



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ®
OF THE FAIRFAX AREA**

Here We Stand

LWVFA Full Positions With Other League Positions In Brief

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(With updated LWVFA Schools Position and Other updated Positions in Brief)

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

**Packard Center
4026 Hummer Road
Annandale, VA 22003-2403
E-mail: league@lwv-fairfax.org
www.lwv-fairfax.org**

Forward

Here We Stand sets forth the positions adopted by the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA) after member study, discussion and consensus. In this edition, the sections have been regrouped and reordered to be consistent with other levels of League positions. In addition, minor editorial changes were made as necessary for clarity and conciseness.

The dates following positions or parts of positions should never be used as the sole criteria that the position is outdated and should be dropped or changed. At program planning meetings, positions are re-evaluated by the membership. Local and national positions are reviewed in December of odd numbered years; regional and state in even numbered years. © 2008

Principles

The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.

The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen’s right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination.

The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.

The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.

The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems and that development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

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Here We Stand ~ LWVFA Positions in full

GOVERNMENT

Fairfax County and City of Fairfax

Support for an effective, responsible and accountable form of government.

Citizen Participation (1987)

The LWVFA believes there is a continuing need for communication between local governing bodies and their constituents. Opportunities for citizen participation in the decision-making process should be provided through such means as scheduling time for public comment at board and council meetings and holding magisterial district “town meetings” in the county.

To maximize the effectiveness of citizen participation on boards, authorities, commissions, and committees. Local governing bodies should:

- Advertise vacancies on boards, authorities, commissions and committees (appointments and reappointments), allowing an adequate time for receipt and review of applications before appointments are made.
- Periodically review the responsibilities and effectiveness of the boards, authorities, commissions and committees that they appoint.
- Require each board, authority, commission, and committee to establish a procedure for orientation for new appointees, including a clear definition of their responsibilities.

When making appointments, the City of Fairfax Council should balance areas of expertise and geographic residence, appointing only City residents wherever practical.

Relations with Non-English-Speaking Population (1999)

In order to assist our culturally and ethnically diverse population in its interactions with government, the LWVFA believes the county should:

- Address the need for bilingual personnel in public service who deal with immigrants.
- Encourage the public participation of all residents in county and public school affairs.
- Provide training in cultural sensitivity for county employees and encourage foreign language competency in personnel who deal directly with foreign-born.
- Pool interpreting and translating services so that all parts of government can benefit from this source.

Form of Government

The LWVFA:

- Supports the election of the Board of Supervisors by and from each of ten districts, with the Chairman elected at-large. (1987)
- Supports the election of the Board of Supervisors to concurrent, four-year terms. (1993)
- Believes there is no need for a recall provision to remove elected officials from office. (1993)
- Believes there should be no statutory limitations on the number of consecutive terms in office for members of the Board of Supervisors. (1987)
- Supports the appointment of deputy county executives and department heads by the Board of Supervisors, with the County Executive given power to remove them. (1987)
- Supports measures to protect the county from further town incorporation and from loss of territory either by annexation or city incorporation. (1988)
- Supports the concept of an independent auditor for program review. This auditor should be:
 - Appointed by the Board of Supervisors.
 - Employed for a contracted, specific term.
 - Provided adequate highly skilled staff.
 - Responsible for traditional financial audits as well as program audits.
 - Allowed to contract for outside consultant services when necessary.
 - Assured of independence in audit of programs.
 - Required to afford audited departments opportunity to respond prior to publication of final audit reports.
 - Required to release final audit reports simultaneously to the Board of Supervisors and the public. (1993)

County Redistricting (1988)

The LWVFA supports:

- Magisterial districts substantially equal in population.
- Redistricting once every ten years after each decennial census.

The LWVFA believes that a citizen's commission established by the Board of Supervisors should have the initial responsibility for drafting a redistricting plan for magisterial districts in Fairfax County. Adequate

technical support should be provided. The commissions should be composed of representatives from both political parties, from each magisterial district, and from countywide organizations, but should not include elected officials. The commission should have an uneven number of members. Final approval of the redistricting plan should be given by the Board of Supervisors.

Inter-Government Agreements

In determining whether to enter into inter-local or regional agreements for provision of services, local governments should give primary consideration to:

The relative costs, quality and capabilities of delivering services, including the possibilities for more diversified programs and economies of scale.

The extent to which those providing the services will be accountable and responsible to the citizens.

The most important factors to be considered when evaluating the provisions of contracts between the City of Fairfax and Fairfax County are the costs to both parties, the quality of services to be provided, and the equity of the charges and provisions.

Contracts between the City of Fairfax and Fairfax County should not be terminated unless there has been adequate opportunity for citizen input and at least a majority vote of the total membership of the governing bodies.

Privatization and Public Private Partnerships (1996)

The LWVFA believes there is a role in Fairfax County/City for privatization and public/private partnerships in cases where the public will clearly benefit from improved and more efficient services.

When evaluating whether Fairfax County/City government should enter into privatization of public services or a public/private partnership, the following factors should be considered:

- Will the quality of service be maintained or improved;
- Will cost savings and/or improved efficiency and effectiveness in providing services be realized;
- Will services be available and accessible on an equitable basis; and
- Can accountability be preserved through effective preparation, monitoring and regulation of the contract by the County/City.

Fiscal

Support for an effectively administered and equitable tax system and sale of bonds for capital improvement.

The LWVFA believes the autonomy of Fairfax County should be enhanced, particularly through the granting of flexible taxing powers. (1970s)

The local tax system, taken as a whole, should be fair and equitable, provide for adequate funding of services and facilities, distribute the tax burden equitably among all sectors of the community, and provide for a stable and reliable revenue stream.

The following important characteristics should be considered when evaluating a tax: fairness and equity progressivity, revenue yield, ease and cost of collection and administration, and the degree of difficulty in avoiding payment. Other factors that should be considered include; the stability of the revenue stream from the tax, who really pays, and the political acceptability of the tax. (1991)

If additional revenue is needed, and in order to diversify the tax system and reduce reliance on the property tax, a combination of adjusting the rates on existing taxes and/or fees and enacting new taxes and/or fees should be considered. (1991)

Earmarking all or part of a tax for a specific purpose is appropriate under certain circumstances, balanced against maintaining the local government's flexibility in making budgetary decisions. The need for the dedicated revenue should always be compelling, and a sunset or review provision should be included. (1991)

The LWVFA supports:

- Provisions for relief from the real property tax that are limited to those whose income and assets fall below a designated level. The percentage increase in the amount of one's real property tax over the previous year should not be a factor.
- Taxing agricultural and forest land according to use, with deferred taxes to be collected if the use changes. (1991)

The LWVFA believes that some kinds of services and/or benefits should be supported by general taxes, while others may be more appropriately financed by those persons using a given service or receiving a specific benefit offered by the local government.

- General taxes should support basic governmental services, such as public education, police and fire service and libraries, which should be available to all residents.
- Criteria for financing by user fees should include the level of choice involved in use of the service or benefit. One example of appropriate use fee financing is recreational facilities in the public parks. (1991)

The LWVFA believes that the sale of bonds by political jurisdictions is an appropriate method of financing capital improvements, including the construction and renewal of school facilities. (1980; 2008) Factors to be considered when evaluating proposals for bond funding include:

- Whether the project is included in the Capital Improvement Program;
- Whether the project addresses a high-priority need;
- Whether the cost is greater than can be financed from the General Fund;
- Whether the life of the facility is at least equal to the payback period of the bonds;
- Whether it is appropriate for future users to share the cost of the facility; and
- The fiscal impact of the bonded indebtedness on the County/City budget. (1991)

Public Libraries

Support for measures to maintain a broad library collection.

The LWVFA strongly believes that the selection policies and procedures of the Fairfax County Public Libraries (FCPL) should ensure that its collection contains a wide variety of books, digital resources, and other materials representing a diversity of views to serve the educational, informational and recreational needs of the residents of Fairfax County/City. (1984, amended 2006)

The LWVFA believes that the residents of Fairfax County/City should have the opportunity to question FCPL selections through formal processes that ensure fair and equitable resolution.

