



LWVOR Advocacy Positions

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Statements of Position



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GOVERNANCE

Citizen Participation and Access

"The League of Women Voters believes 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." LWVUS Principles

"We must promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive." LWVUS Representative Government position

Citizen participation and access are also important parts of LWVOR positions on Land Use and the Judicial System, and LWVUS positions on Campaign Finance, Citizens Right to Know/ Citizen Participation, Environmental Protection and Pollution Control, Natural Resources Public Participation, United Nations, and International Relations Trade Policy. Because of these scattered positions, we collect here our combined history of advocacy for Citizen Participation and Access.

Note: If citizen access issues were part of specific legislation, then issues are covered in their respective subject matter.

Constitutional Provisions

Adopted 1963; Revised 1980

A. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that the Oregon Constitution should be a basic framework of state government, free of obsolete material and statutory detail. It should guarantee basic democratic rights to the people of the state by:

- 1. Providing a bill of rights;***
- 2. Reserving initiative and referendum powers to the people.***

B. The Oregon Constitution should provide for a legislative assembly that is:

- 1. Apportioned on a population basis, under a system that provides flexibility, adequate safeguards and enforcement procedures ensuring reapportionment after every federal census;***
- 2. Adequately salaried with the amount of salary specified by statute;***

3. Permitted to meet in annual sessions.

C. The executive branch should be strengthened by provisions:

- 1. Fixing authority and responsibility in the office of governor. The governor should be given the power to reorganize the administrative functions of the state government subject to legislative review and possible veto;**
- 2. Limiting the number of departments;**
- 3. Granting the power to appoint department heads to the governor with the consent of the Senate;**
- 4. For an item veto and an executive budget;**
- 5. Setting salaries by statute;**
- 6. Allowing no constitutional impairment of the state civil service system.**

D. Administrative - Post Audits (concurrence, 1980)

- 1. Post audits of state and local governments should be conducted in an apolitical manner.**
- 2. The office performing post audit should function independently of the Legislature and the executive department.**
- 3. The office should be given appropriate enforcement tools.**

E. The Oregon Constitution should provide for a judicial system uniform in organization and administration with:

- 1. Full time, legally trained judges paid by the state;**
- 2. Rule-making power vested in the Supreme Court;**
- 3. Mandatory retirement of judges;**
- 4. Judicial appointments that are made by the governor from a slate presented by a judicial nominating committee.**

F. The Oregon Constitution should provide for effective local government (1943, 1963) by:

- 1. Allowing city and county home rule;**
- 2. Reserving to the Legislature authority to provide for local government flexibility to meet future needs.**

G. Revision of the constitution in the future should be permitted by use of the constitutional convention, initiative amendment, or legislative amendment.

Statutes, constitutional amendments, and administrative decisions that implement these positions may be supported by the League.

Economic Development Revenue Bonds

Adopted April 1983

A. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the authority to issue Economic Development Revenue Bonds by the state, ports, and cities with more than 300,000 population.

- 1. In issuing Economic Development Revenue Bonds, top priority should be given to those projects which diversify the economy and/or create jobs. However, consideration should also be given to assisting economically depressed areas and attracting industries to locate in Oregon.**
- 2. Possible unfair competition which might result from bond issuance should be examined at the local level.**

B. In addition to the Economic Development Revenue Bond program, the League of Women Voters of Oregon supports other state and local economic stimulants such as upgrading education at all levels and exploring various types of financing methods.

Election Laws

Adopted 1987; Revised 1997

The League of Women Voters of Oregon recognizes that election procedures and voter information are critical elements to an informed and participating electorate.

A. Registration Process. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes a variety of practices is necessary to provide the public with adequate information regarding where and how to register, under what circumstances and how to re-register, notice of election dates, and content of the ballot. The League supports:

- 1. A registration process which is accessible, well publicized and easily understood, as well as easy to implement and administer;**
- 2. Mail-in registration forms which are widely available;**
- 3. Oregon implementation of the National Voter Registration Act which includes registration process training for agency personnel and the designation of additional registration sites;**
- 4. Implementing a statewide centralized registration list;**
- 5. A registration cut-off requirement that does not disenfranchise otherwise qualified voters.**

B. Elections Process. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes elections should be conducted in a manner which encourages voter participation and supports:

- 1. No more than four annual, regularly scheduled, election dates;**
- 2. A formula for cost-sharing between the state and the counties for the state portion of the primary and general elections;**
- 3. Evaluating the timing of the Oregon Primary; and**
- 4. Expediting the process for filling vacancies in federal offices.**

C. Voting Process. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes citizens are entitled to voting procedures which provide ease of ballot access and use and supports:

- 1. Use of vote-by-mail in all elections. Every effort should be made to preserve ballot secrecy to prevent fraud.**
- 2. Use of the permanent absentee ballot, provided methods and timelines for counting such ballots are improved, unless and until vote-by-mail in all elections is im-**

plemented; and

3. **Shortening the time between sending out mail ballots and their required return date.**

D. Voter Education Process. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports publication and distribution of a state Voters' Pamphlet prior to statewide elections and believes that:

1. **The state has an obligation to provide voters with accurate information so that voters can make reasoned choices;**
2. **All ballot measures must be included with official explanatory statements, an official advisory opinion on constitutionality, effects of a "yes" and "no " vote, a fiscal impact statement, and summaries of the main arguments for and against the measures;**
3. **The number of arguments for and against the measures to be included should be limited;**
4. **The fees charged per page should more clearly reflect the actual costs; and**
5. **Ballot titles and measures need to be stated in clear, concise language and should avoid confusing negatives.**

E. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a mandatory certification procedure for all county chief elections officials.

Election Methods

Adopted 2009

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that any election method should be evaluated on its ability to:

- **Promote voter participation.**
- **Be simple and easy for voters to understand.**
- **Be verifiable and auditable.**
- **Promote access to voting.**
- **Promote competitive elections.**
- **Prevent political manipulation.**
- **Be compatible with vote-by-mail elections.**

The League supports enabling legislation to allow local jurisdictions to explore alternative election methods, e.g. instant runoff or fusion voting. If a local jurisdiction adopts an alternative election method, that jurisdiction should bear the costs of startup and voter education. Only after experience and evaluation at the local level should the state consider alternative election methods for statewide adoption.

The League does not support nonpartisan elections for state legislators.

