



Bulletin

" . . . we are going to be a semi-political body. In that body we have got to be non-partisan and all-partisan."
~Carrie Chapman Catt, 1920

League of Women Voters of Indianapolis
February 2008
Volume 89, Number 4

Notes from LWV-US:

LWVUS Legislative Priorities for 2008:

- Campaign Finance Reform
- Civil Liberties
- DC Voting Rights
- Election Administration
- Ethics and Lobbying Reform
- Global Climate Change
- Health Care Reform
- Tax Policy

League of Women Voters to Celebrate 88th Birthday

The League of Women Voters will celebrate its 88th birthday on February 14, with a renewed commitment to help Americans get involved in their democracy in 2008.

Newsletter Submissions may be sent to the editor, Carol Fowler
% LWV-Indianapolis

LWV-Indianapolis:
Voicemail: 317-767-4187
Email: LWVIndy@att.net
www.indygov.org/lwv

Meeting and Event Information

Lunch with LWV

Friday 15 February Speaker: Janet McCabe, Improving Kids
Noon Environment
 Double Eagle Cafeteria,
 Scottish Rite Cathedral, 650 N. Meridian

General Meeting: Program Planning

Saturday 23 February National and Local Program Planning
10:00 AM North UMC, 3808 N. Meridian
 See pages 2 - 6 for information.

LWV-Indy Evening Coffee Klatch

Monday 25 February Marian College Library
7:00 PM 3200 Cold Spring Road

Collaboration Lunch – With AAUW and Church Women United

Thursday 13 March NUMC, 3808 N. Meridian,
11:30 AM See page 7 for information.

LWV-Indiana State Council

April 25 - 26 Ball State University, Marion

LWV-Indianapolis Annual Meeting

Saturday 3 May MCL Cafeteria Northwest, 86th & Township Line Rd
10:00 AM

Future Lunches with LWV

Fridays, Noon: 18 April, 16 May

Future LWV Evening Coffee Klatches

Mondays, 7 PM: 24 March, 28 April

Future LWV-Indianapolis Board Meetings

Wednesday 5 Mar. 7 P.M. NUMC, 3808 N. Meridian
Wednesday 2 April

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.

LWV-Indianapolis General Meeting:

Saturday, 23 February 2008, 10:00 am

National and Local Program Planning

North United Methodist Church, 3808 North Meridian Street

National Program Review

As a change for this year’s review, we are asked only to propose changes by suggesting new studies, a review or concurrence. Leagues are no longer being asked to adopt the existing program during program planning, although Convention delegates will continue to do so.

Our report to LWV-US will answer the following questions:

Review – Is there any LWVUS position (see Positions in Brief) your League proposes for review? Leagues may select one LWVUS position for consideration for review each biennium. If adopted, a Review Committee will be appointed to examine the position and, if appropriate, suggest changes and updating.

New Study/Program Item – If your League has a recommendation for a study item, please write a brief summary of the scope of the study in 25 words or less.

No New Study – We discussed the issues but have no change to recommend at this time.

Concurrence - If your League has a recommendation for a concurrence, fill in the appropriate information:

1. Title and/or brief summary of the scope
2. Name and location of the local or state League study/position with which your League is recommending concurrence.

Local Program Review

We will also review our local positions, deciding if we should retain, revise, restudy or drop any of our current positions. If you are unable to attend the meeting on Saturday, 23 February, please complete the grid below including any additional comments and send or email it to LWV-Indianapolis by 22 February.

If there are program suggestions for next year, groups must submit all proposals for local study or update before the April Board meeting (so that general publicity can occur 30 days prior to our Annual Meeting in May).

	Retain	Revise Language	Restudy	Drop	Recent Activity
Government					
Urban Region					
Metropolitan Government					
Planned Community					
Downtown Development					
Council Districting					
Schools					
Optional Schools					
Local Option Taxes for Schools					
Public Schools					
Justice					
Juvenile Pre- Trial Detention					

PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

League of Women Voters of the United States

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

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

Voting Rights

Citizen's Right to Vote. Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation. Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

Election Process

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

Campaign Finance. Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

Selection of the President. Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular-vote and work to abolish the Electoral College. Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

Citizen Rights

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation. Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision making.

Individual Liberties. Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices. Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

Congress and the Presidency

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

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

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

United Nations

Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

Trade

Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

U.S. Relations with Developing Countries

Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

Arms Control

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

Military Policy and Defense Spending

Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES

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

Natural Resources

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

Resource Management

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

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

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

Air Quality. Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

Energy. Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.

Land Use. Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

Water Resources. Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

Waste Management. Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

Nuclear Issues. Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Public Participation

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

Agriculture Policy

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

SOCIAL POLICY

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

Equality of Opportunity

Equal Rights. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Education, Employment and Housing. Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

Fiscal Policy

Tax Policy. Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

Federal Deficit. Promote responsible deficit policies.

Funding of Entitlements. Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

Meeting Basic Human Needs

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

Income Assistance. Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter.

Support Services. Provide for essential support services.