The LWVFA supports:

- Selection and challenge policies and procedures that are clearly defined and communicated to the public, which the system serves. (1984)
- Procedures that include the active and regular participation of a group of professional librarians working together in making selection decisions in each materials category. (1984) The authority of a locally appointed Library Board that is responsible for all policies governing the library system. (2006)
- Adequate financing for FCPL, which means funding levels that would enable it to meet the needs of the area's growing population and changing demographics. (2006)

Registration and Voting

Promote efforts to increase voter participation in Fairfax County and the City of Fairfax.

The LWVFA:

- Supports additional hours and the use of appropriate public places for voter registration.
- Believes that local governments have an obligation to their citizens to facilitate registration and increase the number of potential voters.
- Urges County and City efforts to disseminate voting information.

Transportation

Support for an effective, well-coordinated and adequately financed system of public transportation in Fairfax County/City, and an active role by Fairfax County in the planning and financing of its road system.

Coordination

The LWVFA strongly supports a coordinated, accessible bus transportation system for the Fairfax area, which includes, but is not restricted to, roads, bus, rail, para-transit, bike paths, trails and sidewalks. Such a system must provide for travel into, within and through the Fairfax area, as well as commuter travel into the metropolitan core. (2004)

The LWVFA supports the continued need for a Fairfax County Transportation Advisory Commission, which is advisory to the Board of Supervisors. The commission should be concerned with planning and coordinating all aspects of transportation—roads, Metro, ride-sharing, trails, etc. Providing for public input and information should be one of its functions. (1981, amended 1994)

Public Transportation

The LWVFA emphasizes the need for measures to convince the public of the necessity for using public transportation, rather than reliance on private automobile travel. They should include public information, incentives for using car and vanpools, public transportation, combined with disincentives for individual car use.

To provide greater and easier use of public transportation, the LWVFA supports:

- Provision of additional or more adequate fringe parking, feeder buses, express lanes, and access to bus and rail stops.
- Steps to provide reliable, efficient, convenient and coordinated public transportation service, accompanied by greater and more easily obtained

- public information about the service.
- Land use planning measures that take into account and are coordinated with planning for public transportation.
- Para-transit, trails, bike paths, sidewalks, car and vanpools.

The LWVFA believes that the policy for setting levels of regularly scheduled service should be flexible to allow for increases in population and in transit needs. The LWVFA believes that a systematic review and evaluation of service is necessary to maintain fiscal control.

The LWVFA believes:

- During peak transit hours, the locations most important to serve are high-density employment centers, high-and medium-density residential areas, low-income residential areas, and Metrorail stations. Service to railroad and bus depots, airports, and educational facilities is desirable during peak hours. (1986)
- During off-peak transit hours, the locations most important to serve are Metrorail stations, low-income residential areas, and public and social service facilities. Service to and from shopping centers, medical facilities, educational facilities, railroad depots, and airports is desirable during off-peak hours.

The County/City should ensure that public transit service is available to disabled persons in order to provide them greater independence. The best and most cost effective way of providing such service is through the use of regularly scheduled service with wheelchair lifts on specified runs plus extensive use of on-request service and paratransit, which can be tailored to individual needs. (1986)

Extension of Metrorail service into Fairfax County and completion of the Adopted Regional System (ARS) are necessary to provide adequate and accessible public transportation for the Fairfax area.

Roads

The LWVFA believes that the most important criteria to be used in setting priorities for inclusion of new roads or improvements to existing roads in a secondary road construction program are: correction of design deficiencies to improve traffic flow or safety, improved access to major employment centers, improved access to mass transportation, and whether the road is a component of the regional network. Other criteria that should be considered include: improvements based on projected levels of service, improvement of the current

level of service, the extent of environmental impact, the extent of off-site developer contributions, the lack of transportation alternatives, and the extent of neighborhood impact. (1987)

Funding

The LWVFA believes that an effective transportation system in Fairfax will require government funding and subsidies. We support local effort to identify and obtain available sources of State and Federal funding. Appropriate local funding sources are in the chart following:

	Transit Capital	Transit Operations	New road construction/ existing road improvements
General fund		yes	*yes
General obligation bonds	yes		yes
Proffers	yes	yes	yes
Impact fees	yes		yes
Special tax/assessment districts	yes		yes
Private investment	yes	yes	
Parking fees	yes	yes	
Fare-box revenue		yes	
Local fuel sales surtax		yes	yes
User fees/Tolls			yes

*Use of the general fund should be limited to relatively small projects. (Also see positions under Land Use.)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Environmental Quality

Support for measures to protect the public and the environment and to encourage alternative methods of disposal of solid and hazardous wastes; support for a comprehensive hazardous materials program.

Solid Waste

The LWV of the Fairfax Area believes:

- The County should dispose of its sludge by recycling methods; for example, composting to convert it to soil-enhancing material. (1980)
- It is important to recover recyclable materials and favors a County program to achieve this goal. (1982)
- The broadly accepted components of a solid waste management system: source reduction, reuse and recycling, incineration (waste to energy), and land filling are important in a waste management system in Fairfax. Source reduction as well as reuse and recycling should be emphasized over incineration and land filling. (1990)
- Materials separation to recover recyclables and remove toxics is important prior to both incineration and land filling. (1990)
- Local governments should be encouraged to pursue all available avenues to support source reduction and reuse and recycling. (1990)

Hazardous Materials

The LWVFA strongly supports the establishment and maintenance by Fairfax County and the City of Fairfax of comprehensive local hazardous materials programs to protect the public and the environment. Such programs should include dissemination of information to and education of the public and businesses on the safe storage and disposal of hazardous materials.

In order to increase its capacity for dealing with hazardous materials, Fairfax County should:

- Establish land-use controls for the siting of industries using or generating hazardous materials.
- Establish and maintain a database and central information system on hazardous materials.
- Establish and maintain a collection program for accepting and disposing of household hazardous materials.
- Establish and maintain a collection program for businesses generating small amounts of hazardous materials.
- Seek greater authority to regulate underground storage tanks to prevent or remedy leakage from

tanks holding hazardous materials. (1985)

The LWVFA promotes the following methods of disposing of hazardous wastes: waste reduction; recycling by waste generators; recycling through a hazardous waste exchange; and treatment or disposal at a professional hazardous waste facility. In some circumstances and for certain materials, disposal through high temperature incineration or chemical or biological treatment. Temporary, retrievable storage is acceptable pending safe, permanent disposal. Sanitary landfills and lined or unlined lagoons should not be used for holding any hazardous materials, and unregulated dumping should be vigorously prosecuted. (1985, amended 1994)

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (1988)

The LWVFA believes nontidal wetlands are a valuable resource that is in need of protection from destruction by conversion to other uses. Both tidal and nontidal wetlands should be protected against damage from sedimentation and pollution.

In order to protect wetlands, flood plains and other environmentally-sensitive areas in Fairfax County, the Board of Supervisors should:

- Identify and map such areas.
- Incorporate improved wetland and Environmental Quality Corridor protection into the zoning and site plan review process.
- Include an open space plan as part of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Upgrade the effectiveness of erosion and sedimentation and pollution controls.
- Promote state and local wetlands laws.
- Create environmental overlay districts to be applied to environmentally valuable sites for preservation in a natural state and/or protection from pollution. (94)
- Acquire such areas either by purchase or builder dedication.
- Provide for citizen education, particularly through the school system, on the value of wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas.

The LWVFA believes that the siting and building of roads and other public projects that do not fall under the federal umbrella should have independent environmental assessments. It should be Fairfax County policy to have such assessments, which evaluate the environmental, social and economic impacts of such projects.

Air Quality (1992)

In order to achieve and maintain acceptable air quality, the LWVFA:

- Believes that adoption of the California Standards for low emission vehicles is necessary to achieve and maintain compliance with the Clean Air Act of 1990.
- Believes that the development of less polluting alternative fuels should be a high priority with preference for compressed natural gas, reformulated gasoline, electricity and hydrogen. The total environmental impact of a fuel should be considered, including tail pipe emissions and pollution produced during manufacture and disposal.
- Advocates a change in parking subsidies away from those favoring low occupancy vehicles to those favoring efficient transportation modes, and greater emphasis on local programs and regulations encouraging employers to institute transportation management systems that foster efficient transportation modes.