Emergency Board

Adopted 1982

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the use of the appointed Emergency Board to provide fiscal adjustment between legislative sessions.

- A. The League endorses the practice of naming a majority of the members from the current Ways and Means Committee to the Emergency Board. However, balanced state-wide representation should be required.***
- B. The public should have the right to be heard by the Emergency Board. Its meetings should be publicized in advance and summary agendas should be readily available to the public.***
- C. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that powers of the board should be reviewed by the Oregon Legislative Assembly. Areas to be reviewed should include:***
 - 1. The definition of what constitutes an emergency;***
 - 2. The discretionary ability of the board to make policy decisions in a forum where political accountability and public participation are limited.***

Fiscal Policy - Tax System

Adopted 1965-66, 1973; Revised 1971, 1973, 1979, 1984, 1992, 1993, 1999; Educational Update 1999*

- A. Evaluating Taxes. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes any tax proposal should be evaluated with regard to its effect on the entire tax structure. The League supports the following criteria for evaluating taxes and tax systems.***
 - 1. A tax system that is based on ability to pay, but that applies a benefits-received principle wherever reasonable and that recognizes the role of social expediency;***
 - 2. A tax system that is equitable, adequate, stable, easy to administer and as simple as possible;***
 - 3. A tax system that takes into account the taxes levied by all levels of government covering the same tax base;***
 - 4. A tax system that is flexible enough to adjust to social and economic changes (e.g., population shifts, development of new industry, demands for more services and changes in business cycles);***
 - 5. A tax system that recognizes the individual's responsibility for government services by providing for broad sharing of the tax burden.***
- B. Fiscal Responsibility***
 - 1. The League of Women Voters believes local government should have primary responsibility for financing non-school local government. Local services mandated by the state should have state funding.***
 - 2. A tax limitation is justified if it provides safeguards in the regulation of state and local services and economy. A limitation is not desirable if it prevents provision of***

services, disrupts government functioning, inhibits progress or results in loss of local control.

- 3. We believe economy should be achieved by efficiency and responsible administration. If cuts are necessary, preference should be given to cuts based on an established priority of services so that least essential services are reduced or eliminated first.**

C. Income Tax. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the income tax as the most equitable means of providing state revenue. The income tax should be progressive, compatible with federal law and should apply to the broadest possible segment of Oregonians.

D. Sales Tax. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the adoption of a sales tax provided:

- 1. The rate cannot be increased without approval of the voters;**
- 2. Regressivity is reduced through:**
 - a. a tax credit or rebate and**
 - b. exemptions for items such as food, rent and utilities.**

E. Property Tax. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the use of the local property tax for partially financing local government and local services.

Exemptions to the General Property Tax. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes:

- 1. Social values justify:**
 - a. exemptions to charitable, educational and benevolent organizations;**
 - b. exemptions to fraternal organizations only to the extent of actual charity performed;**
 - c. partial exemption of church property with fees to be paid for local government services directly benefiting the property, such as police and fire protection.**
- 2. Exemptions designed to create a favorable climate for attracting new industry should be competitive with those of other states.**
- 3. Economic values justify tax deferral and special assessment at less than real market value on farmlands and forest lands.**
- 4. Eligibility for an exemption should require:**
 - a. a verified statement of the taxpayer;**
 - b. proof of income from all individuals seeking an exemption on their homestead- if eligibility for the exemption is based on income.**
- 5. Exemption laws should be periodically reexamined to determine whether they are justified.**
- 6. Exemption of some classes of personal property is justified if a tax on them would be too difficult or costly to administer.**

F. School District Financing. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes:

- 1. The major portion of the cost of public schools should be borne by the state.**
 - a. The state should provide sufficient funds to give each child an equal, adequate**

education.

b. All specifically state mandated programs should be financed by the state.

2. Local districts should be allowed funding alternatives to provide educational programs.

3. Apart from state mandates, local control of the educational programs should be maintained.

4. A stable state system for financing public schools is crucial for long range planning.

G. Emergency Clause. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports removing the emergency clause restriction on revenue measures. The importance of such measures warrants:

1. Either more support than a simple majority; or

2. More signatures than currently required on a petition to refer.

*Updated for background information only – no position change.

Initiative, Referendum and Recall Position

Adopted 1988; Revised 1996; Educational Update 2001*

- 1. Statute Initiatives. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the constitutional right of Oregon citizens to propose or revise statutes through the direct initiative process. The League supports the following:*
 - a. Requiring a number of valid signatures not less than six (6) percent of the total number of votes cast for all candidates for governor at the last election at which a governor was elected for a term of four years;*
 - b. Requiring more than 25 signatures to file the prospective petition with the Secretary of State;*
 - c. Prohibiting legislative changes to an initiative statute for at least two years from its effective date, except to clarify implementation and to correct errors in form and style;*
 - d. Requiring an advisory opinion as to the constitutionality of each proposed initiative after it has qualified for the ballot. Such opinion should be published in the Voters' Pamphlet;*
 - e. Limiting the time frame for collecting signatures to one year;*
 - f. Optional use of the indirect initiative.*

- 2. Constitutional Initiatives. The League of Women Voters of Oregon discourages amending the Oregon Constitution by the initiative process. If amendments by initiatives are allowed, the League supports the following restrictions:*
 - a. Requiring a number of valid signatures not less than ten (10) percent of the total number of votes cast for all candidates for governor at the last election at which a governor was elected for a term of four years;*
 - b. Requiring more than 25 signatures to file the prospective petition with the Secretary of State;*
 - c. Establishing a formula for a geographic distribution of signatures in order to re-*

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- fect statewide interest in a measure;*
- d. Requiring an advisory opinion as to the constitutionality of each proposed initiative after it has qualified for the ballot. Such opinion should be published in the Voters' Pamphlet;*
 - e. Limiting the time frame for collecting signatures to one year;*
 - f. Requiring more than a simple majority of the total votes cast for the measure for passage;*
 - g. Exempting the Oregon Bill of Rights and revenue measures from the initiative process; and*
 - h. Using the indirect initiative process and scheduling discussion of a qualified initiative first on the agenda of the next legislative session.*
- 3. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the Oregon petition referendum process as provided in the Oregon Constitution.*
 - 4. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the recall process as provided in the Oregon Constitution.*
 - 5. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that ballot titles should be stated in clear, concise language and should avoid confusing negatives.*
 - 6. The League of Women Voters of Oregon opposes paying petition circulators by the signature. Paid petitioners must be required to identify themselves as such, personally and on the signature sheets. With reasonable restrictions, petitioners should be allowed to collect signatures in highly visible privately and publicly owned locations.*
 - 7. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports publication and distribution of a state Voters' Pamphlet prior to statewide elections and believes that:*
 - a. The state has an obligation to provide the voters with accurate information so that voters can make reasoned choices;*
 - b. All ballot measures must be included with official explanatory statements, an official advisory opinion on constitutionality, effects of a "yes" and "no" vote, and summaries of the main arguments for and against the measures;*
 - c. The number of arguments for and against the measures to be included should be limited; and*
 - d. The fees charged per page should more clearly reflect the actual costs.*

*Updated for background information only – no position change.

