



Upcoming LWV Events

Lunch with LWV

January 21st, 2011

February 18th, 2011

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Scottish Rite Cathedral

Township Reform Forum

January 19th, 2011

3:30 pm – 6 pm

Indiana History Center

LWV Program Review & Soup Lunch

January 29th, 2011

10 am – 1 pm

North UMC

3808 N. Meridian

LWV Indianapolis Monthly Board Meeting

First Wednesday of

Every Month, 7 pm.

North United

Methodist Church

3808 N. Meridian Street

Message from the President

With the start of the New Year comes the start of the 117th session of the Indiana General Assembly. That means LWVIN LAN Coordinator Paulette Vandegriff will begin spending a lot of time at the State House and you will have the chance to get more involved with the League!

LAN stands for Legislative Action Network and it is how the state League organizes its advocacy efforts when the General Assembly is in session. (Read more about LWVIN priorities for 2011 in “LWVIN Updates.”) Paulette is the LWVIN advocate who is at the State House on a regular basis. She attends committee hearings, delivers testimony, and works with other organizations and coalitions to further LWV priorities. She also files weekly reports and sends out Action Alerts.

What does all this mean to League members such as you? Well, depending on your interest, it could mean a whole new level of civic engagement.

Paulette is always eager to find individuals willing to serve as “Issue Advocates.” These are local LWV members who help follow a specific issue. Paulette cannot do everything alone. If you feel passionate about a certain issue, please consider talking to either myself or Paulette on how you can get more involved. For example, one LWV-Indianapolis member recently approached me indicating she wanted to help monitor efforts related to redistricting. She is now involved with the Citizen’s Redistricting Commission!

Other ways to increase your involvement with LAN during the session are to 1) let me know if you would like to receive Paulette’s weekly updates and 2) be on the lookout for Action Alerts. Paulette would be the first to say that legislators are often blown away when they receive only ten e-mails or phone calls about an issue. Ten!! Think of the impact our League could make if we committed ourselves to contacting elected officials when LAN Action Alerts are received.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erin Keelley".

LWV-Indianapolis

Voicemail:

317-767-4187

E-mail:

LWVIndy@sbcglobal.net

Visit us on the web:

www.lwvindy.org

The League of Women Voters is a time-tested nonpartisan, nonprofit, volunteer political organization, dedicated to promoting active and informed participation in government—from the school district to the nation, and from voter registration to public service. Although LWV sometimes advocates for or against issues, it never supports or opposes particular candidates.

Upcoming League Events

Lunch with League

Friday, January 21st

12noon – 1p.m.

Scottish Rite Cathedral, Double Eagle Café, 650 N. Meridian St.

Participate in this monthly lunchtime series so that you will be the most informed you can be about local and city politics. Our January speaker is **Sharon Langlotz**, Program Director, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute, who will talk with us about sexual violence and the way it is being addressed in Indiana.

Our February 18th speaker is scheduled to be **Sheila Suess Kennedy**, School of Public and Environmental Affairs, IUPUI.

Both programs are sure to be interesting and informative. Come through the cafeteria line any time after 11:30, buy your meal, and join us in the Truman Room to eat, listen, and discuss. Parking is free in the lot west of the building, accessed from North Street.

Remember – No Lunch with League is scheduled in March! Mark your calendar for Collaboration Lunch at North UMC on March 10th.

LWV Local & State Position Review

Saturday, January 29th

10 a.m to 1 p.m. (A soup lunch follows the discussion)

North United Methodist Church (3808 N. Meridian)

Once a year LWV members are asked to gather and review League policy positions. This is a great way to not only become familiar with LWV positions and beliefs, but it is also a way to connect with fellow League members ... and get a free lunch courtesy of your board of directors!

For 2011 we are concentrating on local and state positions (we reviewed LWVUS positions in 2010). Here is what you need to know:

- We will discuss a concurrence on the revised LWVIN “School Finance” position (page 22)
- We will assess all other LWVIN positions to both (re)familiarize ourselves and discuss whether they should be **retained, revised/reviewed, or dropped.**
- We will conduct a similar assessment on local positions as well.

The state positions to be discussed begin on page 8 of this *Bulletin*. Our local positions will be provided at the review meeting and are available at our website, www.lwvindy.org.

Policy Over Politics: A Forum on Township Reform

Wednesday, January 19

3:30p.m. to 6 p.m.

Indiana History Center, Basile Theater

Sponsored by the Lacy Leadership Association Civic Leadership Cadre with support from the LWVIN, LWV of Indianapolis, LWV of Greater Lafayette, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, CICP, and IndyHub.

Come learn how local government can best meet the needs of Hoosier communities and citizens. Speakers include, Gov. Mitch Daniels, Justice Ted Boehm (ret.), Bill Blomquist, Steve Campbell, Martha Lamkin, Louis Mahern, Mark Miles, and Tim Swarens. The forum will take place from 3:30 to approximately 5p.m. with a cash bar and light hors d'oeuvres reception to follow. Reservations are required by going to <http://policyoverpolitics.eventbrite.com/>. Contact Erin Kelley at 523-5806 if you do not have Internet access and need assistance registering. (Be aware this event might be sold out by the time of this *Bulletin* printing.)

Monthly LWV-Indianapolis Board Meetings

First Wednesday of every month at 7p.m.

North United Methodist Church

3808 N. Meridian Street

All League members are welcome to attend board meetings. Learn more about **your** League and how you can get more involved.

General Membership Meeting – LWVUS Privatization Study

Thursday, February 24

7 to 8p.m.