(See Also Land Use and Transportation positions.)

Climate Change [Local] (2009)

Rapid climate change is imperiling the earth's life system and human civilization. It both affects and is affected by the actions taken by nations, states, localities and individuals.

- The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area believes that localities must play a significant role in addressing the causes of climate change. The League supports and encourages the County and City of Fairfax to adopt and carry out programs that will minimize the causes and effects of climate change.
- The League also supports the coordination of these efforts with those of other localities.

Land Use Planning

Support for well-coordinated and environmentally sound comprehensive land use planning in Fairfax County/City, efforts to ensure that growth is balanced and orderly, preservation of historic and archaeological sites and areas, coordinated revitalization and redevelopment, and coordination of land use and transportation planning.

The LWV of the Fairfax Area supports:

- A general master plan for Fairfax County and its effective implementation to ensure that growth is balanced and orderly. (1986)

- Emphatically, the position that the Board of Supervisors should determine and adopt a set of objectives and criteria for judgment to guide future development in the County and a set of policies to achieve these objectives to provide more stability in the County's planning and zoning process.
- The adoption of a conservation policy in the County.
- Conservation planning by the County for stream valleys and the broadening and strengthening of ordinances to protect stream valleys from erosion.
- Reasonable, fair and appropriate means to preserve adequate amounts of open space in Fairfax County, with special emphasis on outright acquisition by public agencies.
- The development of cluster subdivisions as a means of preserving small areas of open space within a community.
- The development of neighborhood parks.
- Timely planning for the preservation of historic and/or archaeological sites and areas. (1984)
- The coordination of land use and transportation planning, and especially urges that land use planning take into account those factors and elements required for an efficient transportation system and decreased reliance on individual automobile use.
- Measures that will improve communication among the decision-making officials, the planning agency, and the general public with wider dissemination of planning and zoning information.

The LWVFA believes that:

- in order to ensure a balanced community, and in planning for non-residential growth:
 - Public policies should be developed to reserve land suitable for office/commercial centers and major industrial parks surrounding selected Metro stops.
 - Provision should be made for adequate highway access to designated commercial industrial centers.
 - Adequate buffer zones must be required between residential and non-residential usages.
 - Direct access to non-residential streets must be provided.
- Guidelines should be established to avoid over-saturation of commercial development.
- Planning by local governments should allow for concentrations of higher density in selected areas such as projected Metro stations, for the purposes of more cost-effective public transportation services and energy conservation. Such areas

should provide for a combination of uses, including employment centers and residential, commercial and recreational activities with efficient public transportation services.

The LWVFA believes there should be a timing link between a development and the provision of public facilities needed to serve that development, to include roads, schools, public safety facilities and parks and recreation facilities. The following implementation mechanisms should be utilized:

- Public facilities should be scheduled in the Capital Improvements Program for completion within a reasonable time.
- Developers should be required to assume a share of the cost of providing new or expanded public facilities necessitated by their developments. (1986)
- New developments should be channeled to areas that are served, or soon to be served, by public facilities. (1986)

The LWVFA supports a major effort by the county government to revitalize older areas that are deteriorated or beginning to deteriorate.

- We consider preservation or creation of affordable housing and affordable commercial space to be a necessary part of revitalization and in-fill programs
- The County's updating of its development regulations for in-fill and residential development should include attention to neighborhood compatibility and site design, storm-water management and erosion and sediment control, transportation impacts and tree preservation.
- Open space and community-building places should be accommodated where that is feasible.
- The County should work in partnership in this effort with local citizens and businesses. (2000)

The LWVFA believes that practicing smart growth and creating sustainable communities are essential for the future of Fairfax County and the City of Fairfax.

Powers and Tools

- In order to achieve these goals the county must make more use of the growth control measures available to it also must be granted strengthened powers by the state to manage growth.
- We favor stronger regional planning and would be willing to give up some local authority to advance a regional plan and program. (2000)
- LWVFA supports the preservation of Fairfax County's ability to be flexible in negotiating with developers for the cost of providing new, expanded

public facilities and for the resolution of other development issues.(2010)

The City Of Fairfax

The LWVFA supports:

- Funding for maintenance and development of areas for recreational use, balancing open space with equipped play areas.
- Recreational facilities and programs designed for the use of all residents as determined cooperatively by citizens and appropriate governmental bodies.
- The concept of a downtown central area in the City of Fairfax with facilities oriented to the needs of citizens.

Water

Support for measures to protect the Occoquan Reservoir from pollution.

The LWVFA feels that the Occoquan Reservoir should be protected from pollution, and believes that Fairfax County should take those measures which are necessary and effective to achieve this purpose. (1990s)

SOCIAL POLICIES

Health

Support for publicly funded health planning.

Health Planning (1984)

The LWVFA supports publicly-funded health planning to control health care costs.

The LWVFA believes that:

- Health planning helps to control health care costs.
- Proposed changes in the numbers of hospital beds should be evaluated on the basis of need, accessibility to area residents, alternative ways of meeting identified needs, and fiscal impact.
- Adequate health services should be available to all area residents without regard for ability to pay.

Delivery of Health Care Services (1988)

The LWVFA believes that Fairfax County should play a role in the health care of its citizens, which should include participation in:

- Community health promotion, protection, and prevention of illness.
- Primary health care.
- Detection, diagnosis, and treatment.
- Maintenance and continuing care for chronic conditions.

The LWVFA believes that fiscal responsibility for providing for the health care needs of the medically indigent should be shared by all levels of government, individual citizens, industry and business, health care providers, and volunteer groups.

The LWVFA supports:

- County programs that subsidize health care for the medically indigent through private physicians.
- County-funded primary care clinics in appropriate locations.
- An aggressive, community-based out-reach program to inform the public about available health care programs.

The LWVFA believes that there is a need for insurance programs that would enable small employers to provide basic health insurance coverage for their employees. Development of such programs by any or all of the following: insurance companies, private industry, and state and local governments.

Human Resources

Support equal opportunity for education, employment and housing; promote provision of services for the elderly; work to ensure adequate, affordable and appropriate housing for low- and moderate-income families and individuals; support a wide range of housing arrangements for mentally disabled adults; support permanent shelters for homeless families and individuals.

The Elderly

The LWVFA is concerned that a wide range of services be available to the elderly of Fairfax County/City who are in need of the services.

Fairfax County/City should provide information exchange and publicity; collect facts and statistics about the elderly. The local government should encourage and coordinate proprietary and voluntary groups, offer technical assistance and set standards. When necessary, the government should directly operate and fund programs for the elderly.

Services should be available to persons in need regardless of age, and charges should be assessed on a sliding scale reflecting ability to pay.

Poverty (1998)

The LWVFA supports:

- Policies and programs designed to help families and individuals to become and remain self-sufficient, and to protect children and others who may be vulnerable.
- Public/private collaboration in implementing programs; and
- Accountability from public and private agencies involved.

The LWVFA believes that community needs should be assessed regularly and that information about availability of services and how to access them should be widely disseminated to the public.

Housing

The LWVFA is concerned about the continuing insufficiency of housing for low-and moderate-income persons.