Oregon State Courts

Adopted 1979, 2007

The League of Women Voters of Oregon affirms:

- ***The separation of powers provided in Article III, Section 1 of the Oregon Constitution;***
- ***The treatment of the Oregon Judicial Department, the third branch of our state government, as a separate, independent, co-equal branch of state government.***

The League believes that:

- ***The State of Oregon should provide access to its courts that meets the diverse needs of all people who use the state courts.***
- ***Judges must be free to decide cases based upon the facts of the particular case and the applicable law, independent of the influence of public opinion and political and partisan pressures.***

In order to improve the budget process and funding for the Oregon Judicial Department, the League supports:

- ***Adequate and stable funding to perform the Department's core functions and critical services;***
- ***Funding by the Legislature of mandated programs or procedures for the state courts;***
- ***An independent compensation commission to set judicial compensation of state court judges.***

The state should ensure that counties are able to provide adequate court facilities, maintenance of those facilities, and security equipment and services.

The League believes that the following criteria should be used in evaluating a system of selecting judges in Oregon. The system should:

- ***Be as free from political influence as possible;***
- ***Encourage and attract the most competent and experienced people;***
- ***Include a method of evaluating judges and judicial candidates.***

To preserve judicial impartiality and fairness and to protect the public's perception of this impartiality and fairness, the League believes that efforts to obtain campaign finance reform in Oregon should include the financing of judicial campaigns.

The League supports alternative dispute resolution (ADR) programs (such as arbitration, mediation, and settlement conferences) as a way to resolve disputes in appropriate cases, recognizing that, in some cases, a trial will be necessary. In order to operate effective ADR programs, Oregon's courts should, at a minimum, have:

- ***Adequate facilities in which to conduct mediation and arbitration processes;***
- ***Availability of trained and qualified arbitrators and mediators;***
- ***Financial assistance for those unable to afford access to ADR;***
- ***Adequate and stable funding.***

The League encourages the development of specialty courts (such as commercial court) and problem-solving courts (such as drug and mental health courts) within the Oregon Judicial Department. In order to operate effective specialty and problem-solving courts, Oregon's courts need:

- ***Adequate court staff;***
- ***Facilities in which to hold hearings;***
- ***Availability of service providers and outpatient and residential treatment;***
- ***Adequate and stable funding.***

Redistricting

Adopted 2007

Congressional and legislative redistricting should advance the fundamental purposes of representative democracy and a republican form of government by affording the people a meaningful choice in electing their representatives and holding the government accountable to the people.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that the Oregon legislative and congressional redistricting system should be efficient, adequately funded, based on well-defined criteria, subject to a reasonable and effective timetable, and have an open and public process.

- A. Any redistricting plan should assure that voters are effectively able to hold their public officials accountable, responsible, and responsive, and be based on the following criteria:***
 - ***Adhere to all federal constitutional and legal requirements, such as that every district should have equal population, be contiguous, and meet the requirements of the Voting Rights Act;***
 - ***Promote competitiveness and partisan fairness;***
 - ***Consider other criteria, such as respect for political subdivisions, communities of interest, and geographic barriers.***
- B. Any redistricting plan should be developed independently of the Legislature in a nonpartisan manner with substantial public input. The Legislature may be afforded an opportunity to review the plan and accept or reject it.***
- C. The Oregon Supreme Court should promptly review and rule on any challenge to a redistricting plan and require adjustments if the criteria have not been met.***
- D. Oregon should conduct redistricting only once during each decade following the federal census.***

NATURAL RESOURCES

Air Quality

Adopted May 1968

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that all segments of society (government, industry, agriculture and individual citizens) must share responsibility for improved air pollution abatement practices.

A. In more specific terms, the League supports:

- 1. Adequate standards for control of all sources of pollution and strict enforcement of established rules and regulations;***
- 2. A comprehensive, coordinated program for management of air as a natural resource;***
- 3. Adequate financing for air pollution abatement programs;***
- 4. More research to determine causes and effects of air pollution and methods of control, better coordination of research programs, and increased sharing of information.***

B. League agrees:

- 1. Individuals, too, must recognize their responsibility in abatement programs and be willing to accept restrictions on their own activities, particularly with respect to automobiles and backyard burning.***
- 2. Effective public education programs are necessary if the public is to:***
 - a. recognize the seriousness of the problem; and***
 - b. appreciate the necessity to support improved pollution abatement.***
- 3. In general, industry must be prepared to pay the cost of abatement for its own pollution, but members recognize the usefulness of some form of financial incentives:***
 - a. to assist small or distressed industries; and***
 - b. to prevent undue delay in obtaining relief from pollution.***
 - c. The members prefer loans and direct grants over forms of tax relief.***
- 4. Polluters should bear the cost of pollution abatement in proportion to their contribution to the problem. (Actually everyone will pay, whether in taxes, in product cost, or in bearing the consequence of inadequate pollution abatement.)***

C. In considering Oregon's relationship with other governmental units, League concludes:

- 1. Because both the desirable air quality and the problems of pollution vary from one***

- area to another:
- a. *The state has a right to set higher standards for pollution than those set by the federal government.*
 - b. *The state has a responsibility to set higher standards for pollution when local conditions demand it.*
 - c. *Federal standards in all cases should be recognized as a minimum below which state standards cannot be set.*
2. *As air pollution does not recognize state boundaries, participation in interstate compacts is desirable in order to control pollution on an airshed basis.*