North United Methodist Church, 3808 N. Meridian

In accordance with direction from Convention 2010, LWVUS is conducting a study of “Privatization: The Policy Agenda to Transfer Government Functions, Services and Assets to the Private Sector.” The study will focus on the impact of privatizing government services on local communities.

We invite you to attend this meeting to learn more about the LWVUS study. Additionally, to make things more relevant for Indianapolis League members, we are currently working with the mayor’s office to confirm a speaker who can talk about local privatization efforts such as the Citizen’s Water and/or parking meter deals. More details will be in the February *Bulletin*, but please save the date!

LWV, AAUW and Church Women United Luncheon

March 10

11a.m. to 1p.m.

North United Methodist Church

LWV-Indianapolis Updates

New on the Web

Becoming familiar with the LWV of Indianapolis Web site and referring friends and family to www.lwvindy.org is a crucial activity all League members with Internet access should be doing. Our Web site is an important voter education and service tool that is used by a number of people.

A recent update in the “Voter Information” section includes links to help locate and contact newly elected officials. In the “Local League Info” section you can find a report from the 2010 LWVUS Convention that took place in Atlanta last summer.

How Do I File my Indiana Taxes?

As many of you know, one of the cuts made to the Indiana budget was that state tax forms and booklets (IT-40s) are no longer being mailed out to residents. Rather, individuals are encouraged to download their tax forms from the Indiana Department of Revenue Web site; which is fine if you have Internet access but not so great if the Web is not your thing!

Here's some information some of you might find useful:

- If you have a friend or family member with Internet access, they can find the IT-40 form and booklet at <http://www.in.gov/dor/4439.htm>.
- IMCPL branches are supposed to have hardcopies of the forms available. (NOTE: the LWV has learned not all branches have the forms available. If you encounter problems, please let us know!)
- You can contact the IDOR at (317) 232-2240 with questions.
- You can also mail inquiries to:
 - Indiana Department of Revenue
100 N. Senate Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

The Indianapolis Council of Women

The LWV of Indianapolis is a member of the Indianapolis Council of Women. The ICW meets the first Tuesday of the month from September through May (excluding January) from 10 a.m. to approximately 2 p.m. The ICW provides a morning and afternoon program along with a \$20 luncheon. Meetings are typically held at the Highland Golf and Country Club on W. 52nd Street. LWV members are welcome to attend. Call 244-8357 by the Thursday prior to the Tuesday meeting to make your reservation. Upcoming speakers include:

- February 1 – Held at the Riveria Club, 5640 N. Illinois. Morning program: Heroes of '76 of National Sojourners, afternoon: Julian Peebles, President, Ruth Lilly Health and Education Center

- March 1 – Held at the Highland Country Club. Morning: Sarah Zeckel, Nurse Practitioner from the American Diabetes Association. Afternoon: Janet Lloyd, “Today’s DAR”, Officer of the Indiana DAR

\$90 for 90 Campaign: Last Chance! ☺

Our 90th anniversary year is coming to a close, but if you haven’t already; please consider a gift of \$90 (or more) in honor of the Indianapolis League of Women Voters. You can make one \$90 gift, or you can make a pledge and pay it off during the year--it's just \$7.50/month!

Also, please consider marking our 90th anniversary by leaving a legacy of your own with a bequest to the Indianapolis League of Women Voters. Here's some sample language you can use to make an unrestricted gift to the League:

I give, devise, and bequeath to the Indianapolis League of Women Voters, a not-for-profit organization located in Indianapolis, Indiana, \$_____.00 (specific amount) OR _____ percent (%) of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate as an unrestricted gift to be used at the discretion of the Board of Directors of the Indianapolis League of Women Voters for the general purposes of the Indianapolis League of Women Voters, located in Indianapolis, Indiana.

If you have already included the League in your estate plans, THANK YOU! We would like to recognize your generosity if you would like to inform us of your plans.

LWVIN Updates

Legislative Action Network

The 117th Session of the Indiana General Assembly convened on January 5, 2011. This is the 5th year the LWVIN’s Legislative Action Network (LAN) has been in place with Paulette Vandegriff serving as the LAN Coordinator. As such, the League will have a presence in the State House monitoring legislation, attending committee hearings, attending other related meetings, and testifying on the LWVIN legislative priorities.

The LWVIN Officers and Board of Directors selected redistricting as its number one legislative priority for the 2011 session. Other priorities include Reproductive Rights, Local Government Reform, Education, Health Care and Natural Resources including Energy. As the session progresses, other issues could move on to the list of priorities.

In conjunction with the LWVIN’s emphasis on redistricting, the state League is participating in a Citizens Redistricting Commission. The Citizens Redistricting Commission is comprised of two former state legislators, and nine to eleven citizens from diverse backgrounds, geographic locations, and political perspectives who will work together to hold legislators accountable for the maps they are required to draw for voter representation for the next ten years. (More on the Commission in a future Legislative Update; the commission’s motto is “Voters should choose their legislators, legislators should not choose their voters.”)

Paulette will e-mail a weekly LAN Legislative Update to local League presidents. If Indianapolis members would like to receive a copy, please e-mail Erin Kelley at president@lwvindy.org to be

added to a distribution list. (Also note Erin is the LWVIN Liaison on Reproductive Rights and will add League members to that separate email distribution list if interested.) Paulette will also send out Action Alerts that all League members will receive. Please follow up on the Action Alerts and remember democracy is not a spectator sport.