The LWVFA emphatically supports the principle of open occupancy. (1976)

The LWVFA is emphatic in its conviction that the County/City should assume the responsibility to see that adequate housing is provided for the low-income families in Fairfax County/City who cannot afford housing meeting minimum standards for health and safety; and to this end:

- Supports establishment of assisted housing programs using federal funds.
- Advocates that changes in building codes, construction techniques and subdivision regulations should be made to encourage the building of more low-and moderate-income housing. These changes should apply to all housing.
- Believes the Housing Hygiene Code should be a positive tool to help individuals improve their housing. The goal should be the improvement of housing conditions, not the displacement of people. We believe displacement should depend upon the availability of better alternative housing.
- Believes assisted housing programs should include leasing and acquisition, as well as building of new housing.
- Favors a variety of housing types built of good materials in an attractive manner. The housing should be in small concentrations on sites scattered throughout the County/City.
- Believes assisted housing programs should be conducted in such a way as to make people and the housing involved an integral part of their neighborhood.
- Believes the County/City should work with blighted areas to work out comprehensive feasible solutions to their housing and housing-related problems.
- Supports implementation of an affordable dwelling unit ordinance, which would require developers to dedicate a portion of their developments to low-and moderate-income housing. (amended 1994)
- Supports programs to challenge the concerns and misconceptions that work against establishment of low-and moderate-income housing.(1976)
- Believes that local government should establish a linkage program through which commercial developers can contribute to low-and moderate-income housing. (1990)
- Believes that local government can encourage the production of low-and moderate-income housing by allowing developers of that housing to "fast track" through the system of applications and rezonings and inspections. (1990)

The LWVFA strongly believes that the responsibility for housing *mentally disabled adults* must be shared by the various levels of government, the families, and private organizations. The LWVFA further believes that:

- A wide range of housing arrangements to suit the various degrees of mental disability should be available.
- The government should assist financially in meeting the housing needs of the mentally disabled. (1985)

The LWVFA believes that:

- Permanent shelters should be maintained to meet the needs of *homeless families and individuals*. (amended 1994)
- Responsibility for providing these shelters should be shared by local government and the private sector; however, the major responsibility for providing and maintaining shelters rests with the government. (1985)

The LWVFA believes that non-profit housing groups have a vital role to play in the provision and maintenance of low- and moderate-income housing. We support their efforts and believe that local government should act as a clearinghouse for grants, loans and information and encourage and assist these organizations.

The LWVFA strongly believes that local government should establish policies which:

- Encourage the distribution of low-and moderate-income housing throughout the county.
- Encourage the development of low-and moderate-income housing in or near employment centers.
- Preserve and maintain the existing low-and moderate-income housing stock. (1990)

Judicial System

The LWVFA believes that the court, correctional and law enforcement system of Fairfax County/City should be conducted in a just and dignified manner; should minister to all people without legal, economic or administrative discrimination; and requires efficient administration, competent personnel who are given a clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, proper planning, coordination between related agencies, and the active and informed participation of citizens.

Personnel

The LWVFA believes that an effective justice system requires a sufficient number of trained and qualified personnel whose salaries are competitive and commensurate with their position and responsibility; and, to this end, supports:

- County/City funding of salary supplements for State employees in the local justice system when needed to match local pay scales.
- The hiring of additional, locally funded staff when necessary; and
- Lateral entry into the police force.

The LWVFA believes that the quality of police training would be enhanced by citizen representation on the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy Board.

Programs

The LWVFA supports adequately funded, coordinated and well-publicized programs that:

- Provide appropriate alternatives to incarceration, both before and after the trial, for the accused and convicted offender—especially for first-time offenders, misdemeanants, and those charged with offenses classified as victimless crimes—with the goal of rehabilitating the individual while still protecting society;
- Protect the rights of victims and help them recover from the trauma of crime; and
- Help both victims and witnesses proceed through the criminal justice system.

The LWVFA believes that programs for incarcerated persons as well as those providing alternatives to incarceration should be based on classification and separation of individuals through careful screening and evaluation. Programs should be evaluated for their effectiveness.

The LWVFA believes that the County/City must educate the public to the need for alternatives to incarceration and provide local funding where necessary.

The LWVFA supports Small Claims Court procedures and jurisdiction that would maximize its use as a convenient, swift, low-cost, and efficient method of obtaining legal redress in small claims matters.

Procedures

The LWVFA supports the routine, systematic and system-wide compilation of records and statistics on the local justice system and the use of this information to help evaluate its procedures and programs and determine most efficient use of facilities and personnel.

The LWVFA believes that the effectiveness of programs that provide defense counsel for indigents require adequate funding and access to information available to other parts of the justice system.

The LWVFA supports the adoption of uniform regulations, guidelines, and oversight of the bail system to ensure accountability. Since bail is discriminatory against the poor, the LWVFA urges the use of alternative methods of pre-trial release. (Updated 2000)

Juvenile Problems

Support for measures to protect and rehabilitate problem youth.

The LWVFA believes a major goal of the Fairfax Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court should be the protection and rehabilitation of problem youth. To this end, the LWVFA supports:

- Availability of the following additional resources to the Fairfax Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court for dealing with juvenile problems:
 - Expanded intake hours,
 - Emergency psychiatric care,
 - Additional probation officers to lower caseloads,
 - Additional local residential treatment facilities,
 - Expansion of mental health services for juveniles with problems, and
 - Teacher-probation counselors.
- Alternatives to detention of a variety of individual and group homes located throughout the county, in preference to institutions. These facilities should provide for separation of various types of juveniles according to their individual needs.
- The belief that only those juveniles who are dangerous to others, or likely to run, should be held in secure detention.
- The geographical decentralization of counseling services to problem youth and their families.
- The belief that effective planning for programs and facilities to deal with juvenile problems within the jurisdiction of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court is dependent on the following:
 - Obtaining and using adequate information to define problems and evaluate existing programs.
 - Coordinated planning, including all involved agencies, with clear assignment of responsibility.

- The belief that if the Fairfax Juvenile and Domestic Court were to run its own detention center, it should have an advisory board composed of citizens and professionals.

The LWVFA believes that in order to prevent juvenile delinquency and foster youth development:

- Children who have not committed criminal acts and minor offenders whose problems at home, at school or in the community have led them to antisocial behavior should be diverted from the juvenile justice system.
- A centralized referral service, independent of the juvenile justice system, should be established as an alternative to Juvenile Court Intake.
- Social institutions should provide youth with increased access to positive social roles.

The LWVFA also believes community services need to be expanded and their wider use encouraged as alternatives to court petition, and that any system of services to youth should include:

- Close cooperation among all agencies responsible for youth services.
- Coordination of services for youth and their families.
- Identification and filling of gaps in available services, with evaluation of existing services.
- Youth and citizen input/participation in planning and decision-making.
- A third-party advocate, other than a parent or court, for children with problems to perform functions such as follow-up, determining a child's rights, etc.

Child Abuse

In order to break the “cycle of violence” resulting from child abuse and neglect, the LWVFA considers the following prevention programs and services to be very important:

- Programs that foster and develop nurturing and parenting skills.
- Intensive prevention and rehabilitation services targeting the 12 to 18 age group, both victim and offender.
- A sufficient number of family court judges and court personnel to ensure a timely response to child abuse situations.
- Expansion of court advocate programs such as Court Appointed Special Advocates.
- Expansion of before and after school programs (SACC) so they are available to all elementary school children.
- Child abuse education programs for all judges and

other court personnel, teachers, childcare providers, and other professionals who deal with children. (1994)

The LWVFA also supports:

- Teaching children in the regular school curriculum appropriate responses to dangerous and abusive situations.
- Additional residential treatment centers in county for abused and neglected children.
- Providing support groups and halfway houses for teenagers in transition from treatment facilities to home or to the community. (1994)

Schools (FCPS)

Promote equal opportunity for a quality education in Fairfax County/City schools. Support for proper planning, competent administration, full-day kindergarten and minimum of 20-minute daily recess in all elementary schools, programs to meet special needs, adequate personnel, facilities and financing, well defined channels for community input and review, and appropriate books and materials to support and enhance the instructional program.

Organization, Personnel, and Services

The LWVFA supports the assumption by the school clusters of responsibility for monitoring student achievement and school effectiveness and for ensuring good communication between schools and the community, especially in responding to problems and parent concerns.

The LWVFA believes that the primary considerations in determining pupil/teacher ratios and class sizes should be the system's instructional goals and enhancing the achievement of all students.

The LWVFA supports the broad and timely dissemination, using a variety of methods and media, of information about school policies, programs, procedures and organizational responsibilities.

The League supports:

- Efforts to attract and retain good, professionally qualified principals, teachers, and other school staff.
- A program of personnel evaluation, professional development and training to promote maximum utilization of talents and knowledge about current research and best practices.

- Teacher participation in making decisions at all levels.
- The use of qualified, adequately trained and paid instructional and other school aides.