Offshore and Coastal Management

Adopted May 1990

The League of Women Voters of Oregon opposes oil and gas exploration and development within the state's territorial sea, and requests the state to oppose any federal lease sales within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone off the Oregon coast. The ecological integrity, renewable natural resources, and beneficial uses of Oregon's ocean water must be protected.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon opposes exploration and development of marine minerals within the state's territorial sea. The League supports academic research that would not adversely affect the ecological integrity, renewable natural resources, and beneficial uses of the state's territorial sea.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a state policy that calls on the federal government to ban the exploration and development of marine minerals with the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone off the Oregon coast. Should a ban not be effected, the following must be required:

1. *An unbiased, credible scientific E.I.S. should be completed prior to any offshore mineral exploration or recovery operation.*
2. *Offshore mineral activities should be evaluated for degradation of the marine environment, risk to ocean fisheries, and coastal erosion problems.*
3. *A complete socioeconomic impact statement of offshore developments effect on the states and coastal economy should be made.*

The League opposes any revision, interpretation, or application of Oregon's established marine policy that would diminish Land Conservation and Development Commission Goal 19's strong environmental and natural resources conservation policy giving clear priority to long-term renewable resource uses.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes responsible and responsive government management of the public's offshore natural resources shall be based upon:

- 1. A complete environmental assessment, cumulative impact analysis, and baseline data specific to Oregon.**
- 2. Recognition of coastal states and local government's rights, jurisdictions, and responsibilities to preserve and protect marine and coastal environment and economy. Federal government's offshore activities must be consistent with Oregon's approved Coastal Zone Management Plan.**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon affirms the public's right to be completely informed, actively involved and assured the opportunity to participate in decisions about offshore exploration and development, as well as onshore facilities that support offshore development.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon endorses adequate industry-financed oil spill contingency funds, compensation funds, and company bonding for marine mineral mining activities to cover claims for damage caused by their operations, onshore support facilities, and transporting vessels. Governments and other claimants should be reimbursed for, but not limited to, the following:

- 1. Oil spill clean up costs.**
- 2. Loss of natural resources or loss of use of natural resources.**
- 3. Impairment of earning capacity.**
- 4. Damage to real or personal property and personal injury.**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a policy which allows the state to terminate or modify a lease for environmental endangerment or for public safety within the state's territorial sea.

Energy

Energy Conservation

Adopted May 1973; Educational Update 2003*

A. The members of the League of Women Voters of Oregon support state policies which promote long range planning for conservation and wise development of energy sources. The League believes the public should have an opportunity to influence decisions on the development of particular sources and the citing of specific installations. League supports:

- 1. A governmental agency to evaluate power needs estimates and plan source development. This agency should include representatives of:

 - a. utility companies,**
 - b. the general public, and**
 - c. all levels of government.****
- 2. Governmental programs to provide public education and information to encourage information participation in all power decisions, both for production and conservation.**

B. The League believes that in any decision to build a power plant:

1. *The most important consideration is environmental quality;*
 2. *Of lesser importance, but to be taken into account are:*
 - a. *size of electric bills and prices of goods,*
 - b. *industrial development,*
 - c. *cultural standards.*
- C. *The League supports the following conservation measures:***
1. *Rate structures encouraging the wise use of energy. To this end League favors:*
 - a. *a low base rate for essential use, above this,*
 - b. *higher rates to discourage waste.*
 2. *Government funding of research and development efforts to discover new technologies:*
 - a. *to provide efficient methods for energy production and use with minimal environmental damage,*
 - b. *emphasis should be given to renewable resources.*
 3. *Governmental programs to provide public education and information.*
 4. *Building codes which will specify standards of design and insulation that minimize waste of energy used for heating, cooling, and lighting.*
- D. *The League believes that state or region should be allowed higher standards for nuclear plants than those set by the federal government.***

*Updated for background information only – no position change.

Nuclear Energy

Adopted May 1980

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that the nuclear power program must be managed to protect current and future generations and to maintain an environment beneficial to life.

- A. Technical uncertainties must be publicly recognized and planned for,***
- B. Responsibility for establishing and maintaining a waste system must not be deferred to future generations, and***
- C. Effective coordination among all levels of government - federal, state, local - and the private sector is imperative in planning and carrying out programs for transportation, waste storage, and safety, with responsibility and authority clearly designated.***

Land Use

Adopted May 1995; Educational Update 2002*

Citizen Participation

Citizen participation, education, communication and ongoing reevaluation are essential elements in the comprehensive planning process. Recognizing the need for effective citizen participation, the League of Women Voters of Oregon believes the following factors should be considered in establishing citizen advisory groups in all jurisdictions within the state involved in land use planning:

- 1. Representation on a broad socioeconomic, geographic and occupational basis.***
- 2. Appointment for a specific project with specified goals and terms, and provision for an adequate orientation to the purposes of the agency.***
- 3. Provision for communication among citizens, citizen advisory groups and planning agencies.***

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports appointment of Citizen Involvement Committees (CICs), separate from planning commissions, to assist local governing bodies with their citizens' involvement programs.

Regional and Urban Growth

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a system of local government based upon constitutional home rule for metropolitan districts, counties and cities. The League recognizes certain principles of good local government. These are:

- 1. Democratic representation and control.***
- 2. Basic simplicity with power to plan for future growth or change.***
- 3. Consideration of the interdependence of land use, transportation and environmental quality in all comprehensive plans.***

The League supports the establishment of a regional government in an area where planning and delivery of services can be more efficiently and economically provided by such a government.

Statewide Planning

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) as the statewide planning agency. We also support the 19 statewide land use goals.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports policies that promote both conservation and development of land as a natural resource, in accordance with Oregon's land use goals. Applying this principle, the League believes:

The state should have the prime responsibility for establishing statewide planning goals and for supervising and coordinating comprehensive land use plans, with participation by citizens and by local and regional governments.

The state, with citizen participation, should identify, regulate and enforce areas of critical statewide concern.

Consideration of accurate information concerning water availability and quality should be a prime factor when making land use decisions.

Taxation and assessment policies should support comprehensive land use plans.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports protection of private property rights commensurate with overall consideration of public health and environmental protection.

*Updated for background information only – no position change.