Housing Supply. Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

Child Care

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

Early Intervention for Children at Risk

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

Violence Prevention

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

Gun Control

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

Urban Policy

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

Death Penalty

The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well defined channels for citizen input and review.

SUPPORT POSITIONS

League of Women Voters of Indianapolis

GOVERNMENT

Urban Region (Adopted April 1997)

Support of regional cooperation and government mechanisms to (1) eliminate fiscal disparities and (2) improve the economy and quality of life for all citizens, as the region participates in a global marketplace.

Promote energy-efficient and environmentally sound regional transportation, especially mass transit systems, that improve the well-being of cities and other communities and afford better access to housing and jobs.

Metropolitan Government

The LWV-Indianapolis supports a metropolitan government which is representative of and responsive to all citizens.

Support of representative and responsive metropolitan government with a single legislative body and a "strong" Mayor system.

1. A single legislative body with a majority of its members elected from single-member districts, the remainder at large.
2. A "strong" mayor system – a deputy mayor or deputy mayors, who will be appointed by the mayor and serve at his/her pleasure, trained and experienced in management for efficient, productive government. (A "strong" mayor is elected separately on the ballot, has power of veto, power to appoint with approval of the Council, primary responsibility for preparation of the budget, and policy-making authority.)

Planned Community (Adopted January 1972)

Support of a planned community with stringent control of use variances.

If any variances are allowed, there should be: careful choice of and mandatory training for variance board members, and rules of procedure designed for maximum communication among all affected parties. The Director of Planning and Zoning should be able to appeal any decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals to the Metropolitan Development Commission.

Downtown Development (Adopted May 1983)

Support use of public funds and incentives for development and preservation in the regional center (downtown) according to certain criteria and with adequate opportunity for public discussion and evaluation. The LWV-Indianapolis supports the expenditure of public funds for downtown development.

While a balance of spending on human resources is important, the League supports some investment of public

monies for regional center development and preservation, as long as the investment meets the following criteria:

- maintains or improves the quality of life in downtown Indianapolis
- maximizes both public benefits and cost effectiveness
- maintains or improves environmental quality
- promotes desirable social and economic impacts

Before public hearings for citizen comment on proposals are held, and before proposals are approved, public information on the proposals' objectives, costs, benefits, and market feasibility should be made available for citizen examination.

In order to evaluate the incentives used, the city should maintain records (and publish them periodically) in those cases involving public-private partnership. A record of employment created also should be made public at established intervals.

In assessing whether or not to expend public funds, the incidence (who pays ultimately) of a tax, the effect on the tax base, and the fairness to various taxing districts should be considered.

While the League supports the creation of a special body to administer and develop Enterprise Zones, that body should not have power to override the City-County Council.

The goals of downtown development should be to:

1. create and maintain jobs
2. expand the tax base
3. bring money into the community from the outside
4. produce ripple or multiplier effects
5. encourage energy efficiency
6. increase efficiency of services
7. bring people downtown
8. provide cultural and educational opportunities and other amenities
9. improve physical conditions
10. rehabilitate distressed areas
11. provide housing for a range of incomes
12. preserve historic and architectural artifacts
13. provide public facilities
14. encourage public transportation

Council Districting (Adopted October 1970; updated December 1984)

Support of Council districting plans that apply fairly the criteria of the Unigov law, protect representation from special service districts, and recognize neighborhoods.

1. All criteria specified in the Unigov law should be applied fairly in drawing of district lines, namely that, insofar as it is practicable, districts should be equal in population, compact in configuration, subject to natural

- boundaries, and lie entirely inside or entirely outside a special service district.
2. Every voter living inside a special service district should be represented on that special district's council.
 3. High priority should be given to drawing council district lines so as to protect the integrity of special service districts and prevent substantial dilution of voting rights and political power of those within the special service districts.
 4. Insofar as requirements of law permit, districts should be drawn in such a way as to permit neighborhoods to reflect their identities in their choice of councillors.

SCHOOLS

Optional Schools (Adopted April 1977)

Support educational options which are within the law, are educationally sound, and provide for involvement of parents, students, teachers, and administrators.

1. Within the limitations of state law and court orders, all parents, students, and teachers should have the opportunity to choose among educational options offered.
2. The offered options should be educationally sound and significantly different from each other. All children, no matter which option is chosen, should acquire basic skills and cover a normal range of subjects.
3. Options should not be distinguished by the amount of money spent. All schools should receive a fair, equitable amount of money for instructional purposes.
4. The options implemented should be those chosen by the community (including the professional educators) after an effective educational program describing possible programs.
5. There should be provision for considerable involvement of parents, students, teachers, and principals at all levels of planning, development, implementation, and evaluation.
6. Before initiation of an options program, staff training is essential, as are continuing regular opportunities in each school for teachers to plan and develop their programs.
7. In large school districts, an administratively decentralized structure with community participation should be developed to facilitate implementation of an options program.

Local Option Taxes for Schools (Adopted May 1985)

- Support local fiscal control of schools.
- Support equal educational opportunity.
- Support ability of Marion county districts to raise taxes above the state foundation to improve local programs or meet special local needs.