The LWVFA believes that comprehensive and effective guidance, counseling and psychological services at all levels are necessary to ensure a quality education. Emphasis should be placed on: diagnosing and solving children's learning and emotional problems; keeping students in school with support services; and providing constructive options for students, family and school personnel. The schools should use expulsion only as a last resort.

Programs

The LWVFA supports flexibility in programs, services and grouping at all levels (preK-12) to help children develop their potential at their own rate, including children with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency.

The LWVFA supports school readiness programs and believes that Family and Early Childhood (Head Start) programs and a comprehensive program for gifted children should be available for all qualified applicants.

The LWVFA believes that full day kindergarten should be offered in all elementary schools (June 2010).

The LWVFA supports a strong physical education program that helps students acquire the knowledge, processes, skills, and confidence needed to engage in meaningful physical activity both in the present and for a lifetime. Elementary school children should be provided with at least one daily period of recess of at least 20 minutes in length. (June 2010)

The LWVFA believes that FCPS should continue to provide a comprehensive instructional program of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) for all grade levels.

The League supports public/private partnerships such as workplace training and the work of community groups in teaching English.

The LWVFA supports an excellent, comprehensive and flexible special education program of instruction and services that is responsive to the needs of children with disabilities and delivered by an adequate number of highly qualified teachers and staff in settings that maximize the educational quality of instruction for all

students. All teachers of special education students should receive the necessary training, support, and planning time to provide excellent instruction for all students.

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area supports a K-12 Family Life Program in FCPS that provides students with age-appropriate knowledge and skills to make healthy, responsible, respectful, and life-enhancing decisions related to human growth and development, sexuality, relationships and mental health. The program should be presented by well-trained teachers, promote parent involvement, and reflect the values of the community. In respect for individual family culture, parents should be able to opt their children out of all or part of each grade's program. These children should have quality, appropriate lessons to replace the FLE classes they do not attend.

The LWVFA supports the FCPS Career and Technical Education program's academies and other efforts to make advanced technical and specialized elective course offerings available to more high school students.

The LWVFA supports the introduction of innovative programs and practices in Fairfax County/City schools. The LWVFA believes that:

- Innovative programs should be carefully planned and evaluated, and, when proven by piloting, they should be implemented without unjustified delay. As a general practice, new innovative programs should not be initiated until those already proven are applied throughout the school system.
- Teachers, principals and other staff implementing new programs should be supported and carefully trained.
- Evaluation procedures should determine if the desired changes are produced in the classroom, and if not, what further assistance is needed.
- Innovations should be considered whether they arise from the community, parents, individual school, or FCPS system personnel.

School Start Times (2008)

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area believes that it is desirable to delay the start time for instruction at all high schools and middle schools in order to provide the best opportunity for student learning and to promote adolescent health and safety. The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area recommends that Fairfax Public Schools fully explore

the feasibility of adopting later start times for middle and high schools.

Facilities

Community Involvement: The LWVFA supports a policy that encourages and provides for citizen involvement in all aspects of school construction, redistricting of school boundaries, consolidations, closings and subsequent alternate use. Adequate background materials and time must be provided for widespread community discussion and public comment at every step of the decision-making process.

Planning and design: The LWVFA supports: flexibility in school design to meet the changing needs of school programs and the community; long-range planning and follow-up to minimize overcrowding or underutilization of public school facilities; and coordination with other governmental agencies.

Specifically, the LWVFA supports:

- The construction or provision of facilities that are functional and flexible to meet present and future instructional requirements, suitable for wide community use, technologically up-to-date, economical, environmentally responsible, and energy efficient.
- Making available generally comparable facilities for all public school children.
- Close cooperation and coordination between the school boards of Fairfax County and City and between the school boards and those divisions of government responsible for land use planning, fiscal planning, recreation, parks, libraries and public health and safety to prevent duplication, make the best use of public funds, and help provide for the safety of the school community.

Community Use: The LWVFA supports using space in school facilities for other education and community purposes that do not disrupt the basic educational program of the school and are appropriate to the school, community and site. The LWVFA supports the concept of community schools and flexibility in school design so that optimum use can be made of all public school facilities.

Fees

The LWVFA opposes the charging of textbook rental and other instructional materials fees by FCPS. If school budget constraints require the imposition of some activity fees in order to maintain the basic school program, it would not oppose charging legally

permissible fees if adequate provisions are made to provide for and encourage the participation in activities by those unable to pay the fee.

Books and Other Materials

The LWVFA believes that the goal of FCPS policies and procedures for selecting books and other materials for use in classrooms and school media centers should be to support and enhance the instructional program.

The LWVFA believes that there should be a clearly defined efficient process for questioning FCPS books and materials selections and resolving challenges equitably and in a timely manner, while protecting the quality of education and the breadth of materials available to students. The challenge procedures should be communicated widely and easily available to parents and the school community.

The LWVFA believes that both instructional materials selection and challenge procedures should include the participation of school professionals, parents and other residents of Fairfax County/City.

Transportation Policies and Management

The LWVFA believes that the FCPS should:

- Adopt measures to discourage student auto usage and encourage students within the walking distance to walk, bicycle or use public transportation to and from school.
- Support the development of safe walking routes for students to their assigned schools.
- Adopt measures and schedules to encourage students who live beyond the maximum walking-distance to use school buses or public transportation.

We believe that the maximum walking distance should be one mile for elementary school students and one-and one-half miles for secondary students.

The LWVFA also believes that FCPS should:

- Provide the necessary funding, facilities, computerized scheduling capability, and staff support to plan, maintain and operate an efficient, safe and environmentally responsible school bus fleet.
- Consistently analyze needs, scheduling flexibility, equipment, routing, age and uses of school buses.

(April and June 2007; March 2008, June 2010)

Here We Stand – “**Complete**” includes Other League Positions as follows:

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LWV of the National Capital Area (NCA) Full Positions May 2011

The LWNCA is the Inter-League Organization (ILO) that deals with issues that cross jurisdictions in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. These positions have been developed after study and concurrence and or consensus among the Local Leagues in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia who are members of this ILO. The positions are listed in alphabetical order. The dates following the text denote when the position was adopted. For more information please visit our website at www.lwvnca.org.

AIRPORTS

1. Use of the three major metropolitan Washington airports [Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall (BWI), Washington Dulles Internationals (IAD), and Ronald Reagan Washington National (DCA)] should be balanced based on overall airport infrastructure and capacity. Good ground transportation is necessary to all airports.
2. It is necessary to place limitations on the use of DCA. We support the enforcement of:
 - a. The current High Density and Perimeter Rules, and noise abatement procedures.
 - b. Other methods to limit aircraft types.
3. With regard to all three airports, jurisdictions should:
 - a. Enact responsible, comprehensive planning and zoning policies that limit development to industrial and/or commercial uses in the immediate vicinity of the airports.
 - b. Restrict residential development within the area directly affected by the presence and operations of the airports.
 - c. Consider potential development height when evaluating land use changes. (1985, 2007)

BELTWAY SAFETY

1. In order to control speeding and unsafe driving on the Capital Beltway and its feeder roads, we support:
 - a) the use of additional patrol officers for visibility and enforcement
 - b) the use of automated photographic speed enforcement devices as an additional system of speed enforcement
2. We support measures to increase truck safety on the Capital Beltway and its connector roads that include:
 - a) mandatory commercial vehicle safety inspections in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia,
 - b) increased fines for truck safety violations
 - c) limiting hazardous material carriers to certain hours

3. Weight and length limitations for commercial vehicles using the Capital Beltway and its feeder roads should not be increased
4. Efforts between federal, state and local governments to improve coordination of inspection and enforcement activities on the Beltway should be a continuing process (1991).

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH PLANNING

1. LWNCA supports:
 - a) governmental regulations of health planning (1976, 89),
 - b) regional coordination among Health Systems Agencies in the Washington Metropolitan Area to include gathering data, sharing information, avoiding duplication of facilities and services, and controlling costs (1976, 89),
 - c) regional implementation of health education and information services to the public (1977, 89).
2. In order to increase the availability of medical services, LWV supports the concept of 24-hour clinics & the use of para-professionals (1977, 89).
3. There should be improved care for the elderly and an emphasis on community support as an alternative to long-term institutional nursing care (1977, 89).