Parks

Adopted January 1999

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that a parks system is an appropriate function of state government and should provide the following services:

- ***Acquire, protect and preserve natural, scenic, cultural, historic, and wildlife sites and other resources;***
- ***Provide camping and a variety of other recreational opportunities, consistent with the natural environment;***
- ***Offer interpretive and educational information and programs regarding the history, culture, and natural resources of the state and the features of specific parklands;***
- ***Protect public ownership of beaches;***
- ***Secure affordable and safe access to parks and ocean beaches.***

PROGRAM

The LWVOR believes that to be effective the Oregon parks system must have:

- ***Competent personnel in sufficient numbers;***
- ***Clear assignment of responsibility;***
- ***Adequate, stable funding;***
- ***Coordination with different agencies and levels of government;***
- ***Well-defined channels for citizen input and review;***
- ***Consideration of local concerns when consistent with statewide public interest;***
- ***Reasonable protection from crime and vandalism;***
- ***Cooperation and coordination with the private sector when in the public interest;***
and
- ***Long-range planning.***

FUNDING

The LWVOR supports a balance and varied mixture of revenues for Oregon's parks with the General Fund providing basic support for departmental operations. While the LWVOR believes user fees are sometimes appropriate, the League opposes them for non-intensive, brief visits. The sale of annual use permits is encouraged. Other appro-

priate revenue sources include but are not limited to recreational vehicle and automobile registration fees, lottery funds, and certain specific charges, such and bottle taxes. The Oregon parks system should actively seek donations of land, funds, facilities and services.

SERVICE PROVISIONS

The LWVOR advocates the efficient provision of services in state parks under state supervision and control. In general the League is opposed to the private management of parks but supports well-supervised contracts for services with a reasonable return for the Oregon parks system. Use of correction-system and volunteer labor is supported if it is well supervised.

PLANNING

The LWVOR believes that the Oregon parks system requires a long-range strategic plan that includes periodic evaluation and is adequately funded. Such a plan should give high priority to:

- *Preservation and maintenance of existing parks;*
- *Protection and expansion of public access to ocean beaches;*
- *Acquisition of additional park resources;*
- *Provision of campground facilities and day-use areas; and*
- *Protection of scenic waterways.*

Seismic Risks

Adopted March 1995

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that all levels of government share the responsibility of coordinating, implementing and funding an effective program to mitigate Oregon's earthquake and tsunami hazards.

Priority must be given to mitigation that protects human life and safeguards critical life support systems.

The League supports:

- *Educating the public about the grave significance of Oregon's earthquake and tsunami threat and encouraging preparedness.*
- *Improving the safety of transportation systems and establishing alternate routes around bridges and overpasses which are likely to be unsafe after an earthquake or tsunami.*
- *Establishing tsunami warning signals and evacuation routes.*
- *Evaluating dams that threaten population centers and taking remedial actions such as reinforcing dams, and developing maps and downstream notification procedures.*

LWVOR supports as essential elements of an effective earthquake and tsunami program:

A. Comprehensive education efforts:

- 1. All school children should be taught to understand Oregon's earthquake and tsunami hazards and how to respond to various situations and conditions that may arise.**
- 2. Schools' earthquake and tsunami plans, education and drills should be monitored and analyzed for adequacy.**

B. Improved preparedness:

- 1. Federal, state, and local chain of command should be established and fully coordinated. The emergency communication system should be enhanced and regularly tested.**
- 2. Emergency Services should be accessible and housed in safe buildings. Citizens should be encouraged to develop emergency plans, including supply kits.**
- 3. When citing critical facilities, tsunami run up and inundation as well as seismic factors such as severe ground shaking, liquefaction, massive landslide potential, and subsidence should be considered.**
- 4. Geological reports identifying property at risk should be on file and accessible to the public. Property that poses extreme hazards should be designated as un-buildable.**

Water

Water Policy and Planning

Adopted January 1977; Revised March 1985

A. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that all water policy should be managed for the benefit of the public. Applying this principle, the League supports modifications in the historic appropriation doctrine that would:

- 1. Take into consideration both in-stream and out-of-stream beneficial uses of water;**
- 2. Facilitate changes from one beneficial use of water to another;**
- 3. Provide incentives for water user conservation; and**
- 4. Establish a mechanism for management of water. Such management should include:**
 - a. the ability to address equitable allocation of water in times of shortage, and**
 - b. mechanisms for the protection of in-stream beneficial uses such as minimum perennial stream flow.**

B. The interdependence of land use planning and water planning should be recognized at all levels of government.

- 1. Local comprehensive plans, basin plans, and state and regional planning should be coordinated and complementary.**
- 2. Roles and responsibilities of state and local decision makers and agencies on wa-**

ter resource issues should be clearly defined.

- C. There should be coordinated planning for the use of both surface and ground water.**
- 1. Basin program statements should include policies on:**
 - a. ground and surface water resources,**
 - b. water rights, and**
 - c. current and projected uses.**
 - 2. Basin water management should be:**
 - a. efficient and economical,**
 - b. responsive to public need,**
 - c. leading to conservation and allocation of the resource in the public interest.**
 - 3. Transfers of water between basins require coordination with planning and water use in both basins.**
 - 4. Wise planning for the use of water in the state requires a complete inventory of the water resource.**
 - 5. There should be efficient monitoring of water use, and water users should bear responsibility for reporting use.**
- D. Although all water users must share in the costs of water management, the League:**
- 1. Recognizes the benefit to individuals and to the public at large; and**
 - 2. Believes the state should bear primary fiscal responsibility for water resource management.**

Water Quality

Adopted January 1969

The members of the League of Women Voters of Oregon support state policies and procedures which promote comprehensive long-range planning for conservation and development of water resources and improvement of water quality.