Volunteer News

Volunteer Opportunities

- *Unigov Handbook*

The LWV is still in need of help to complete this project. The bulk of the work has been done, but assistance is needed with:

- Reviewing & revising the various city/county government organizational charts from the last edition (2001)
- Locating photographs for illustrations
- Updating the Table of Contents
- Creating a new Index

Contact Erin Kelley at president@lwvindy.org to help.

- *Indianapolis-Marion County Library Collaboration*

LWV of Indianapolis board member and IMCPL employee Jessica Moore recently asked the board to consider partnering with the library on a couple of projects in 2011. We think these are exciting opportunities that will allow members to fulfill the League mission while providing a vital service to the city. Details are forthcoming, but please consider getting involved with these initiatives later in the year:

- ***Citizenship Tutoring***

As part of the National League of Cities' "New CITYzen" campaign, the IMCPL has begun hosting naturalization workshops for immigrants. The library would like to increase its efforts by offering tutoring sessions for the citizenship test. The Indianapolis LWV has been asked to help provide volunteer tutors. More information will be forthcoming, but these sessions would likely occur just a few times during the year and would probably only last an hour or more. The IMCPL will provide tutoring materials and training. Stayed tuned!

- ***Voter Registration***

The IMCPL has also asked our League if we would be interested in registering voters at various branches this year. We will share more information on this opportunity as it becomes available.

Volunteer THANKS!

Thanks to all those who have recently volunteered their time and talents. Your hard work is deeply appreciated.

- *Indiana Debate Commission:* Tracy Heaton deMartinez, Erin Kelley, Deb Lawrence, and Karen Kay Leonard
- *Step of for Kids Liaison:* Ada Shaum
- *Poll Watchers:* Becca Loofborrow, Sandra Mowell, Robin Olds, and Nancy Smith
- *Election Re-Cap Dinner with Jim Shella:* Carol Fowler
- *Redistricting Liaison for LWV-Indpls:* Anne Nation
- *Local Newspaper/Media Contacts Research:* Karen Rutherford
- *Directory of Government Officials:* Erin Kelley, Vada Kim, Becca Loofbourrow, Jeanne Luke, Emily Murray, Amy Olson, Carol Fowler, Mary Lou Rothe, and Ada Shaum
- *LWVIN Redistricting Conference Volunteers:* Karen Kay Leonard, Anne Nation, Robin Olds

Membership News

We are happy to report that the LWV of Indianapolis will begin 2011 with an official count of 86 members.

Please do your part to help increase our membership numbers by doing these simple things in 2011:

- Invite a friend to Lunch with League or another event. Ask them to join the LWV!
- Carry membership brochures with you.
- Consider using the LWV “tagline” in your email messages - *The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. JOIN LWV where leaders are actively engaged in effecting change at the local, state, and national levels. Visit our Web site at www.lwvindy.org.*

ELECTION PROCESS

Nomination of Candidates

The goal of the primary process should be to select the best possible candidates for the political parties, with the greatest possible voter participation.

Candidates of political parties for the office of Governor and U.S. Senator should be selected in open primaries where voters do not publicly declare a party but can vote for the candidates of one party only.

- Primaries should be direct. A plurality vote is sufficient.
- To be nominated for the primary, each candidate for state or national office should be required to file a petition signed by a specific number of registered voters distributed geographically.
- A specific period for filing should be set, with a closing date which allows time for the certification of signatures and other administrative details necessary for the preparation of the ballot.
- Purge and maintain an accurate statewide voter database

Voter Registration

Indiana should require registration to verify the identity and qualifications of voters, to prevent fraud, and to maintain accurate records. Records should be purged and updated regularly.

Government at all levels, the political parties, other groups, and individual citizens should encourage citizens to register.

State and local government and the political parties carry primary responsibility for implementing registration procedures, and all citizens, the federal government, and nonpartisan political groups should be allowed to participate in voter registration.

- Registration should be easy and accessible. State and local governments carry the responsibility for publicizing registration deadlines and procedures. They should
- have mail-in application forms readily and always available at public offices and libraries, as well as allow political parties and other organizations to distribute forms;
- ensure that the offices are conveniently located at a variety of public sites during hours suitable for the working public, and that the forms will always be accepted;
- publicize widely the dates for voter registration, where forms may be obtained and the office hours for these locations; and purge and maintain an accurate statewide voter database

As stated in the Constitution of the State of Indiana, registration should be open to citizens who are at least eighteen years of age at Election Day and have resided in the precinct for thirty days before the election.

Dissemination of Voting Information

Through various public media, election officials should provide adequate and timely information about registration procedures, lists of candidates on the ballot, polling places, and voting procedures.

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

Poll Workers

To guarantee checks and balances at the polls, precinct officials should be selected by the two major parties working under equitable regulation.

To enhance the pool of applicants, poll workers should receive reasonable compensation, including for time spent in training.

Some workers at each polling place should be allowed to work shifts rather than the entire day.

Employers should regard poll service as an excused absence from regular work, like jury duty.

The League supports efforts to broaden the pool of potential poll workers by educating citizens about the need for workers, especially from diverse groups in our communities. Young voters and members of minorities and other underrepresented groups should be recruited. Qualified residents who are sixteen or seventeen years old should be permitted to serve under adequate supervision.

Training for poll workers should be standardized throughout the state. First-time workers and those assuming new positions should be trained in their new duties. Experienced workers should be trained in all changes in the laws and regulations and should be required to attend periodic review sessions.

Election Procedures

Note: Under current revision.

Election Recounts

The state should maintain uniform and equitable recount procedures for state and local offices.

Local and state election officials should fully cooperate with federal officials in recounts involving U.S. senators, representatives, or the president.

Redistricting

The county commissioner districts in each county should be as nearly equal to each other in population as possible.