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

1. We support legislation to permit the use of marijuana and heroin for medicinal purposes (1989).
2. We believe that testing for illegal drug use is a justifiable invasion of privacy when required as part of the hiring process for jobs affecting public safety and national security (1989).
3. Employees who test positive should be:
 - a) retested prior to any disciplinary action (1976, 89),
 - b) allowed to continue working or put on administrative leave,
 - c) required in each case to participate in an employee assistance program,
 - d) subjected to random drug tests for a one-year period following a positive test (1989).
4. Measures for solving the drug problem should include interdiction, enforcement, education/ prevention, and treatment. Education and treatment should receive

special emphasis and should be stressed over criminal justice sanctions (1989, 91).

5. Drug treatment programs that should be given public funding priority include detoxification and self-help programs, outpatient care, and the use of therapeutic communities, with aftercare as part of all programs (1991).

6. Treatment programs for drug users under 18 and for pregnant women should receive priority for public funding (1991).

7. Drug treatment should be incorporated into the sentence for any juvenile or adult convicted of a crime who tested positive at the time of arrest (1989).

8. Pregnant drug users should not be subjected to criminal prosecution just because they are pregnant. Pregnant drug users who are before the court for crimes other than the use of drugs should be placed in mandatory treatment through a justice system diversion program. We support the use of outreach nurses and counselors for pregnant drug users without the threat of legal penalties (1991).

9. Financial responsibility for drug treatment should fall, to some extent, on all of the following: insurance, patients, patients' families, governments (federal, state, and local), employers, and labor unions (1989).

10. Each jurisdiction in the metropolitan Washington area should set up its own treatment programs for drug users (1989).

11. The area jurisdictions should establish a public/private partnership through the Council of Governments (COG) to develop a long-range plan to meet treatment needs and to identify financial and in-kind resources. This partnership should include the private sector and citizen groups (1989).

D.C. FINANCING

1. Budget Autonomy. The District of Columbia should have autonomy in budgeting locally raised revenue. The League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA) supports legislation eliminating the annual Congressional D.C. appropriations budget-approval process.

2. Federal Payment. To address the District of Columbia's need for a stronger revenue base, the LWVNCA supports Congressional legislation setting forth the factors for determining an annual, predictable federal payment. The most important factors to be considered are:

- a) taxes that the District of Columbia cannot levy because of Congressional prohibitions on the District's ability to tax; and
- b) the cost of services provided by the District to the federal government

Other factors might include the cost of state services provided by the District and the percentages of revenue that other U.S. cities receive from external sources. (2003)

LAND USE/HOUSING

1. Regional land use planning for the Washington Metropolitan area should include a coordinated and comprehensive approach to meet housing needs. The goal of the housing component of a regional land use plan should be to:

- a) provide adequate housing for all income levels,
- b) promote a balanced distribution of housing and employment for all income levels,
- c) improve the quality of housing and neighborhood environments (1975, reaffirmed 1989).

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

1. We accept the Council of Governments (COG) as the basic instrument for cooperative regional planning and the solution of governmental problems that cannot be solved by local governments or other planning boards and agencies (1966, 82).

2. We support granting COG sufficient authority so that it can resolve governmental problems that cannot be solved by local governments (1973, 82, 87, 89).

3. Any Washington Metropolitan governance should have some funding powers. Specifically, we support assessments of member jurisdictions, user fees, and state and federal grants.

4. We support citizen participation at the regional level for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and other inter-jurisdictional agencies (1973, 83).

TRANSPORTATION

1. In support of the concept that there be some form of public transportation available for all, we endorse public policy in services and planning that:

- a) supports a coordinated public transportation system which includes bus and rapid rail transit (1964, 70, 83, 89),
- b) promotes and improves the present and proposed public transportation systems to encourage the use of mass transit (1963, 70, 89).

2. Priorities in transportation services and planning should include:

- a) transportation systems services that are convenient, frequent, regular, speedy, and economical to the user and for the benefit of the larger community (1963, 64, 70, 83, 89),
- b) reduced air pollution through the promotion of mass transportation systems (1970, 89),

c) allocation of road space for use of high-occupancy vehicles (buses, carpools, vanpools) to speed services, including traffic control measures.

3. We support public participation and supervision in determining information needed and in evaluating transportation proposals, transportation planning, and operations. Public involvement and decision-making should include

a) appointment of citizen members to decision-making boards with full authority to participate in their functions, and enough tenure to master the subject. (These members should be residents of the jurisdictions involved and include consumer advocates who do not have business connections or official roles in the transportation and appropriations process) (1971, 89),

b) every effort by local governments to include minorities, senior citizens, economically and/or physically challenged persons and other traditionally under-represented citizens on transportation and land use advisory committees and to facilitate this participation (1997),

c) open public meetings of all regulatory and public management boards (1971, 89),

d) compulsory paid publications in general circulation newspapers or proposals on which public review is to be held (1971, 89),

e) decision-making on the level of services for the regional mass transit system by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA) with local input, including citizen input early in the decision-making process (1981, 89).

4. We support financial measures that include:

a) informing the public of the total costs of auto use and full public disclosure of the costs of transportation service, of who pays for service and who receives it, and of full cost/benefit information,

b) public investment to finance public transportation systems, to encourage substantially greater use of mass transportation, to increase resources for bus and rail transit, to achieve a realistic alternative to private auto use, to provide funds for bus shelters and information services (1971, 83, 89),

c) reduction of subsidies to auto use, such as tax favors which support parking and free parking for employees paid out of public funds (1971, 89).

d) the use of a dedicated tax to help fund public transportation. The objective of such a tax should be to spread the costs of mass transit

among the total population and to encourage the use of mass transit instead of the automobile. A sales tax which excludes such necessities as food and medicines would be the best means of financing mass transportation in the metropolitan area. The most important criteria to be used in evaluating particular taxes dedicated to transportation should be revenue potential, timeliness, and reliability (1980).

Note: the above position applies only to the Washington metropolitan area, and may be acted upon within the context of interstate regional cooperation, despite its partial conflict with the LWVMD, LWVVA and LWVDC positions

5. We support the integration of transportation and land use planning on local and regional levels (1997).

6. We support an interstate compact authority for regional transportation.

a) Members representing corporate, environmental, social, and political jurisdictions would best promote a regional approach to transportation planning.

b) Members representing political jurisdictions would best produce cooperation among/between local jurisdictions and would best promote efficiency and flexibility in meeting transportation needs.

c) The following areas of transportation planning should come within the jurisdiction of a regional transportation authority: Roads and highways; urban and suburban transit, including bus and rail; interstate rail, including connections among systems, i.e., Amtrak, Marc, etc.; pedestrian/bike paths; water, i.e., water taxis, ferries, etc.; bridges and tunnels.

d) Approved projects should be funded through: Federal funds appropriated through transportation authorization act; state and local contributions; user fees, including tolls, fares, and other fees; private funding; bonds; gasoline tax (2004).

WATER RESOURCES

1. In order to ensure a safe and adequate water supply for metropolitan Washington and to restore the quality of our streams and rivers, we support:

a) conservation and protection of drinking water and supply sources. Sources of drinking water serving the metropolitan area, such as the Potomac River and Occoquan and Patuxent Reservoirs, must be maintained and protected against pollution from both point and non-point sources,

b) regional demand reduction and water conservation measures to reduce annual per capita use --

- a
 - i) Contingency plans should be developed on regional basis to provide for mandatory restrictions on water use in time of emergency.
 - ii) Measures to recycle treated waste water in industrial, agricultural, and other non-potable systems and measures to reduce the use of water of drinking water quality as a conveyer of wastes should be encouraged to the extent consistent with public health and hydrological requirements
 - c) water-sharing measures to meet emergencies and to protect the physical and biological integrity of the sources,
 - d) protection of ground water,
 - e) official consideration of new drinking water sources --
 - i) Sources within the metropolitan region should be investigated as possible adjuncts to existing water sources
 - ii) Construction of major upstream dams on the Potomac or its tributaries for the purpose of providing additional water supplies for the metropolitan region should not be undertaken unless other options have been found insufficient to meet the essential needs of the region.
2. We support regional planning to improve waste water treatment management. Final selection for new or expanded waste water treatment facilities should be based on meeting national clean water objectives, protecting public health, and minimizing environmental, energy, and cost impacts (1979, 89).