- A. In more specific terms, the League supports:**
- 1. Water quality standards for rivers and estuaries high enough for recreational use, including primary contact sports, and for maintenance of commercial and sport fishing;**
 - 2. Regulatory laws sufficiently strict to guarantee the high standards desired;**
 - 3. Effective enforcement procedures with agency funding adequate to ensure compliance with regulations without undue delay.**
- B. The League opposes any degradation of present high quality streams, rivers, and estuaries.**
- C. League members are concerned about ground and surface water pollution in our suburbs and are anxious to see the problems caused by malfunctioning septic tanks eliminated. League favors:**
- 1. Strict state laws regulating the placement and maintenance of septic tanks;**
 - 2. Strict state laws requiring the provision of adequate alternatives to individual systems where population density or local conditions preclude the satisfactory functioning of septic tanks.**

- D. In urban areas, League members desire adequate sewers and sewage treatment plants. League supports:**
- 1. Local bonding efforts;**
 - 2. Financial assistance from the state to local governments.**
 - 3. Consolidation of sewer districts in those areas where such amalgamations would result in economies of scale and efficiency of administration.**
- E. While recognizing the difficulties of combining the functions of the many governmental units involved, League members favor working toward a River Basin Treatment Authority or authorities. Such an agency could:**
- 1. Result in an efficient, low cost, equitable method of limiting and treating the pollution in our rivers;**
 - 2. Provide responsible management of our surface water resources.**
- F. League members want clean water. To achieve and maintain clean water they support:**
- 1. A governmental structure so organized that the responsibility for the enforcement of antipollution laws is easily assigned, with no overlapping authority;**
 - 2. Enforcement bodies which have sufficient strength and courage to withstand pressure from special interests.**
- G. League members recognize the necessity for an informed public to encourage and support governmental efforts for our pollution abatement from all sources: individual, industrial, agricultural, and municipal.**

Water Resources of the Columbia River and the Columbia River Task Force

Adopted 1979

- A. In order to meet the present and future water needs within the Columbia River Basin, the League of Women Voters believes comprehensive planning on a basin-wide basis for conservation, development, and management of the water is essential to the optimum utilization of our water resources. Machinery is needed which will:**
- 1. Provide coordinated planning and administration among federal, state, and other agencies;**
 - 2. Establish a process for resolving conflicts among uses;**
 - 3. Establish procedures which provide information and an opportunity for citizen participation in policy decisions affecting the directions which water resources development will take.**
- B. The federal government has a necessary role in financing water resources development, but state and local governments and private users should share such costs, as far as possible, based on benefits received and the ability to pay.**
- C. The League of Women Voters believes that wise planning for the use of water in the**

Columbia River Basin requires an inventory of the water resource within the Basin.

1. This inventory should include all water-related information including:

- a. ground and surface water sources,***
- b. viable water rights,***
- c. current use, and***
- d. projected future needs.***

2. The inventory should be readily available to concerned agencies and the general public.

D. The League also believes that minimum stream flows should be established as a public right and maintained on all streams in the Columbia River Basin.

SOCIAL POLICY

Adult Corrections

Adopted August 1983

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that a full range of correctional programs should exist for adult offenders.

A. The League strongly favors increased use of alternatives to incarceration where possible.

- 1. The League supports alternatives at all stages of the criminal justice process, including but not limited to:***
 - a. pre-trial diversions,***
 - b. employment and educational programs,***
 - c. restitution,***
 - d. treatment centers for mental illness and substance abuse.***
- 2. The League strongly supports community-based programs such as those offered through the Community Corrections Act, especially those which allow inmates to be partially or wholly self supporting.***

B. If more facilities are needed, the League favors:

- 1. Minimum security regional treatment and/or program focused facilities.***
- 2. Adequate staffing and program must be part of any facility within the corrections system. Prison programs should provide each inmate with:***
 - a. educational and vocational training,***
 - b. opportunities for meaningful work, and***
 - c. adequate medical and mental health care.***
- 3. Maximum security prisons are needed for violent criminals judged dangerous to society.***

C. The League believes that comprehensive transitional programs are essential for successful completion of rehabilitation for each inmate released or paroled from a correctional facility.

D. The League supports the adoption of sentencing guidelines that set parameters for judges throughout the state in order to reduce disparity in sentencing.

- 1. Judges should be responsible for determining the length of sentences.***
- 2. The League supports continuation of the Parole Board.***

Child Care

Adopted March 1989

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that child care is a social and economic issue that reaches beyond the family into the community. Quality child care needs to be available, accessible and affordable to all families for children of all ages and with differing needs.

A. The League of Women Voters supports a diverse child care system to accommodate different parental choices and needs. Such a system may include day care centers, group homes, and family day care homes.

- 1. The State of Oregon should establish appropriate standards to ensure that high quality care exists in all settings. For centers and group homes: these standards should address facilities, staff qualifications, and number of children served. Program, parent/care giver communication, administration and transportation should be included for centers and may also be considered for group homes. There should be flexible guidelines for family day care homes because of the unique character of these facilities.***
- 2. The State of Oregon should enforce mandatory regulations by funding a sufficient number of inspectors.***
- 3. The State of Oregon should set requirements for adequate training for care givers and ensure those training opportunities are available. This could include state provision of training and/or state incentives for others to provide training.***
- 4. City and county governments should participate in enforcing health and fire standards.***

B. Affordable child care should be available and accessible for children with differing needs and in various age groups.

- 1. While parents have the primary responsibility for choosing child care, a coordinated effort between parents and government, together with providers, employers, and private groups is necessary to deliver quality child care at an affordable price.***
- 2. The State of Oregon should:***
 - a. Provide financial assistance for child care expenses to low- and middle-income families based on need. Such assistance could include tax credits for parents with a ceiling based on income.***
 - b. Support resource and referral programs.***
 - c. Encourage employer involvement in the child care system.***
 - d. Encourage development of school-age child care programs.***
- 3. Parents in job training, in school, with special-needs children and/or needing respite care services should be eligible for financial assistance for child care based on demonstrated need.***

C. Child care givers should be awarded recognition commensurate with their responsibilities. The State of Oregon should take a leadership role in elevating the professional status of child care givers and ensuring adequate compensation.

National Position (adopted in 1988): "Support programs, services and policies at all levels of government to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it, in order to increase access to employment and to prevent and reduce poverty. "