FISCAL AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

Local Government

LWVIN supports the following principles of local government:

Representative and participatory: LWVIN supports strategies that promote diversity of representation and civic participation, information that is complete, clearly presented and accessible; services that are accessible; and citizen input and review of all policy making.

Efficient and effective: LWVIN supports local government organization and processes that direct dollars to the improvement of services instead of excess administration. Intergovernmental cooperation should be an essential element of governmental processes.

Transparent, accessible and accountable: LWVIN supports local government that is transparent and with elected and appointed officials accessible to the public. Officials who make

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

policy and levy taxes should be accountable to the voters. Officials who administer policy are accountable to the elected officials who appoint them.

Flexible: LWVIN supports choices for counties, cities, and towns in the ways they organize and administer their structures and functions within guidelines set by the state.

Fair and equitable: LWVIN supports fair and equitable processes and services.

Continuous improvement: LWVIN supports provisions for the continuous improvement of governmental processes including, but not limited to: technical assistance, qualifications for and training of personnel, standards, evaluation, reporting, data collection, and research.

Local Government Finance

Local government units should be allowed to use a mix of taxing options or alternatives, in addition to equitable property taxation, for financing local governmental operations.

There is a need for flexibility in funding services at the local level. Local government units should have the ability to choose the most appropriate remedy, as established by law.

Local government units depend on and need a program of state fiscal support including, but not limited to, distribution of taxes collected statewide as well as state general fund surpluses. State funds should be used to compensate local governments for taxes not paid on tax-exempt state property and for state-mandated local programs.

State government should enable a variety of local option income taxes that allow increases in local revenues for purposes other than property tax replacement. These taxes may be levied on both personal and/or corporate income. When a county adopts such a tax, it should apply to all income generated in that county, with no credits given to either residents or nonresidents.

Motor Vehicle Licensing System

Support of state operation of the motor vehicle licensing system, with guidelines to establish standards for operation, full disclosure of all collections and disbursements, and periodic auditing.

The League of Women Voters of Indiana believes that any system for motor vehicle licensing should meet the following criteria:

Guidelines to establish standards for operation, including:

Hours to be set (with allowance for varying needs of local communities in terms of density of population and life patterns).

Method of collection. To the extent possible, within prudent business procedures, establish uniformity in regard to the use of checks, cash, and credit cards by license branch patrons.

Employee compensation (wages and benefits).

Accessibility to the vehicle license facility (including an accessible location of the facility and a uniform naming system for all facilities).

Full disclosure of all collections and disbursements, including Bureau of Motor Vehicle fees, vehicle excise tax, and branch income funds.

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

Periodic, timely, state-mandated financial audits conducted according to generally accepted auditing standards.

All funds collected by the license branch system should be deposited daily in state accounts at duly designated depositories. The allocation of funds should be administered according to state statutes. Any remaining funds should be returned to the designated administrative authority.

The League of Women Voters believes that the operation of the motor vehicle licensing system is a responsibility of state government and therefore should ideally be administered by the state. However, the League does not oppose a private, contractually based system structured to meet the criteria above. The League recognizes the need for some flexibility in administering a statewide service agency, whether operation is by the state or private contractor.

Property Tax Exemption

State property tax exemptions, deductions, tax abatements and TIFs narrow the tax base of local governments, burden non-exempt properties and/or cause reductions in services offered by local governments. They should be granted fairly, equitably and sparingly. (“Tax abatements”: taxes on new investment phased-in over a number of years; “TIF”: if an area is designated a Tax Increment Finance district, property taxes generated from new development can be set aside and invested back in the area to promote development.)

Each county auditor should make available to the public the names, assessed values and purposes of organizations and businesses whose property is tax-exempt. The auditor should post property tax information on the county website.

Owners of tax-exempt properties should make payments in lieu of taxes for services provided them by government.

Property tax relief for persons should be based on economic need, should be given uniformly, and should be financed by the state.

Tax System

Support of a broad-based, equitable, efficiently administered tax system which provides adequate revenue for Indiana's budgetary needs.

Members of the League of Women Voters of Indiana believe a tax system should be broad-based, equitable, easily understood, and efficiently administered and should provide adequate revenue for Indiana's budgetary needs.

To achieve these goals, the League supports the following measures:

An individual income tax which is progressive for all income levels.

Graduated rates of income tax are progressive, proportionate to income, but Indiana's current flat rate for individuals is not. The League of Women Voters of Indiana supports progressivity because it helps to equalize the tax burden among those with different incomes, not putting a greater share proportionally on the poor. It builds into taxes the ability to pay.

Therefore, the League strongly advocates that the Indiana income tax should be made progressive, with the introduction of graduated rates. The league believes that individual income taxes should be restructured as soon as possible to this method of taxation.

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

The actual graduated rates should provide, at the least, the same total income to the state as current income taxes do.

The League of Women Voters continues to oppose any reduction in Indiana personal income tax revenue.

Assessment of all real property at frequent, regular intervals, at the same effective percentage, using adequately trained personnel and up-to-date procedures.

The League finds that, over and over, Indiana tax problems stem from inadequacies of administration, especially of assessment. The League urges state and local governments and legislative groups to work further to resolve these problems.

Because the League of Women Voters of Indiana prefers taxation based on income and the ability to-pay, the League favors changes in local property taxation in the direction of equity and fairness. The League favors the transfer of some responsibilities of government from the local to the state level, with consequent reduction in local property taxes and replacement of the funds from state revenues. The League supports full state financing of public welfare. It also favors relief on local property taxes by shifting responsibility for much of the financing of public education to the state; however, it also supports retention of some funding responsibility for education at the local level so that some degree of control of schools can be maintained at the local level.