Positions in Brief - LWVFA

A summary of LWVFA positions, as updated 9/2011

For complete wording, see *Here We Stand, 2008 edition-revised 6/2009, 4/2010, 6/2010, & Republished 2011*, or the website: www.lwv-fairfax.org

GOVERNMENT

Fairfax County & City of Fairfax (1987-1996)

Support an effective, responsible and accountable form of government that includes opportunities for citizen participation in the decision-making process by scheduling time for public comment at board and council meetings and holding magisterial district town meetings in the county. Support for the concept of an independent auditor for program review.

Fiscal (1970s-2008)

Support for an effectively administered, equitable tax system and the sale of bonds for capital improvements including the construction and renewal of school facilities. If additional revenue is needed, and in order to diversify the tax system and reduce reliance on the property tax, a combination of adjusting the rates on existing taxes and/or fees and enacting new taxes and/or fees should be considered.

Public Libraries (1984-2006)

Support for selection policies and procedures of the Fairfax County Public Libraries (FCPL) that ensure its collection contains a wide variety of books, digital resources, and other materials representing a diversity of views to serve the educational, informational and recreational needs of the residents of Fairfax County/City.

Registration and Voting

Support efforts to increase voter registration and voter participation in Fairfax County and the City of Fairfax.

Transportation (1981-2004)

Support for an effective, well-coordinated and adequately financed system of public transportation in Fairfax County/City, and an active role by Fairfax County in the planning of its road system and the financing of road improvements

NATURAL RESOURCES

Environmental Quality (E.Q)

- **Solid Waste (1980-1990)**
Support measures to protect the public and the environment and to encourage alternative methods of disposal of solid wastes. Source reduction, as

well as reuse and recycling, should be emphasized over incineration and land filling.

- **Hazardous Materials (1985-1994)**
Support establishment and maintenance by Fairfax County and Fairfax City of a comprehensive local hazardous materials program, including safe disposal of hazardous waste, to protect the public and environment.
- **Sensitive Areas (1988-1994)**
Non-tidal wetlands are a valuable resource that is in need of protection from destruction by conversion to other uses. Both tidal and non-tidal wetlands should be protected against damage from sedimentation and pollution.
- **Air Quality (1992)**
To achieve and maintain acceptable air quality, development of less polluting alternative fuels should be a high priority with preference for compressed natural gas, reformulated gasoline, electricity and hydrogen. Support for a change in parking subsidies away from those favoring low occupancy vehicles to those favoring efficient transportation modes.
- **Climate Change (2009)**
Localities must play a significant role in addressing the causes of climate change. The League supports and encourages the County and City of Fairfax to adopt and carry out programs that will minimize the causes and effects of climate change. The League also supports the coordination of these efforts with those of other localities.

Land Use Planning (1984-2000)

Support for well-coordinated and environmentally sound comprehensive land use planning in Fairfax County/City, efforts to ensure that growth is balanced and orderly, preservation of historic and archaeological sites and areas, coordinated revitalization and redevelopment, and coordination of land use and transportation planning.

Water (1990s)

Support for Fairfax County taking measures necessary to effectively protect the Occoquan Reservoir from pollution.

SOCIAL POLICY

Health Care (1984-1988)

Support publicly funded health planning to control costs and support Fairfax County/City having a role in the health care of its citizens, which should include participation in programs that subsidize health care for the medically indigent through private physicians and primary care clinics placed in appropriate locations. Support for an aggressive, community-based out-reach program to inform the public about available health care programs

Human Services (1976-1990)

Support equal opportunity for education, employment and housing; promote provision of services for the elderly; work to ensure adequate, affordable and appropriate housing for low-and moderate-income families and individuals; support a wide range of housing arrangements for mentally disabled adults; and support permanent shelters for homeless families and individuals.

Judicial System (2000)

Support court, correctional and law enforcement systems for Fairfax County/City that are conducted in a just and dignified manner; that minister to all people without legal, economic or administrative discrimination; that require efficient administration and

competent personnel who are given a clear assignment of responsibility and adequate financing; that require proper planning and coordination between related agencies; and that encourage the active and informed participation of citizens.

Juvenile Problems (1994)

Support measures for problem youth whereby the major goal of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court for Fairfax County/City is the protection and rehabilitation of problem youth. Support for alternatives to detention and a variety of individual and group homes located throughout the county/city, in preference to institutions. These facilities should provide for separation of various types of juveniles according to their individual needs.

Schools (2007-2008, 2010)

Promote equal opportunity for a quality education in Fairfax County/City schools. Support for proper planning; competent administration; full-day kindergarten and minimum of 20-minute daily recess in all elementary schools; programs to meet special needs; adequate personnel, facilities and financing; well defined channels for community input and review; and appropriate books and materials to support and enhance the instructional program.

League of Women Voters of VIRGINIA (LWV-VA)
Positions in Brief Revised September 2011~ A Summary of Position Statements
For Full positions, see *Positioned For Action*, on the website: www.LWV-VA.org

GOVERNMENT

DELEGATION OF POWER (1972, 1991)

Support for a balanced partnership between state and local government, including:

- Policies and incentives that promote regional coordination and local action.
- Establishment of uniform powers and responsibilities of local governments by changing the distinctions between cities, counties, and towns.
- Coordination of activities and programs of local jurisdictions.
- Solving problems which cross jurisdictional lines.

ELECTION LAWS (2011)

The League of Women Voters of Virginia believes that democratic government depends on the informed and active participation of its citizens; that voting is a right and responsibility; and that election laws, regulations and administrative procedures should be uniformly designed and applied, and adequately funded to facilitate and increase voter participation throughout Virginia.

Specifically, the League supports measures to ensure the availability of voter registration and to encourage and facilitate increased voter participation in elections, including: absentee voting by mail and in-person without a reason; an adequate number of voting machines and trained election officers; the use of satellite voting; split shifts for election officers when needed; and measures that take advantage of technological advances such as online voter registration and the use of electronic poll books. The League also supports the shared funding of statewide registration and voting systems by the localities and the Commonwealth; providing adequate authority and resources to the State Board of Elections for oversight and enforcement of laws and standards for registration and elections uniformly throughout the Commonwealth; and the use of secure electronic means to facilitate voter registration and absentee voting for Virginia's military and overseas voters.

FISCAL POLICY (1964, 1977, 1979)

Support for a responsible state fiscal policy that includes:

- A flexible and diverse tax structure that is based on a progressive income tax.
- Continuous evaluation of all programs for need, effectiveness, efficiency, and economy.

- Flexibility in developing local sources of revenue.
- Increased state commitment to funding of state-mandated programs.

Opposition to constitutional or statutory limits on state/local government spending or revenue sources.

REAPPORTIONMENT & REDISTRICTING

(1985, 2007)

Support for the establishment, in law, of a politically balanced and independent Reapportionment Commission for each decennial redistricting to prepare, with the Virginia Department of Legislative Services, a plan for submission to the legislature as specified by the Virginia Constitution. The Commission should be bi-partisan and be composed of individuals who are not elected officials; they should represent the geographical distribution and demographic diversity of the state, and consist of an uneven number of members.

TRANSPORTATION (1996)

Support for regionally balanced transportation systems which efficiently and economically meet regional needs without adversely affecting planned growth or the environment.

- Regional organizations, that set policy for a multi-modal public transportation program, that plan, coordinate, and are the designated recipients of federal and state funds, that operate or contract for services, and that could have taxing power.
- A mixture of public (federal, state, and local) and private funding for public transportation.
- Increased local participation with some public funds utilized to encourage private support and the use of innovative financing methods, such as tax incentives to encourage private sector participation.
- The use of a variety of incentives to increase the use of public transportation.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND VIRGINIA LAW

(1980, 1983)

Support for the legal recognition of marriage as an equal partnership, including:

- Policies that recognize non-monetary as well as monetary contributions to a marriage by each partner.
- Surviving spouse policies that specify that if one spouse dies without a will, the surviving spouse should inherit all property.
- Divorce policies that recognize separately acquired property before marriage and during marriage through gifts or inheritance.