Marion County school districts should be able to raise taxes above a state foundation in order to improve local programs or to meet needs unique to their districts, as long as the standard of equity is maintained.

In order to compensate for the difference of wealth of school districts, the League believes the state should match additional local option tax funds above the foundation, but at a fixed percentage rate lower than the state support for foundation funding.

Public Schools (Adopted March 1999)

Support the common (public) school in its various functions: preparing students for participation in our democracy, helping students realize their individual potential, training students for the workplace, and supporting parental and community values.

JUSTICE

Juvenile Pre-Trial Detention (Adopted November 1985 as an extension of the of LWV-IN position on Juvenile Justice)

- Support secure pre-trial detention of only those juveniles who are determined to be dangerous to themselves or the community.
- Support the establishment of guidelines and uniform administration of the guidelines to determine which juveniles are "dangerous."
- Support alternative programs and housing.

Secure pre-trial detention of juveniles charged with criminal offenses is provided in the Indiana Code to protect both the juveniles and the community at large and not to punish the juveniles. The policies on assignment of juveniles to secure detention and on detention facilities in Marion County should insure that only potentially dangerous juveniles are housed in the secure detention facility.

Clear guidelines should be established to assist those persons charged with assigning accused juveniles to the secure detention facility (the Juvenile Center). These guidelines should assure uniform interpretation of that part of the Code which allows detention when it "is essential to protect the child or the community." The guidelines should address factors such as: seriousness of the charges, number of charges, previous cases pending, previous convictions, and failure to appear on previous charges.

The secure detention facility should be limited in size to house only those juveniles who must be held under provisions of the Code and those who have been judged in terms of the established guidelines to be potentially dangerous to themselves or the community. Alternate programs and/or less restrictive alternative housing should be available for juveniles who do not require secure detention but who should not be returned to their homes.

Lunch with LWV

Purpose:

to inform us as citizens and voters

Place:

Double Eagle Café
inside Scottish Rite Cathedral
650 N Meridian St, Indianapolis

Date:

3rd Fridays

Time:

12 NOON – 1 P.M.

Parking:

Free in the lot west of the building, accessed from North Street

Plan:

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.

Friday, 15 February Lunch with LWV

Janet McCabe, Executive Director of Improving Kids Environment is set to speak to Lunch with LWV this month about their proposed legislation. Please join us!

LWV Evening Coffee Klatch

Mark your calendar and join the discussion on Monday, 25 February at 7:00 PM. We will be focusing our informal conversation with members and friends on the state legislative session.

Come discuss League and personal political interests for 60-90 minutes, inside Marian College's library, 3200 Cold Spring Rd, Indianapolis. There is free parking in the lot south of the library. Purchase your favorite warm beverage from the library coffee shop just inside the west entrance door and then join us upstairs, where the furniture is more comfortable! (A map and directions can be found at www.marian.edu.) Please contact Carol Fowler (767-4187) or LWVIndy@att.net if you have any questions.

Collaboration Lunch Thursday, 13 March 2008

The League of Women Voters has joined with the Indianapolis Branch of American Association of University Women (AAUW) and Church Women United (CWU) again this year for a shared program and pitch-in luncheon on Thursday, March 13, 2008 in the Fellowship Hall of North United Methodist Church. This year's program will focus on Immigration, featuring the Rev. Dr. Felipe Martinez, Associate Executive Presbyter of Whitewater Valley Presbytery. To help insure an adequate set-up, please RSVP by Tuesday 11 March. Either leave a voicemail message with Tracy Heaton at (767-4187) or e-mail her at LWVIndy@att.net, giving your name and telephone number, plus the number of individuals for whom you are responding.

For lunch, please bring a salad or bread item to share, and try to arrive by 11:30, in order to drop off your food and register. North UMC is located on the northwest corner of 38th and Meridian Streets. There is ample parking in the paved lots adjoining the building. Passengers can disembark at the drive-through beside the West Entry. Though there are elevators from the main floor down to the Fellowship Hall, the least walking is accomplished by coming through the church's south door and then up on the elevator to the Lower Level (LL).

The meal will be served at 11:45 A.M., and at 12:15 P.M., Rev. Martinez will discuss Immigration - a timely topic for League! He will bring his perspective, both on a personal level as a new United States citizen and as it relates to proposed legislation here in Indiana. Rev. Martinez will also reserve time for questions and dialogue.

If you are able to take a "long lunch" that day, please plan to join us.

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.

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 _____.

Date: _____

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

National Issues	State Issues	Regional/Local Issues	Lobbying
Health Issues	Letter Writing	Membership	International Issues
Research	Education Issues	Welfare Issues	Environmental Issues
Election Issues	Fundraising	Observer Corps	Ridesharing

For more information about the League of Women Voters, please call (317) 767-4187.

From:

League of Women Voters of Indianapolis

c/o North United Methodist Church

3808 N. Meridian St.

Indianapolis, IN 46208-4019

Forwarding and Address Correction Requested

Join us!

Lunch with LWV Feb. 15

Program Planning Feb. 23

Collaboration Lunch Mar. 13