

## **Remember the Basics when Taking Action with the League Positions or the League Principles.**

- We are one organization and must act together.**
- We must have a position on an issue in order to take action.**
- The League president speaks in the name of the League. Other League members who write, call, testify, or take other action do so as informed citizens.**
- Local Leagues must cooperate with the state League to act at the state level of government. They have a responsibility to respond to action alerts from the state League.**
- Local and state Leagues must cooperate with the national League to act at the national level of government. They have a responsibility to respond to action alerts from the national League.**

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*Agenda for Action* is both a history and a guidebook. Written as an every-member reference, it is the main source of information about state program for the League of Women Voters of Ohio—what it is, how it developed, what the topic’s outlook for the future is, and how the positions have been used for action.

*Agenda for Action* contains LWVO positions on state governmental issues that are the basis for League action at the state and local levels. This book describes LWVO positions only, but state-level and federal action based on the national positions is included in this book.

*Agenda for Action* is a companion program publication to *Impact on Issues*, published by the League of Women Voters of the United States. The two publications should be used together to understand and utilize fully the basis on which League acts. The state League uses LWVUS positions for state-level action when applicable and necessary. Sometimes LWVO acts using national positions alone, as in the successful campaigns for Ohio’s ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, the continuing battle for campaign finance reform, and Ohio housing and health care legislation. Where both LWVO and LWVUS positions exist on the same items, such as hazardous materials, the positions augment and supplement each other.

The LWVO publication *Taking Action* uses a game-like format to help League members work through the decisions that must be made when considering whether to take action using local, state, or national positions. *Taking Action* may be purchased through the LWVO office, and a summary of guidelines for taking action is included on page 4.

## Position Summaries

This edition includes a one-page summary of LWVO positions. While **the summary is no substitute for the actual language of the positions and should not be quoted when taking action**, this summary, found on page 5, serves as a quick guide to the issues. **Local Leagues are encouraged to copy this page and share it with members.**

## Action Decisions

LWVO’s president, Advocacy Committee, lobbyists, and legislative director measure proposed legislation against these positions to decide which to support, oppose, or ignore. They decide the type and timing of any action. The state board determines LWVO stands on state ballot issues and other action possibilities. LWVO does not take a stand on every proposal that falls within its positions. The significance of the proposal in terms of LWVO priorities, the possible impact of League action, timing, and the demands of other League work are some of the factors weighed in these decisions.

Local Leagues may use LWVO and LWVUS positions for action on local issues within their own local jurisdictions if members understand how the position relates to the situation and will support the action.

## Local Responsibility

Action Alerts are sent to local Leagues when local lobbying can play a critical role and when member interest and knowledge are high enough to produce an effective response. Local boards are expected to take the action requested in such alerts. In addition to official League responses, local boards should notify members if there is enough time so that they can respond as individuals. All action at the state level is based on positions that come from the study and consensus of individual League members, so local League support can prove very effective in lobbying these positions. **Action taken should be reported to the LWVO office.** If there is a reason a board feels it cannot respond to the alert, this must be reported immediately to the state office. A local League may not take action in opposition to an LWVO position.

## Action History

The section entitled “State-Level Action Using State Positions” is an outline of much of the action the League has taken using LWVO positions in the past dozen years. This section gives a good but incomplete picture of total state action efforts. It does not list work on LWVO positions since dropped, nor does it record use of state positions by local Leagues in their communities. The sections referring to action using national positions help to complete the picture of the work of LWVO by citing state League action using LWVUS positions (gun control, reproductive choice, etc.) at both the state and federal levels.

Much of the action listed involved testifying at formal hearings. It also often includes one-on-one lobbying, media conferences and news releases, public forums, speeches, letters, calls, editorials and letters to the editor, litigation, publications, and coalition efforts. Success depends on every-member participation to build support for changes favored by League.

League has not chosen easy goals, and the positions often pit the League against formidable foes. However, the diversity of the League program means that adversaries on some issues are allies on others. Such is the fascination of political action.

This, then, is how a multi-issue, multi-level, informed-citizen organization participates in government—year after year, always with many irons in many fires. Action is the name of the game—the most exciting one in town!

# Guidelines for Taking Action

**Taking action** for the public good is not only a cornerstone of the League’s mission to advocate for sound public policy, it is also a good way to energize membership, achieve visibility in the community, and attract new members.

The League’s principles and its positions at the local, state, and national levels are meant to be used. The principles are written broadly so that they will be applicable over time to specific circumstances.