The LWVIN strongly advocates replacing any lower local property tax collections with increased collections from a state graduated income tax. The League takes the broad position that the mix of taxes used to fund all state and local government should be changed in favor of heavier reliance on a state graduated income tax.

The League favors the replacement of revenues lost from local property tax relief for businesses through an increase in state corporation income tax and other taxes on business. The LWVIN does not favor rescinding the Corporate Gross Receipts Tax. The League supports the elimination of the inventory tax, action requiring a constitutional amendment. Until such an amendment could be approved, the League favors reduction of the inventory tax and its replacement by other taxes on businesses.

Because of the possibility of substantial increases in residential taxes with a "market value" system of property assessment, the League supports a "circuit breaker" system in market value assessment, which will protect low-income taxpayers whose property has appreciated in value.

School Finance

Note: Under current revision.

JUSTICE SYSTEM

Juvenile Justice

Rehabilitation must be the primary goal of the juvenile justice system. Detention should be used only for the protection of the child or others, or if the child is a flight risk. All children must be treated equitably, regardless of sex, race, ethnic background, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status. Major community partners—courts, police, schools, youth service agencies, parents and the community at large—should support an effective and efficient system for the assessment and treatment of juveniles in trouble. Continual use and study of best practices is essential.

We support these refinements in the juvenile justice system:

Establishment and funding of an Indiana Youth Authority to separate youth and adult corrections;

Protection of the legal rights of juveniles by providing counsel to the extent possible from the beginning of the intake process;

No waiving of counsel for juveniles under sixteen years of age;

A right to counsel for students facing expulsion from school;

Standardization of the rules of due process for juvenile courts, probation departments and the Department of Correction;

Assistance of the Judicial Center in interpreting laws and overseeing their enforcement for juvenile courts and law enforcement agencies;

Required training in child and adolescent development—physical and mental, normal and abnormal—and in family systems for judges having juvenile jurisdiction, and support for similar training for attorneys and other relevant personnel involved in juvenile cases;

Special and ongoing training for correctional officers who work with juveniles, and specific guidelines.

Status Offenders (see glossary for definition of status offense)

Status offenders should be assessed at the earliest possible point and should come under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court only as a last resort. Primary responsibility should rest with a network of community partners offering alternative resources.

Status offenders in detention should be held separately from adjudicated delinquents. Limits should be placed on their detention prior to and during court proceedings.

Delinquent Juvenile Offenders (see glossary for definition of crime delinquent offense)

A parent/guardian should be required to attend all court proceedings.

There is no offense for which a juvenile should automatically be remanded to adult court. Judges should retain full discretionary powers to make decisions regarding these juveniles, including remanding them to adult courts.

Parents should be responsible for the cost of the crime incurred by their child; however, this responsibility should not extend to their being incarcerated for the crime.

Alternative rehabilitative services rather than incarceration shall be provided when appropriate.

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

Instruction must be provided to insure the acquisition of transferable credits that will lead to a timely diploma.

Delivery of Services

Agencies involved in juvenile justice should coordinate their activities.

The state should act as a catalyst in providing services and programs for juveniles and provide a forum for communication.

The development of delinquency preventive services should be a community priority and have community oversight.

Law Enforcement and Police Training

Police should have the authority to refer juveniles, especially status offenders, to voluntary agencies.

Police training should include a curriculum at the Indiana Police Academy which includes emphasis on juvenile law and techniques for handling juveniles effectively. Police who work with juveniles should have special and ongoing training, and specific guidelines.

Detention

Needs include:

24-hours-a-day intake services by qualified personnel in each county;

Statewide guidelines for holding or detaining a child;

A statutory limit on the period of time a juvenile may be held without a determination hearing;

Alternatives to detention, such as foster home care, shelter care and community service.

Institutionalization and alternatives

Community-based detention and correctional programs at the local and regional levels are preferred, with centralized state institutions housing only the most serious offenders.

When a youth is detained away from home, the financial responsibility should be shared by both local and state governmental agencies.

All facilities must provide diagnostic health services as well as physical and mental health care.

If a juvenile is detained longer than 60 days, the facility should follow the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations for well-child care and be sure that each juvenile is up-to-date with required vaccinations and inoculations.

The state should set minimum uniform standards for hiring and evaluating job performance at all facilities.

Options need to be available for paroled juvenile offenders, and their families must continue to be involved. The cost of these services should be shared by county, state and federal governments and, whenever possible, parents. Non-government funding sources should also be solicited.

Probation

Establish uniform standards for hiring probation personnel.

Require in-service training.

Provide adequate salaries.

Control caseloads.

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

Hire probation personnel as civil servants, not political appointees.
Subsidize with state funding counties that meet certain probation standards.

Record-keeping

The courts and law enforcement agencies should maintain a uniform system of confidential records (e.g. CCMS or Quest) separate from those of social service agencies. Access to these records should be available only on an as needed basis to social service staff who are providing services to these children and their families.

Automatic destruction of records of status offenders and other misdemeanor offenders following a period of two years of good behavior should be standard. However, if the current procedure of petition of records is maintained, the juvenile and parents should be notified orally and in writing of this procedure during the court proceedings.

The Public Schools' Role

All schools in Indiana should have resources available to provide alternatives to suspending or expelling students. A principal should be able to place the juvenile in an appropriate educationally related program.

Each school corporation should address absences of ten days or more per semester.

School corporations should be responsible for providing alternative classroom education for disruptive or delinquent juveniles.