Children at Risk

Adopted January 1995

- A. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports comprehensive statewide, locally based programs and services for teen pregnancy prevention and for teenage parents. Such programs and services should include elements of the following:**
- 1. family planning services,**
 - 2. school-based health centers,**
 - 3. parenting skills' education,**
 - 4. cooperation/coordination among agencies providing services,**
 - 5. evaluation and accountability measurements,**
 - 6. easy and appropriate access to information and services,**
 - 7. mentoring and counseling for teenagers and their parents, including peer counseling,**
 - 8. community involvement and support groups,**
 - 9. abuse prevention,**
 - 10. male responsibility in teen pregnancy prevention,**
 - 11. broad public education, and**
 - 12. substance abuse prevention.**
- B. The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes the state should have the primary responsibility for funding programs addressing teenage pregnancy prevention and teen parenting. Elements to be included, but not limited to, are:**
- 1. equitable funding of programs for young women and young men,**
 - 2. adequate funding for state agencies with responsibilities to children,**
 - 3. cooperative efforts with the private sector,**
 - 4. funds earmarked for community programs, urban and rural, which provide after school and weekend activities for teens, and**
 - 5. shared funding responsibility, when appropriate, among state, local and private sources.**
- C. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports development of required curriculums for all school districts relative to teen pregnancy and parenting, accompanied by implementation requirements, which covers, but is not limited to, the following areas:**
- 1. comprehensive, age-appropriate family life sexuality education K-12,**
 - 2. parenting skills education,**
 - 3. specialized education programs for pregnant teens and teenage parents, and**
 - 4. teacher training at the baccalaureate level and as continuing education.**
- D. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports programs directed to assist pregnant teens and teen parents. These programs include the following:**
- 1. job training and adequate wages,**
 - 2. involvement and financial support requirements for fathers,**
 - 3. counseling to break the cycles of abuse, poverty, and teen pregnancy,**
 - 4. health care, including prenatal care,**
 - 5. accessible, affordable housing,**
 - 6. child care,**

7. *transportation access,*
8. *completion of secondary education, and*
9. *self-esteem enhancement, career opportunities, and transition to self-sufficiency.*

National Position, adopted 1994:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. The League supports policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that promote the well being, encourage the full development and ensure the safety of all children. These include:

- * *child abuse/neglect prevention;*
- * *teen pregnancy prevention;*
- * *quality health care, including nutrition and prenatal care;*
- * *early childhood education;*
- * *developmental services, emphasizing children ages 0-3;*
- * *family support services;*
- * *violence prevention.*

Education

Public Postsecondary Education

Adopted January 1985

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes the primary goal of Oregon's public postsecondary education should be to provide a broad spectrum of higher education for professional, vocational, and personal enrichment to all qualified and motivated individuals.

Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE)

A. For the most effective use of state educational resources, OSSHE institutions should cooperate and coordinate programs resulting in:

1. *Consistent statewide standards.*
2. *Easy transfer of credit between schools.*

B. If state funding for OSSHE institutions necessitates limiting access, such limitation should be:

1. *Academic, e.g. entrance requirements.*
2. *Financial limitation is the least desirable.*

C. Oregon needs a strong, high-quality system of higher education.

1. *State funding must reflect this need, and high priority should be given to providing sufficient funds to improve the general excellence of the state system.*
2. *In order to attract and retain quality faculty, salaries and research opportunities should be appropriately competitive.*
3. *Adequate funding should also be provided to ensure complete, up-to-date libraries*

and to maintain or upgrade the physical plants at all of our colleges and universities.

- 4. It is imperative that in our institutions we have good fiscal management accountability for the funding provided.**

D. League members feel that the roles and interrelationships of the present regional colleges, specialized institutions, and research universities are properly balanced.

- 1. Oregon State University and the University of Oregon should remain comprehensive research universities.**
- 2. Portland State University should be allowed to expand gradually.**

Community Colleges

A. The primary role of community colleges should be in the areas of:

- 1. Vocational-technical training;**
- 2. Developmental education (e.g. high school equivalency, English as a second language);**
- 3. Lower division college courses.**
- 4. Community adult education (hobby and recreation courses) should have a secondary role and must be self-supporting as defined by statute.**

B. Community colleges should maintain an open door policy. If funding necessitates limiting access:

- 1. Such limitation should be geographic, i.e. higher tuition for out-of-district students;**
- 2. Academic or financial limitations are the least desirable.**

C. State funding for community colleges should be according to the formulas set by the 1961 legislation. Local control must be maintained because it affords the community colleges the necessary flexibility to respond to local needs.

Boards And Commissions

A. Cooperation and coordination should be emphasized by all Oregon public postsecondary education institutions and governing boards.

B. The current boards dealing with education, the Board of Education, and the Board of Higher Education need no structural change. The League does not favor the creation of a new education governing body.

Editor's note: for K-12 education, see **Fiscal Policy Position**, School District Financing.

Farmworker Issues

Adopted January 2001

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes all citizens benefit from the agricultural bounty produced by Oregon's farmers and farmworkers, and that the state has a role in supporting the sound and fair relationship between farmers and the agricultural workforce, with the goal of economic and social justice for both parties. LWVOR be-

believes the state must work for the humane and respectful treatment of workers as well as the viability of Oregon farms.

Currently laws that regulate the working environment for agricultural workers are different from laws regulating the working conditions in other industries. The LWVOR believes the differences between agriculture and other industries justify some variance; but where farm work is similar to other labor, regulatory differences should be narrowed.

- **All farmworkers should be fairly compensated, earning at least minimum wage.**
- **With the possible exception of piece-rate work, some farm labor should be eligible for overtime pay.**
- **Unemployment insurance should cover permanent, year-round farmworkers.**
- **Hourly-paid farmworkers should receive paid rest breaks; all farmworkers should be provided adequate time away from work for meals.**
- **The state should continue to improve the safety of agricultural workplaces for farmworkers.**
- **Rules for child labor and for the use of farm and forestry labor contractors should maintain high standards of worker protections.**
- **State laws and programs, including non-governmental efforts, should address farmworkers' needs for a broad range of services, such as child care, safe and decent housing, sanitary working and living conditions, and access to education and health care. Education programs that are bilingual and culturally appropriate should be offered to assure that workers understand safe work practices, workplace rules, and grievance procedures.**

LWVOR supports the right of Oregon farmworkers to collectively bargain. Farmworkers should have the right to hold union elections. Employer retaliation for collective activity should be prohibited. Legislation establishing fair rules for unionization by farmworkers should be developed through a dialogue between workers and employers. Monitoring of union elections and contracts by either a private commission or a state entity should be fair and under terms agreeable to both workers and employers. Mediation programs should be encouraged.

LWVOR believes consistent and adequate enforcement of state regulations is a key to better conditions for farmworkers. Currently, we find enforcement to be inadequate and inconsistent. LWVOR supports increasing enforcement staff, increasing fines and penalties for serious violations, and collection of civil penalties for infractions of laws. LWVOR supports programs to help farmers understand and comply with worker protection rules.