- Elimination of the concept of "fault" in the court's division of marital property.
- Legal recognition of valid pre-nuptial contracts.

NATURAL RESOURCES

AIR QUALITY (1989)

Support for achieving and maintaining acceptable air quality through:

- Adoption of strict vehicle emission standards.
- Development of less polluting alternative fuels.
- Programs and regulations that foster efficient transportation modes.

Support for limiting smoking in public to designated areas so that nonsmokers are not exposed to smoke.

LAND USE (1975)

Support for state policies that include:

- Creation of a state long-range comprehensive land use plan coordinated with local and regional plans.
- State protection of critical environmental areas through some land use controls.
- Assistance to and increased flexibility for localities in land use planning and control.

WATER SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION (1983)

Support for a comprehensive state effort to protect the water supplies, including:

- Recognition of the connection between ground and surface water.
- Decision making based on the concept of sharing in the use of ground water.
- State responsibility for the collection of information on water resources and planning for future use.
- Land use policies that guarantee protection of water resources.

SOCIAL POLICY

ADULT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (1992)

Support for addressing the crime of adult domestic violence through:

- Uniform law enforcement including mandatory arrest, reporting.
- Educational and training programs for medical, clerical, law enforcement personnel, and the public on the problem of adult domestic violence as well as conflict resolution.
- Assistance and job training programs for victims.

CHILD CARE (1988)

Support for state policies that promote quality child care that is affordable, accessible, and available, including:

- Minimum comprehensive state license standards for child care facilities.
- Incentives for development of child care programs.
- Financial assistance for low income families.
- Coordinated resource and referral systems.
- Training for care givers and parents.

CHILDREN AT RISK (1989)

Support for state and local policies that recognize the basic needs of all children including shelter, family/community support, health care, food, education, and personal safety, including:

- Funding of preventive services, rehabilitative programs, family support programs, crises services, court costs, and detention.
- Evaluations of programs and services.
- State mandated case planning and case management systems to assure timely access to services.
- Internal and judicial grievance procedures.

EDUCATION

Part I Funding (1991, 1993)

Support for state funding for public schools that insures a high quality education with equal educational opportunities for all children, including:

- Full funding for the Standards of Quality.
- Increasing the state's share of education costs.
- Full state funding of mandates.
- Funding for half-day pre-kindergarten programs for at-risk children and full-day kindergarten programs.
- State funding for some portion of capital costs.
- Improving the funding formula for determining local ability to pay and using it as a basis for distribution of state education funds.

Part II Quality Education (1997, 1999,2003)

A challenging curriculum, high expectations of students and teachers in mastering that curriculum, and appropriate assessments of student achievement. The League believes the following elements are essential for a quality education: • Four core disciplines:

- English, Mathematics, Science, History and Social Studies;
- Art, Music, Physical Education, Health and Foreign Languages;
- Analytical skills, application of knowledge and decision-making;
- Technology integrated throughout the curriculum;
- Strong remedial programs implemented at the earliest indication of a student's academic weakness;
- Special offerings for at-risk and gifted students and educational programs for students with special needs, using specified minimum standards;

- Education for students with limited English proficiency, in which emphasis is placed on teaching English;
- Career and Technical education;
- Professional education of principals and teachers and on going staff development;
- Class size appropriate to instructional goals; a safe environment for students and staff; and discipline, providing preventative programs and a well-defined system of rules, consistently enforced;
- Guidance Counselors for academics and support services;
- Parental and community support and involvement;
- Opportunities to select a specific program or school. These opportunities should be based on a system of equity so that all qualified students have equal access.

The LWVVA believes that the following are important elements of quality education in the public system, K-12:

- School-based teamwork, goal-setting and decision-making
- Application of learning to life experiences in further education, work, and leisure activities.
- Incentives, recognition, and awards for both students and teachers.

JUSTICE (1970s)

Support for a judicial system that serves all people without discrimination, including:

- Judicial selection by the General Assembly with use of a nominating commission of lay persons and lawyers.
- Sentencing by judges, not juries, with the availability of a pre-sentencing report.
- Corrections system that is adequately funded, efficiently administered, and humane.
- Corrections system that protects society and rehabilitates offenders, while offering deterrence, diversion, protection, and restitution programs.
- Local jails and community-based corrections facilities that are professionally administered and use community resources in the rehabilitation and treatment of prisoners.

JUVENILE/ADULT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (2005)

Support for the values and principles of restorative justice for juveniles and adults; support for development locally and at the state level of activities, programming and training consistent with these values and principles in responding to crime. This option should be offered at the earliest possible time in the

process, with juveniles being given preference if funds are limited.

Persons to be involved: for Juveniles: victims, schools, family, juvenile justice system, community, offender, restorative justice volunteers, trained attorneys, judges; for Adults: victims, adult education programs, family, adult correction system, community, offender, trained attorneys, judges, volunteers, Restorative Justice Association of VA.

Programs or practices to be offered as options: Victim-offender dialogue (variety of models): Activities addressing anger management, accountability, empathy for the victim and the impact of crime; mental health screening and substance abuse programs; Jobs and skills training; family counseling.

Consider case by case the needed involvement of community and/or family members, trained volunteers, attorneys, judges, social services, family counselors, and after school programs. And, in all cases protect privacy of victims, offenders and others. Local courts, social agencies and trained volunteers should collect data from programs.

In coordination with the Supreme Court of Virginia and the Restorative Justice Association of VA the legislature or administrative agencies should develop standards and measures of evaluation. Measures of evaluation should include: victim satisfaction, offender compliance, extent harm was repaired, recidivism, benefit to the community, use of community service that develops skills.

JUVENILE JUSTICE (1974, 1978, 1997)

Support for a juvenile justice system, funded by both the state and local governments, that emphasizes prevention and rehabilitation, with:

- Prevention programs that include community programs, education and recreation programs for young children and family and parenting support.
- Rehabilitation programs that provide treatment and training to meet the needs of each child and include counseling, vocational training and accredited academic programs.
- Alternative education programs or community service for juveniles who have been expelled or suspended from school or paroled from correctional facilities.
- In- and out- patient mental health and substance abuse programs oriented to the needs of juveniles.
- Pre- and post-dispositional community-based programs
- Establishment of small group homes.
- Removal of juveniles from jails.
- Continuation of the Department of Juvenile Justice as a separate department with adequate funding.

**CIVIL RIGHTS OF FELONS IN VIRGINIA
(2009)**

Position in Brief:

The League of Women Voters of Virginia believes that the civil rights of felons, regardless of the nature of their crime, should be restored automatically upon their release from incarceration or upon completion of probation or parole and that the process should be easy to understand, accessible, transparent and fair with information about the process made available to all.

MENTAL HEALTH (1987, 1988, 1989)

Support for a comprehensive state public mental health care system of quality, statewide and community based services that meets the mental health needs of all Virginians, including:

- Long-range planning, coordination among agencies, and the use of established criteria for allocation of funds.
- Assistance in providing adequate and appropriate housing for the mentally ill.
- Comprehensive and consistent service delivery in all local communities.
- Advocacy programs that ensure patients' rights at all levels.

Revised September 2011

Purpose & Principles:

The purpose of the League of Women Voters of Virginia is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government, and influence public policy through education and advocacy. While the League acts on selected governmental issues, based on positions reached after study and member agreement, it is strictly nonpartisan -- it neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates for public office.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that government policy, programs and performances must meet these criteria:

- competent personnel with clear responsibilities
- coordination among agencies and levels of government
- adequate financing
- effective enforcement
- well-defined channels for citizen input and review

Summary Of Public Policy Positions

League of Women Voters of the United States, 2010 – 2012
For Full Wording of Positions, see *Impact On Issues* at www.lwv.org

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.

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.

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.