The community and school should provide the following services to juveniles expelled from school: job/skill training and/or apprenticeships, counseling, alternative schooling, and independent living training. These services should be paid for by a mix of local and state governmental funds and parental funds.

Schools must provide parents/guardians with community resource information for basic needs and family supports such as classes in family dynamics and child behavior.

Whenever possible, suspended or expelled students should be integrated back into the school environment. This process requires special attention and care.

Pretrial Release

Persons arrested should be released on their own recognizance or on an unsecured bond unless the court finds financial security necessary to secure appearance for trial or to protect public safety. Certain offenses are constitutionally exempt from bail.

Release on own recognizance or an unsecured bond should not be available to those already on pretrial release or arrested for another felony.

Trained judicial and non-judicial personnel should screen eligible defendants as soon as possible after arrest. Bail, if appropriate, should be set without delay.

In all courts, a system of minimum ten-percent cash bail should be readily available. The cash should be returned to the defendants upon disposition of their cases, except that one-tenth of the cash (usually, one percent of the total bail) may be retained from those found guilty, for administration of the program. Persons too poor to afford the administrative fee shall be given special consideration.

All persons on pretrial release should be placed under supervision.

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

Unified Courts and Merit System

Indiana should maintain a single statewide court system with uniformity of rules and records, of fiscal responsibility, of assignment of judges and cases, and of administration. As an interim measure, the state should allow court reorganization in individual counties.

All judges should be lawyers and should be free from the influence of pressure groups and political demands.

Candidates for judgeships should be nominated under a merit plan by a commission. Judges should be appointed by the governor, and periodically reviewed for retention by voters.

A discipline and removal commission should be readily available to hear public complaints against a judge. It should be authorized to hold confidential hearings and to recommend disciplinary action.

To allow sufficient time for judicial business, judges should be free from non-judicial duties and should be supported by trained staff.

The courts should be fully financed by the state. Access should be guaranteed to all residents without delay, regardless of their financial situation.

Indiana should maintain a single statewide court system with uniformity of rules and records, of fiscal responsibility, of assignment of judges and cases, and of administration. As an interim measure, the state should allow court reorganization in individual counties.

All judges should be lawyers and should be free from the influence of pressure groups and political demands.

Candidates for judgeships should be nominated under a merit plan by a commission. Judges should be appointed by the governor, and periodically reviewed for retention by voters.

A discipline and removal commission should be readily available to hear public complaints against a judge. It should be authorized to hold confidential hearings and to recommend disciplinary action.

To allow sufficient time for judicial business, judges should be free from non-judicial duties and should be supported by trained staff.

The courts should be fully financed by the state. Access should be guaranteed to all residents without delay, regardless of their financial situation.

SOCIAL POLICY

Mandatory Kindergarten

The League of Women Voters of Indiana favors mandatory state-supported kindergarten school attendance. It supports requiring school corporations to establish either a full-day or a combination full-day and half-day program for kindergarten. If both are offered, the parents should determine in which program their child participates. This position assumes that state government will provide full tuition support at the same level as that provided for public school children in first grade.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a serious threat to the well-being of Indiana families.

A consistently used definition of domestic violence facilitates its detection and documentation. It serves law enforcement, rehabilitation, public education and other ways of addressing this problem.

Domestic violence includes physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and mental abuse. It includes stalking, harassment, trespassing, threats and intimidation, and also the destruction of another person's property. Parties to domestic violence are those who are or have been spouses, unmarried couples, cohabitants, non-cohabitants in an ongoing relationship, children, or relatives. For the purpose of record-keeping, domestic violence should be regarded as a category separate from battery, or as a distinct subcategory. It should be treated no less seriously than battery.

The League supports mandatory uniform reporting and compilation of data on domestic violence by law enforcement agencies, prosecutors' offices, local and state courts, and health care providers. The privacy of victims must be protected.

Adequate training should be required for health care providers and the personnel of law enforcement agencies, prosecutors' offices and courts who come into contact with domestic violence.

Penalties should be uniform throughout the state. A second offense should be treated as a felony and subsequent offenses should be subject to the habitual offender statute, with mandatory hold for any offender. There should be strict penalties for the violation of protective/restraining orders. Other laws that affect domestic violence cases, such as the use of probable cause, should be strictly applied.

Victims should be encouraged to access counseling and court-ordered assistance programs. Counseling should be mandatory for first offenders. Shelters and victim services should be funded adequately, by public or private means. Public funding sources could include marriage license fees and fees charged to offenders.

Educating the public is important, to prevent domestic violence and to increase public awareness and understanding.

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

Children at Risk

For the purpose of this position, an at-risk child is defined as one who may be prevented from achieving full potential because of factors such as abuse, neglect, mental or physical disabilities, behavioral disorders, socio-economic status. A position of LWVUS addresses early intervention.

Every child has the right to grow up in a safe and supportive environment.

Left untreated, some of today's children at risk may become tomorrow's juvenile offenders and the future's adult offenders. In general, neglect of at-risk children may lead to higher cost to society later.

The League supports education of the public about the need for early identification of children at risk, related societal and individual problems, and potential solutions.

Social service agencies serving at-risk children should be adequately staffed and funded. Community resources should be coordinated.

Intervention and preventive treatment should begin as early as possible, including newborn home visits by qualified professionals. The entire family group should be involved.

General Assistance

Support of a state-administered general assistance program and of state standards for eligibility, benefits, accessibility, and appeals, as well as a program which is adequately and equitably financed.

