**League of Women Voters of California**

**League of Women Voters of the United States**

**Combined brief statement of Policy Positions**

Note: Before applying these positions, you must read the full, detail statement of the position and its history. [posted Dec, 1, 2013]

Government Issues

**Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive**.

[Privatization](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/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.

[The Presidency](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/presidency)

Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

[Congress](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/congress)

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

[Reproductive Choices](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/reproductive-health)

Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

[Voting Rights](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/voting-rights)

Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

[Individual Liberties](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/individual-liberties)

Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

[Selection of the President](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/selection-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’s Right to Know/Citizen Participation](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/citizen%E2%80%99s-right-knowcitizen-participation)

Protect the citizen’s right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision-making.

[Campaign Financing](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/campaign-finance-reform)

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.

[Apportionment](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/apportionment)

Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

[DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/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.

[Voting Rights](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/voting-rights)

Support measures which will protect every citizen's right to vote and which will ensure government's responsibility to protect this right through regulations and procedures that encourage an informed and active electorate.

[Redistricting California](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/redistricting-california)

Support a state redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation in the state legislature and in the house of representatives with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny.
Support an independent commission as the preferred redistricting body.

[Public Libraries](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/public-libraries)

Support a public library system as a basic community service with a long-term, assured, stable and adequate funding source. Support access by all persons to public library services as a major source of knowledge and information necessary for informed, active participation in a democratic society.

[Intergovernmental Relationships](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/intergovernmental-relationships)

Support an efficient, effective and equitable balance of responsibility and authority among the levels of government with accountability to the public.

[Initiative and Referendum](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/initiative-and-referendum)

Support citizens' right of direct legislation through the initiative and referendum process.

[Election Systems](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/election-systems)

Support election systems for executive and other single seat offices, both at the state and local levels, that require the winner to receive a majority of the votes, as long as the majority is achieved using a voting method such as Instant Runoff Voting, rather than a second, separate runoff election.

[California State Constitution](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/constitution)

Support measures to secure an orderly and simplified State Constitution; provisions which enable the Legislature to deal with state problems efficiently, flexibly and with responsibility clearly fixed, and constitutional guarantee of equal representation of all citizens in the state legislature.

[State and Local Finances](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/state-and-local-finances)

Support measures to ensure revenues both sufficient and flexible enough to meet changing needs for state and local government services; that contribute to a system of public finance which emphasizes equity and fair sharing of the tax burden as well as adequacy; which include long range finance methods that meet current and future needs while taking into account the cumulative impact of public debt.

Support a process which maintains statutory authority over tax sources, rates and tax expenditures; that makes limited use of direct voting by the public on revenue measures; and that allows adoption of revenue and finance measures by a simple majority vote.

Support the distribution of revenue sources between state and local governments in a manner to ensure adequate, equitable and flexible funding of public programs based on the responsibilities and requirements of each and which encourages accountability.

Support an equitable, broad-based local property tax, easy and economical to administer, producing adequate revenue, with limitations on the types of services it funds. Support assessment practices and policies that are equitable, accurate, easy to understand and well publicized, with like properties treated uniformly.

Natural Resources Issues

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

[Agriculture](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/agriculture)

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.

[Public Participation](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/public-participation)

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

[Environmental Protection and Pollution Control](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/environmental-protection-and-pollution-control)

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

[Resource Management](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/resource-management)

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

[Natural Resources](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/natural-resources)

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

[California Water Resources](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/california-water-resources)

Support measures which promote the management and development of water resources in ways that are beneficial to the environment with emphasis on conservation and high standards of water quality that are appropriate for the intended use.

[Transportation](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/transportation)

Support a transportation system to move people and goods which includes a variety of transportation modes, with emphasis on increased public transportation services and other viable alternatives to reduce vehicle miles traveled; is efficient, convenient, and cost effective; is safe and secure; serves all segments of the population and diverse geographic needs; minimizes harmful effects on the environment; is integrated with land use; and is supported by extensive public education

[Solid Waste](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/solid-waste)

Support measures to ensure environmentally sound and efficient solid waste management, to reduce the generation of wastes, to encourage resource recovery, and to increase the demand for secondary materials.

[Land Use](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/land-use)

Support state land use planning that recognizes land as a resource as well as a commodity. The state should establish guidelines and standards for land areas of more than local concern.
Decisions for these areas should be made at the lowest level of government feasible, but should be subject to state review. Citizens must have a meaningful participation in land use planning and regulation.