LWVOR believes that safe, decent, and affordable housing should be available to all farmworkers. Oregon currently has an acute shortage of such housing for its agricultural workforce. LWVOR supports increased state funding for farmworker housing, including support, with other funds, for planning, development costs, rural infrastructure, start up costs, operating subsidies, emergency housing, and training and assistance for sponsoring organizations. The state has an important role in ensuring the safety of farmworker housing provided on farms. Such housing that has not been registered with the state should be located and brought into compliance with state standards. Public funding should emphasize best practices, such as community-based housing, and

should encourage new models that are decent and safe housing alternatives for seasonal and for permanent, year round workers; these two groups may require different types of housing.

Health Policy

Adult Mental Health in Oregon

Adopted January 1987, Educational Update 2001*, language update 2008**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a comprehensive and integrated adult mental health services delivery system in Oregon which:

- 1. Includes both community and state programs and facilities;*
- 2. Provides for coordination of local and state mental health planning based on regular needs assessments;*
- 3. Provides funding by a coordinated mix of federal, state, local, and private sector dollars; and*

Includes such budget allocations that reflect service priorities jointly determined by Community Mental Health Programs and the state Addictions and Mental Health Division.

The League supports the concept of care, treatment, and support in the least restrictive environment possible which:

- 1. Ensures continuity of care and humaneness; and*
- Balances the rights and safety of individuals with mental disorders, other interested parties, and society in general.*

The League believes that the mental health delivery system should include:

Adults with:

- a. Mental and emotional illness; and*
 - b. Alcohol and drug addiction.*
- 2. Services that focus on recovery of the individual through use of evidence-based crisis intervention and ongoing support. These services could include alternatives to hospitalization, early intervention, residential services, supportive housing, and services delivered by peers in sufficient mix and quantity to afford an acceptable quality of life for consumers and their families.*

Mental health service providers, administrators, advocates, consumers, their families, and lay citizens as participants in:

- Service delivery planning;*
- The evaluation of services; and*
- The provision of community education.*

The League supports an adult mental health civil commitment process which:

- 1. Ensures statewide consistency in the application of commitment statutes;*
 - 2. Provides for adequate and equitable investigation and examination; and*
- Protects the rights and needs of all interested parties.*

**Updated for background information only – no position change.*

*** Updated for language changes only in the position statement – no position change.*

Mental Health Services for Children and Youth

Adopted January 1975

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a coordinated plan for comprehensive mental health services for all levels of need to children and youth provided under the direction of a single state service agency responsible for basic state standards. We support the appropriation of consistent and sufficient funds to implement state-mandated programs.

- A. A well-coordinated comprehensive mental health service delivery plan should cover such concerns as:***
- 1. Community level services that are accessible, visible, and available to all income levels through a graduated fee schedule;***
 - 2. Community level programs that provide early diagnostic and referral services, 24-hour emergency care, treatment services and facilities, aftercare, and follow-up care;***
 - 3. The development of preventive programs;***
 - 4. Coordination of all levels of government and all public and private agencies working with children;***
 - 5. Standards of training for all personnel appropriate to job placement;***
 - 6. Consistent state funds supplemented by all available resources, public and private;***
 - 7. Utilization of all local resources;***
 - 8. Basic state standards which encourage quality treatment and care while permitting alternative programs.***
- B. The League of Women Voters further supports consistent and sufficient state funds for special education programs in the public school, including:***
- 1. Programs based upon the child's individual needs;***
 - 2. Special training for teachers working with disturbed children.***

Homeless Youth

Adopted 2007

Parents are legally responsible for their children. When parents are unable to fulfill that responsibility, the League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that communities and governments at all levels have a responsibility to provide programs and services to meet the needs of runaway and homeless youth.

In order to help families stay together, prevent youth homelessness, and reduce the need for more expensive future services, the LWVOR supports providing services such as family crisis counseling, child care, parenting education, mental health and addiction treatment, low-cost housing, and health care.

When youth are separated from their families, the LWVOR supports providing services to these youth, such as shelter, food, education, health care, mental health and addic-

tion treatment, plus outreach to encourage youth to use services. Older youth need additional services, such as assistance with independent living skills and with finding employment and more permanent housing.

These services may be provided by government or by private organizations that receive government and/or private funding. Coordination of these services is necessary to avoid duplication and service gaps. Youth should be served regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

All levels of government should have funding responsibility for preventive and supportive services to families and homeless youth. Private organizations are encouraged to provide funding and services. Government funds should be adequate and allocated according to demonstrated need. Agencies must show that their programs are effective.

Juvenile Justice

Adopted March 1981; Educational Update 2000*

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes in coordinated planning and implementation of juvenile services.

A. Prevention of juvenile crimes should be a priority in our society. Prevention programs should:

- 1. Be available from early childhood to adulthood;**
- 2. Involve family, peers, schools, and the community;**
- 3. Make available early diagnosis and treatment for physical, mental, and educational problems;**
- 4. Make available opportunities for all youth to learn responsibility and positive self images in their own communities; and**
- 5. Make available opportunities for learning parenting skills.**

B. Services for juvenile offenders should:

- 1. Be responsive to the needs of the youth and his or her family;**
- 2. Make diversion programs available prior to entry as well as during involvement in the juvenile justice system;**
- 3. Emphasize community planned and operated programs, including youth restitution programs;**
- 4. Deal with youth offenders in the least restrictive environment;**
- 5. Provide treatment-oriented secure custody;**
- 6. Include appropriate evaluation, treatment, and placement for those already in the system.**

C. The League opposes holding juveniles in adult jails. If appropriate alternatives are not available, care must be taken to assure that juveniles are out of sight and sound of incarcerated adults.

D. Status offenders should be diverted from the juvenile justice system whenever possi-

ble.

- 1. The League opposes holding status offenders in jail under any conditions.*
- 2. Social services outside the juvenile justice system should be developed to meet their needs.*
- 3. The juvenile court may be needed to provide help and protection for some youth.*

E. Basic standards for juvenile services should rest with the state.

- 1. Minimal federal standards are acceptable.*
- 2. Local governments should have flexibility for implementing programs consistent with these standards.*

F. Funding for Juvenile services should be consistent and dependable from all sources:

- 1. Local, state, federal, and private;*
- 2. Include parental ability to pay;*
- 3. Any level of government mandating services should provide substantial funding for those services.*

G. There should be a uniform statewide data system that provides meaningful and retrievable information while complying with right-to-privacy laws.

*Updated for background information only – no position change.