The League of Women Voters of Indiana supports a general assistance (formerly, "poor relief") program that is state administered and supervised according to state standards of eligibility, benefits, accessibility, and appeal procedures. This program should fill the gaps that are unmet by categorical assistance in Indiana for those persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate, or for whom jobs are not available.

Eligibility and benefit standards should be adjustable for local differences and cost-of-living changes. Offices for service should be as close as possible to the target population.

The general assistance program should be equitably financed throughout the state, and financing should be sufficient to meet the needs of the program. Criteria for general assistance should include the following provisions:

Eligibility should be based on need. Residency, work in exchange for assistance, lack of support by a relative, repayment, or prior application to other social service agencies should not be requirements for assistance; however, referral to other agencies should be made where appropriate, especially to agencies that provide job training and other employment programs. Decisions on eligibility for emergency assistance should be made within a reasonable time.

Benefits should be sufficient to meet adequate standards for food, clothing, shelter, and other basic needs. Standards should be adjusted for local differences, and revised periodically for cost-of-living changes. Recipients should have as wide a choice as possible in selecting providers.

Access to services should be made as convenient as possible for all applicants. Regular office hours, including evening hours, should be established. Provision should be made for emergency services after office hours and on weekends. These hours should be prominently posted and publicized. Applications should be accepted in person, by telephone or letter, or by a designee;

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

but at all times the privacy of the applicant should be protected. If the applicant so desires, an advocate and/or translator should be present at all interviews or proceedings.

Appeal procedures should provide applicants with a fair and meaningful opportunity to have their requests for assistance reviewed. Appeal procedures should be prominently posted and also explained to the applicant orally when an application is denied or assistance is discontinued. Appeal decisions should be based only on information provided at hearings, must be made in writing, and must include reasons for the decision. Appellants should be permitted to examine records pertaining to them and to use those documents as evidence.

Competent, trained personnel should administer the general assistance program, hired and compensated according to state personnel policies. Annual detailed reports should be required from each general assistance office. Supervision, accountability, and enforcement of state standards and procedures should be lodged in a public office at state level. Administrative boards at state and local levels should be representative of the communities they serve and should convene regular public hearings to elicit information and opinions from the general public. All rules regarding administration of the general assistance program should be written, posted, distributed, and otherwise made available to all applicants and to the general public, in English and in other languages where appropriate.

The state should bear the major cost of **financing** both administration and benefits of the general assistance program, with local governments sharing the financial responsibility. Budgets should be based on the requirements of the program for sufficient funds to serve all who meet state standards of eligibility and need.

Each general assistance office should maintain an open relationship with **other agencies** in the community, distributing information on available general assistance services and procedures and keeping on file an up-to-date list of services provided by others. Referrals to other agencies should be made where appropriate.

In implementing this position, the state board is to be guided by the following member preferences:

- that general assistance be administered by the Indiana Department of Public Welfare, or
- that the township trustee system of administering general assistance be retained, with state-imposed standards, or
- that a separate general assistance system be formed, with non-elected personnel.

Illegal Substances

Through comprehensive programs and cooperation, law enforcement agencies and the judicial system must seek to eliminate the manufacture, distribution and use of illegal substances. The effort should include the pooling of information and resources, prevention and intervention strategies, and education.

Related health care and social services should be available to all who suffer the effects of substance abuse.

The effort can only succeed through constant cooperation among the involved public agencies and with non-governmental organizations offering support.

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

Health Care

The position is based on and supplements the national position which advocates that all U.S. residents should have access to a basic level of health care, supported by public funding and administration.

It is the responsibility of the state to regulate health care facilities and ancillary facilities, to license health care providers, and in other ways to protect the health of Indiana residents. This role is mainly the responsibility of the Department of Health, with other state offices and bureaus and local health departments having a regulatory and/or enforcement role. Protection of the health of Indiana's residents requires that the state establish, maintain and enforce adequate standards for health care agencies and workers.

Coordination of care is essential for those receiving both short- and long-term care. It requires identifying and assessing need, determining a plan for delivery of services, advocating for those in need, and reassessing service delivery over time.

Certain services for daily living and general health maintenance can be provided in the home and community by family caregivers and professionals. When supported by public funding, these services should be at least as cost-effective as those in residential institutions, and of comparable quality.

Governmental and non-governmental funding of programs to promote healthful lifestyles is to be encouraged, but the state should act where adequate local programs do not exist.

Hospitals should not make up shortfalls from Medicare and Medicaid by shifting costs to commercially insured and paying patients. This burden should be spread among all taxpayers until a single payer system is adopted.

The state should have a process for allocating services to underserved areas and should ensure a mechanism for local input.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hazardous Waste

Support of LWV national position and of continued monitoring of the management of hazardous wastes in Indiana, as well as of the federal laws and regulations which affect our state.

The League of Women Voters of Indiana supports:

Division of authority between federal and state agencies for the management of hazardous waste.

A strong federal role in setting uniform standards.

A strong state role in enforcing regulations.

Selection of persons responsible for enforcement of hazardous waste regulations on the *basis of* professional qualifications and experience, regardless of *political* affiliations.

Increased taxes as necessary for the stringent enforcement of hazardous waste regulations.

Bonding, insurance, or other proof of financial responsibility of operators of hazardous waste sites.

LWV-Indiana State Position Review, January 29, 2011

Strict enforcement of regulations by state and federal agencies.

Training of local emergency response personnel.

Closure and post-closure protection of sites.

The League ranks considerations for site selection for disposal of hazardous waste in the following order:

Protection of public health; protection of air and water; geological features of the area; proximity of towns, cities, and other human habitation;

transportation of wastes through populated areas; protection of prime agricultural land; scenic and recreational potential; social and political considerations; archeological, historic, and cultural factors; and convenience and cost of generators and providing jobs.