[Hazardous Materials](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/hazardous-materials)

Support comprehensive measures to provide maximum protection to human health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous materials, including pesticides. An integrated approach should be taken to prevent harmful exposures through soil, surface and ground water contamination, bio-accumulation, air pollution and direct contact. Hazardous materials planning should promote pollution prevention. All levels of government share responsibility for preventing exposures.

Public information about Hazardous Materials
The public has the right to know the potentially harmful effects of materials they encounter in the home, workplace and community. Citizens should be included in the planning and decision making processes of hazardous material management. Adequate funding to promote citizen participation should be available.

[Energy](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/energy)

The League supports development of a state energy policy that will ensure reliability of energy resources and protection of the environment and public health and safety, at reasonable customer rates, giving primary consideration to conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable resources. State government should provide an efficient, coordinated energy administrative structure with open transparent procedures.

[Air Quality](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/air-quality)

Support measures to establish air quality standards that will protect the public health and welfare, and the development of effective enforcement and implementation procedures at each level of government to attain these standards.

[Agriculture](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/agriculture)

Support policies that recognize agricultural land as a limited resource which must be preserved for the economic and physical well-being of California and the nation. Appropriate agricultural land should be identified and its long term protection should be based on regulatory and incentive programs which include comprehensive planning, zoning measures and other preservation techniques. State policy which affects agriculture should ensure the conservation of soil and water resources through incentives coupled with penalties for noncompliance.

# Social Policy Issues

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

[Children at Risk](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/children-risk)

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

[Sentencing Policy](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/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.

[Death Penalty](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/death-penalty)

The LWVUS supports abolition of the death penalty.

[Urban Policy](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/urban-policy)

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

[Gun Safety](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/gun-safety)

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.

[Violence Prevention](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/violence-prevention)

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

[Children and Family Issues Action Policy](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/children-and-family-issues-action-policy)

Support policies and programs that promote the well being, development and safety of all

[Child Care](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/child-care)

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

[Meeting Basic Human Needs](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/meeting-basic-human-needs)

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

I**ncome 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.

[Immigration](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/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.

[Health Care](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/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.

[Fiscal Policy](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/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.

[Federal Role in Public Education](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/federal-role-public-education)

Support federal policies that provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12.

[Equality of Opportunity](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/equality-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.

[Mental Health Care](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/mental-health-care)

Support an adequately funded mental health care system that provides comprehensive services to the acutely, chronically and seriously mentally ill of all ages; maintains optimal mental health services for all clients; places emphasis on meeting the needs of children; offers mental health services for the homeless; seeks additional funds for preventive services; implements a master plan to integrate services; raises awareness of critical unmet needs; and emphasizes case management.

[Legal Aid](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/legal-aid)

Support measures which will enable the judicial system of the state to provide for all citizens adequate access to legal services.

Support adequately funded government supported legal assistance programs which provide legal aid to those unable to pay.

[Juvenile Justice and Dependency](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/juvenile-justice-and-dependency)

Support a juvenile justice/dependency system which works to prevent child abuse and neglect and juvenile delinquency, which serves foster children and their families and status offenders, and which rehabilitates juvenile offenders, by promoting the safety and well-being of children and helping to prepare them for productive participation in society. Support early identification of at-risk children and families followed by appropriate referrals to services which work with children, youth, families and schools. Support community efforts to provide safe supportive environments for children and their families and institutions that respect them and promote non-violent solutions to problems. Support the rights and best interests of the child in preference to those of any other individual.

[Housing](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/housing)

Support of equal opportunity in housing.

Support of measures to provide state programs to increase the supply of safe, decent, and adequate housing for all Californians.

Support for action at all levels of government for the provision of affordable housing for all Californians.

[Education](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/education)

Support a comprehensive pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade public education system which meets the needs of each individual student; challenges all students to reach their highest potential; develops patterns of lifelong learning and responsible citizenship. Support improvements in public education, based on access with both equitable and sufficient opportunities to learn for all students.

[Community College System](http://ca.lwv.org/issues/community-college-system)

Support a statewide community college system with sufficient resources to fulfill its overall goal: to offer all Californians access to a quality higher education.
Resources should be stable, accommodate all enrolling students, be fairly distributed among the college districts, and provide opportunities for long-range planning.
Governance should allow greater authority within the system itself with local districts making key decisions about mission priorities to meet community ne