

League of Women Voters of Florida State Program 2017-2019

Adopted June 2017

Government in Florida

Promote an open government that is responsive to the people of the state.

Florida Constitution

Support basic law that assures a government responsive and accountable to the people of the state.

Finance and Taxation

Support a state fiscal structure that is equitable in its distribution of the tax responsibility and responsive to public needs.

Election Law

Support measures to protect, extend and encourage the use of the franchise and to advocate fair methods of financing political campaigns.

Issues for Action:

- Support automatic restoration of voting rights for former felony offenders.
- Support notifying voters if their absentee ballot has been accepted or rejected, and provide a remedy for ensuring the vote of those whose ballots have been rejected.
- Support online voter registration statewide.
- Support Florida's participation in the Electronic Registration Information Center.
- Support implementation of Election Day Registration as soon as administratively possible.
- Support implementation of automatic voter registration of eligible voters.

- Establish threshold criteria for write-in candidates that mirror current requirements for announced candidates. The presence of a write-in candidate as the only opponent should not close the primary.
- Make election voting portable within the county to enable the broadest voter access.
- Support statewide use of an Open Primary election system that would allow for the broadest possible vote participation.
- Support retention of 1968 Florida Constitutional Amendment for home rule by municipalities and counties in the administration of local issues.
- Support the election of the President and Vice-President by direct popular vote. Support the National Popular Vote Compact (LWVUS).
- Replace Florida's present closed Presidential Preference Primary with an Open Primary system of voting.
- Support the abolishment of Super PACs, the elimination of foreign money investment in US elections, reducing dollar contributions to campaigns and limiting carryover funds from campaigns to PACs.
- Support a curricular framework that includes broad common standards developed by educational experts that serves as a guide to local districts.
- Support the increased oversight of the development and implementation of charter school contracts with regard to administrative fees, facility contracts, teacher salaries and benefits, instructional innovation, independence of charter board members, and unmet need in the district.
- Support a statewide assessment and accountability system that provides valid data at appropriate intervals to measure student progress for all students and schools that receive public funds directly or indirectly. Data should be used to identify areas where increased support is needed.
- Support higher standards for early childhood education staff and programs.

Education in Florida

Support a free public school system for Florida with high standards for student achievement and with equality of educational opportunity for all that is financed adequately by the state through an equitable funding formula.

Issues for Action:

- Promote adequate funding of public education with no use of public funding for the expansion of funding of private education through a voucher program.

Justice in Florida

Support a judicial system that provides a unified court structure, improved provisions for judicial selection and merit retention and equal access to legal services. Support a criminal justice system that emphasizes diversion and deflection, rehabilitation and alternatives to incarceration.

Issue for Action:

- Support juvenile justice actions that emphasize civil citations and increased judicial oversight of direct file of juveniles to adult court.
- Support rehabilitation and other alternatives to incarceration.

Social Policy in Florida

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

Children and Families

Support measures to meet special concerns of children and families, including countering intrafamily abuse and providing for safe foster care and shelter care.

Issue for Action:

- Support the safe rescue and rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking and the education of the public about this issue.
- Support employment at a livable wage for all workers.
- Support equal pay for women.
- Support better coordination between school and community services in social services, pre-school programs, and after school programs.

Financing & Delivery of Health Care

Support measures to implement Florida health care in a manner consistent with the LWVUS position on health care reform.

Issues for Action:

- Support implementation of the March 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in Florida, emphasizing access for all and control of costs for the individual including Medicaid expansion and mental health coverage.
- Support the education of Floridians regarding application for coverage.

Farmworkers

Support measures to provide adequate living and working conditions for farmworkers.

Libraries

Support full funding of eligible public library systems as provided in Section 257.27 Florida Statutes.

Immigration

Support immigration policies that promote reunification of immediate families, meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States, and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the United States on student visas. Ensure fair treatment under the law for all persons. In transition to a reformed system, support provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.

Issue for Action:

- Support granting driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants.
- Support the June 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, the abolishment of quotas, and support sanctuary cities.

Gun Safety

Support regulations concerning the purchase, ownership and use of handguns that balance as nearly as possible individual constitutional rights with the general interest and welfare of the community.

Issues for Action:

- Support changes in law to allow local communities to enact ordinances for any type of gun safety measures in their jurisdiction.
- Support expansion of mandated background checks and three day waiting periods for ALL gun sales or transfers, including gun shows and unlicensed gun sales.

Sustainability in Florida

Support governmental action that results in sustainability: Meeting the needs of the present without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Environment, society and the economy must be integrated and balanced to achieve a sustainable Florida.

Issues for Action:

- Support public transportation projects which yield multi-modal investments in local and state enhanced infrastructure.
- Support governmental actions that result in sustainability by meeting the needs of the present without endangering the future.
- Support the adoption of a renewable portfolio standard.

Natural Resources in Florida

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest by recognizing the interrelationship of air quality, energy, land use, waste management and water resources.

Land Use

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

Issues for Action:

- Support the preparation and implementation of a new state growth management plan that addresses current needs.
- Support the implementation of the Water and Land Legacy Amendment consistent with the intent of the adopted language.

Energy

Support state legislation for energy conservation and greater use of renewable sources such as solar energy.

Issues for Action:

- Support partnership with FL SUN to create solar cooperatives.
- Support clean implementation of 2016 Amendment 4 regarding solar power.

Freshwater Resources

Support public policies that promote conservation of freshwater and its availability for environmental, public supply, agricultural, industrial and mining uses on a priority basis.

Coastal Management

Support intergovernmental stewardship of and fiscal responsibility for the Florida coast, under the management of the state, while recognizing the dominance of nature and the role of the sand transport system.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

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

Issues for action:

- Support the ban of advanced well stimulation treatments (“fracking”) including but not limited to hydraulic fracturing, acid fracturing, and matrix acidizing.

Public Participation

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

Agriculture

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