The League agrees that:

Generators of hazardous waste and operators of hazardous waste disposal facilities have the responsibility for paying for new facilities.

Federal funds (e.g., Superfund) plus funds recovered from generators and operators of hazardous waste sites should be used to clean up sites if necessary.

If these funds cannot be used, state funds or some other combination of funds must be used.

In the light of present knowledge, state laws, if strictly enforced by adequate numbers of persons representing sufficient financial commitment by the state, could protect the health and safety of Indiana residents.

Materials for Revision of “School Finance”

The statewide committee reorganized and streamlined the text, removing repetitions and some other superfluous detail. The proposed version focuses on the League's view, supported by the reorganization of school funding in recent years, that the State is responsible for equal high-quality general education (no longer “basic” or merely a “foundation”) while local authorities are responsible for the funding of local interests. Transportation, capital projects, and debt service continue to be treated separately.

The committee did not provide a rationale. However, the proposed changes either preserve the substance of the current version or—where they do not—arise from the transfer of funding responsibility to the State.

The extensive textual reorganization makes it impractical to present a version that documents each change of wording.

Proposed Wording of “School Finance”

Public school funding should guarantee equal access to high quality education for all Indiana children.

The State should provide school corporations with the funds for high quality elementary and secondary education of all Indiana children, regardless of their place of residence.

The program should be appropriate for each child's individual potential and circumstances. It should reflect the added per-pupil cost of equalizing educational opportunity for children who are economically disadvantaged, physically handicapped, or have other special needs.

Mandates by the State should be fully funded by the State.

Funding methods should be stable and predictable so as to allow for efficient planning. The methods should provide incentives for creative efforts by school corporations.

If additional revenues are needed, the League favors the use of the State income tax.

The League supports limited additional local funding which allows for local interests. The League does not oppose the use of tax referenda to increase such school funding.

The League opposes the use of tuition tax credits for school operating expenses.

Transportation, capital projects, and debt service should be funded by a mix of State and local taxes. Unused local monies from these sources should go to a local rainy day fund.

Under the state program, teachers' salaries should be competitive within the field.

Current Version of “School Finance”

Support of funding equal access to basic, high quality education for all Indiana children and recognition of state responsibility for attaining this goal.

The League of Women Voters of Indiana believes that public school funding should guarantee equal access to basic, high quality education for all Indiana children. To achieve this goal, the League supports a foundation program for funding public elementary and secondary schools.

The League defines a foundation program as a state-regulated system (1) which provides for standard, basic, high quality education for all Indiana children regardless of their place of residence; (2) which is appropriate for each child's individual potential and circumstances; (3) which is financed by a mix of local and state funds; (4) and which provides fiscal equalization, i.e., a minimum local tax effort is required by state legislation, and state tax revenues provide sufficient additional funds to pay for the foundation program.

The foundation program should include:

Provisions for incentives to improve education.

Weights reflecting the added per pupil costs for equalizing educational opportunity for children who are economically disadvantaged, physically handicapped, or in other special circumstances.

Provision for additional costs resulting from special circumstances of the school corporation itself.

The total foundation program funding should be set at a level high enough to provide all funds needed for school corporations to pay for high quality education. This includes teachers' salaries which are competitive within the field.

After the foundation program has been set at a level high enough for a basic program and has been fully funded, the League supports other funding mechanisms which allow school corporations to provide for local needs and interests by additional limited local leeway funding.

The League of Women Voters of Indiana supports:

An over-all increase in the level of education funding of Indiana's public schools.

The concept of state taxes paying, on the average, three fourths of public school operating expenses (those costs other than construction costs, debt service, and transportation).

Transportation funded separately by a mix of state and local taxes.

Complete funding of costs over the foundation level for state mandated programs.

Methods of public funding of schools which (1) are simple, predictable, and stable, allowing for efficient planning; (2) are flexible and responsive to local needs and/or choices; (3) and provide incentives for creative efforts among school corporations and innovative approaches to problems.

A method of public school funding which eliminates extreme variations in level of per pupil expenditures, allocating funding so that each child receives relatively equal support, with consideration given to area differences in cost of living.

If additional tax revenues are needed to supply the state's share of an adequate foundation program, the League favors use of the statewide income tax.

The League opposes use of tuition tax credits for school operating expenses.

LWV Indianapolis Membership Form

Joining the League of Women Voters

Yes, I would like to become a member of the League of Women Voters for an annual fee of \$50.00.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

My annual dues of \$50.00 are enclosed.

I am a new member. Yes _____ No _____ I am a renewing member. Yes _____ No _____

(All members receive the *Bulletin* several times a year as well as other League literature and information.)

Scholarships/reduced dues are available for student memberships please contact the League.

Enclosed is an additional contribution of \$ _____ to help the League of Women Voters make a positive impact on voting, citizenship and democracy. Enclosed is an additional contribution of \$ _____ to help provide student member scholarships.

Date: _____

Below is the name and address/phone number of a prospective League member.

I expect to be an active member _____, an occasional participant _____ or a supporter _____.

I would like to be contacted to assist with (*circle all preferences*):

Education	Health & Welfare	Natural Resources	Public Transit
Voter Service	Women's Issues	Local Government Reform	Other/Special

From:

League of Women Voters of Indianapolis

c/o North United Methodist Church

3808 N. Meridian Street

Indianapolis, IN 46208-4909

Forwarding and Address Correction

Requested

TO: