorial elections. Promote taxpayers paying into Presidential Election Fund; Ask candidates to commit to using public financing.
- Comprehensive Ethics Reform: Create a new Office of Congressional Ethics (for US House of Representatives); slow the link between Congress and lobbying jobs. Oppose Supreme Court ruling on campaign finance. Urge Federal Election Commission to reform campaign contribution system and shed light on bundling process of lobbyists. Enforce provisions dealing with "electioneering communications." Strengthen public corruption laws and increase the ability of federal prosecutors to hold officials accountable for abuse of office.
- Join Justice at Stake Coalition to monitor judicial elections and ballot measures that affect impartiality of state courts.
- Produce *Protecting Your Right to Know*: guidebook on promoting transparency and observing government activities. Strengthen Freedom of Information Act and make more information available to citizens.
- Promote Washington DC Voting Rights Act
- Advocate against discriminatory voter ID laws at federal level and in states, lawsuits against states for discriminatory voter registration and election administration procedures. Assist in production of National Poll Worker Guidebook; lobby for Ballot Integrity Act of 2007. Report showing that Voter ID requirements suppress minority voter turnout.
- Support of Election Administration Commission and its authority over national mail in voter registration form. Urge separate and open votes for commissioners of the Federal Election Commission. Fully fund Help America Vote Act.
- Cosponsor "Safer, More Compassionate World Forums" to help Americans understand and prevent terrorism; releases expert papers on strategies for secure world.
- Urge Congress to support stronger environmental standards for fuel economy and renewable electricity.
- Reauthorize State Children's Health Insurance Plan (SCHIP).
- Restore Civil Liberties- outlaw warrant-less wiretapping. Restore Right of Habeas Corpus (HR 2826); alter foreign intelligence surveillance act (FISA). Limit FBI's authority to issue National Security Letters.

• **LWVUS PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS**

• **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 and work to abolish the Electoral College. 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.

• **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.
 - **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 for 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 the abolition of the death penalty.
- 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.*