## **\*Action Not Requiring Consultation\***

Local Leagues wishing to take official League action on public policy matters do not need to consult with other levels of League under these circumstances:

1. Action by a local League at the local level can be taken without consultation with the state or national League so long as that action is based on local, state, or national positions. The decision to take action on issues that affect *only* your League’s geographic area rests with your local board.
2. Any action taken in response to an action request from state or national League does not require consultation. These requests are most often in the form of e-mail Action Alerts from the state or national office, but they may also appear in Voter articles or the Post Board and will be posted on the state and national Web sites, [www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org) and [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) respectively.
3. Any action regarding legislation on which the state League has already taken action does not require consultation. All recent action—including written testimony, news releases, and action alerts—is listed in the “Action” section of the state Web site, [www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org). You do not need to consult with the state League to contact your state legislator on any of the matters listed.

## **\*Action Requiring Consultation\***

Local Leagues wishing to take official League action on public policy matters must consult with the appropriate parties under these circumstances:

1. Action that would affect more than one League (such as those in your county, district, or region) requires consultation with the boards of the other Leagues in the area involved.
2. Action that would involve contact with state government officials (state senator or representative, the governor, etc.) where no action has been requested and no state action has been taken requires consultation with the state board. This can be as simple as a phone call to the state office, 1-877-LWV-OHIO.

3. Action that would involve contact with government officials at the national level (U.S. senator or representative, the President) where no action has been requested by LWVUS requires consultation with the national office. The national League maintains strict adherence to its current Issues for Emphasis. The state League would be happy to serve as a conduit for such a request.

**The best rule of thumb** is to consider, before taking action, if an elected official could possibly receive two conflicting messages from League on the same issue. If it’s possible that more than one local League might respond to an issue of “local” concern, then consultation is a must. The League(s) being consulted must agree with the action, but need not join in the action. If agreement is not obtained, then action is not permissible.

## **\*Action on the Principles\***

The 1974 LWVUS Convention authorized action by local, state, and national Leagues on the basis of LWVUS principles. Since the principles evolved from and incorporate former League positions, the authorization for action is not a radical departure from action at all program positions.

Parts of the LWVUS principles dealing with taxation, economy, and international law are so general that action would require considerable member discussion. In these cases, specific action should only be taken in connection with League positions to which they apply.

**Before using the principles** as a basis for action, each League board will consider whether:

- a) members are informed;
- b) members agree with the proposed action;
- c) the action is appropriate in timing, need, and effectiveness; and
- d) other affected Leagues agree that the action results would extend beyond a League’s own boundaries.

Action under the principles requires authorization by the appropriate League board.

## Government

### **Constitution**

Support clear, flexible, organized, and internally consistent Constitution. Support specification that taxation is a General Assembly responsibility and that funding should be flexible. Support independence of judges, with preference for merit selection. Oppose term limits for the General Assembly.

### **Districting**

Support an impartial districting process with opportunity for citizen participation. Support districts that are compact, contiguous, bounded by a non-intersecting line, and follow political boundaries as much as possible.

### **State Government Finance**

Support taxation that is fair and equitable, provides adequate resources for government programs while allowing flexibility for financing future program changes, is understandable to the taxpayer and encourages compliance, and is easy to administer.

## Social Policy

### **Primary and Secondary Education**

Support the use of public funds only for public schools. Support an elected State Board of Education whose responsibility is policy making/planning. Support state education standards as a method of attaining a high-quality education. Support state funding for education that guarantees a realistic and equitable level of per-pupil expenditures, and support local school districts assuming a reasonable share of the financial burden.

### **Higher Education**

Support funding by the state to ensure that all Ohio citizens have access to higher education that provides general education and job preparation. Support Board of Regents, appointed by the Governor with confirmation by the Senate, to be a planning, coordinating board with broad policy-making powers.

### **Juvenile Justice**

Support community-based, least restrictive placement; rights and humane treatment of children who are juvenile offenders; alternative educational services; gender-specific treatment programs; unbiased treatment regardless of race or ethnicity; statewide uniform standards for dealing with juvenile records. Oppose holding children in adult jails.

## Natural Resources

### **Water**

Support policies and procedures that provide for joint, cooperative planning and administration along watershed

lines and across political boundaries; stringent water quality standards accompanied by strong enforcement and means of implementation; and adequate state financing, including incentives to local governments and industries for expediting water pollution abatement.

### **Solid Waste**

Support the philosophy that solid waste, from generation to ultimate disposal, must be purposefully and systematically controlled by all levels of government in order to provide efficient service, protect the environment, and achieve successful resource recovery. Support measures to forestall depletion of our natural resources and to recover nonrenewable resources.

### **Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste**

Support state policies and programs that emphasize the following hazardous waste management options in order of priority: waste reduction, toxicity reduction, and waste elimination; waste separation and concentration; energy/material recovery; waste exchange; chemical, biological, physical, and thermal treatment; and underground injection and land disposal.

### **Land Use**

Support both urban revitalization and farmland preservation and the curbing of urban sprawl. Support the role of the state in providing authority and incentives for local governments to exercise innovative additional land use planning and regulatory techniques such as land banking, planned unit developments, purchase and transfer of development rights, limited development ordinances, scenic easements, agricultural districts, cluster development, conservation reserves and land trusts, urban enterprise zones, environmental impact assessments, impact fees, tax abatement, and zoning efforts. Support use of eminent domain under certain circumstances.

### **Interbasin Transfer of Water**

Support diversion of water only after study of the ecological, economic, and social implications indicate that diversion would be sustainable and only after the development of a plan to protect the affected areas during all stages of development, operation, termination, and post-termination. Support public participation in the decision-making process. Support participation of all concerned governments in Great Lakes resource decision-making.

The following positions of League of Women Voters of Ohio can also  
 be found at [www.lwvohio.org](http://www.lwvohio.org).  
 National LWV positions can be found [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org).

The positions on government deal with the philosophy, the structure, the procedures, and the operation of government. Since 1979 this umbrella heading has covered LWVO positions on Ohio Constitution and Districting. In 1985, the State Government Finance position was included. Also covered are LWVUS government positions on agriculture policy, citizens' right to know/citizen participation, individual liberties, public policy on reproductive choices, Congress and Presidency, D.C. self-government, apportionment, gun control, fiscal policy, campaign finance, election of the president, and voting rights.

LWVUS positions in some of these items can be applied and implemented at state and local levels. See *Impact on Issues* for complete LWVUS government positions.

## **GOVERNMENT: Ohio Constitution**

### **Positions: Ohio Constitution**

#### **General Criteria** (Adopted May 1968)

LWVO believes a constitution should be a clearly stated body of fundamental principles. It should provide for the flexible operation of government and be logically organized and internally consistent.

#### **Taxation and Finance** (Adopted March 1969)

LWVO supports constitutional revision that would:

1. Remove the fixed dollar debt limit and provide a flexible limit tied to some indicator of the state's economic wealth.
2. Specify that the power to levy state taxes and determine their uses resides in the General Assembly. This necessitates removal of constitutional provisions dealing with earmarking of taxes.

#### **Judiciary** (Adopted March 1973, amended May 2003)

LWVO believes that the selection and tenure of judges are fundamental matters and therefore should be provided for in the Constitution. LWVO supports policies that promote the independence of the judiciary. LWVO supports constitutional revision to provide for:

1. Nomination of judges for Appellate and Supreme Courts by judicial nominating commissions that are carefully balanced and broadly based. Commissions must be nonpartisan or bipartisan and must include both legal and lay members and not be dominated by the former.
2. Appointment of judges by the Governor from lists provided by a nominating commission.
3. The inclusion of constitutional provisions to require appointive judges to run against their own records in non-competitive elections.

While an all-elective judiciary exists, LWVO supports provision for the nonpartisan election of judges in both primary and general elections.

#### **Term Limits** (Adopted May 1992)

The LWVO opposes term limits for members of the Ohio General Assembly.

### **Background: Ohio Constitution**

Ohio's Constitution provides that every 20 years voters must decide whether there should be a convention to amend the constitution. Anticipating that issue in 1972, LWVO in 1967 adopted a study to see if a constitutional convention would be warranted.

In 1967, members agreed on the general criteria for a good constitution, and these were then used throughout the study. For the next five years we studied and reached consensus on taxation, finance, legislative, executive, local government, amendment, and judicial provisions.

In 1968, study focused on the public debt and the finance and taxation articles. The Leagues participating in consensus agreed unanimously that the \$750,000 debt limit was unrealistic and should be repealed.

LWVO supported the 1971 creation of a Constitution Revision Commission to recommend constitution changes to the legislature. From 1971 to 1977 this commission (whose membership included several League members) was an additional forum for LWVO lobbying and was instrumental in bringing many issues to the ballot.

LWVO did not support a 1972 or a 1992 constitutional convention, but in both cases provided pro/con information to voters. Ohioans turned down a convention both times, as they had in 1932 and 1952.

LWVO interest in appointing judges dates back to 1921. In 1938 we supported a successful initiative petition drive to put such an amendment on the ballot, but the issue failed by a two-to-one margin. In our 1947-52 Constitution Study we again adopted an appointive judiciary position. This was dropped by the 1969 Convention after legislatures in '53, '55, '57, '63, '65, and '67 failed to recommend this issue for the ballot. Re-adoption in 1973, following study of the judiciary article, showed member commitment to the concept.

In 1979, we again worked to reach the ballot with this issue via initiative petition, but the effort failed. In 1986 the League began collecting signatures as an active member of a coalition, and the issue ultimately reached the November 1987 ballot. LWVO campaigned strongly for its passage, but the issue failed 65 to 35 percent. In March 2002 the League's Education Fund hosted a national conference on judicial independence, and at Convention 2002 the League concurred with the addition of the statement regarding general support for policies that promote an independent judiciary. The new position was based on the recognition that voters were not likely to support merit selection and that the existing position offered little flexibility to support other reforms. Later that year, Chief Justice Thomas Moyer asked the League to be one of five conveners of a statewide summit on judicial election reform that took place in March 2003.

In 1992, anti-incumbent fever led to ballot issues across the country seeking to limit the number of terms that could be served by legislators. In Ohio there were actions to put the term limit issue on the ballot, both through initiative petition and through legislative resolutions. LWVUS has a position opposing term limits for members of Congress; however, the position did not extend to state offices. The state board adopted a position opposed to term limitations and, as an emergency program item, the statement was concurred with by delegates to 1992 State Council. Although the LWVO worked to oppose term limits, in 1992 voters passed three constitutional amendments: to limit terms of the members of the General Assembly; to limit terms of Ohio's U.S. senators and representatives (term limits for both U.S. senators and representatives were ruled unconstitutional); and to limit terms of five statewide elected officials: lieutenant governor, secretary of state, treasurer, attorney general, and auditor. (The term for governor was already limited to two four-year terms.)

## Outlook: Ohio Constitution

Whenever changes in the Constitution are proposed, our Constitution positions guide League action. Meanwhile, we favor efforts to replace the \$750,000 debt limit with a flexible limit, but since the issue's defeat in 1977 no interest has surfaced.

We can work to repeal current earmarking provisions and will oppose future efforts to earmark taxes in the Constitution. This can be a lonely stand because earmarking seems a funding "solution" to those who do not understand how restricting and shortsighted such provisions can be. We are repeatedly faced with a conflict when constitutional amendments are placed on the ballot proposing changes that we support but that conflict with our opposition to earmarking and to inserting specific detail in the constitution.

Since the defeat of merit selection of judges in the 1987 election, prospects for amending the Constitution on this issue appear slim. During the spring of 1999, LWVO worked with other citizen groups to promote bipartisan commissions for the selection of judges. The Governor's office took this proposal under consideration, but there was no action. The March 2003 summit, "Judicial Impartiality: The Next Steps," resulted in broad-based committees examining term lengths, qualifications, disclosure, voter guides, and public financing, with League members represented on each committee. Initial recommendations involved legislation on term length and qualifications, rules changes on disclosure at the Supreme Court, and voter guide publication. More far-reaching proposals on disclosure and public financing were anticipated in 2004, but never came to fruition.

Term limits for members of the General Assembly have changed the dynamics in the Statehouse: legislators no longer politely "wait their turn" for leadership positions. More legislators take extreme positions because they have little to lose (they will be gone in eight years regardless) and they are not in the legislature long enough to learn how to compromise so that government can be run effectively. Some legislators express a hope for a repeal of term limits, but with public sentiment still favoring term limits, this is highly unlikely in the near future. Ohio was one of 14 states to approve term limits for federal elected officials. In May 1995, the U.S. Supreme Court declared term limits for members of Congress unconstitutional.

Massive problems in the 2004 have led to four initiated constitutional amendments for the 2005 ballot: to change the process for redrawing legislative and congressional districts; to revamp campaign finance rules; to create a state board of elections; and to require unrestricted absentee voting. Approval of any of these would cause major changes in Ohio elections.

## Positions: Apportionment/Districting

(Adopted January 1980)

LWVO supports an impartial districting process that may include, but is not limited to: (Amended May 2005)

1. Districting for Congress and state legislature based substantially on population equality with a variance of no more than plus or minus 5 percent among districts.
2. Use of a bipartisan commission comprised of an odd number of members to determine congressional and state legislative district lines.
3. Congressional and state legislative districts that are compact, contiguous, bounded by a non-intersecting line and follow local political boundaries as much as possible.
4. Opportunity for citizen participation.
5. No more than 99 House districts and 33 Senate districts within the Ohio legislature.

**Local application:** Local Leagues may apply this position to local situations to support or oppose changes in existing districting procedures. (The first four points can apply, substituting the name of the local governing body in 1 and 3.) Boards that contemplate doing this should supply advance information to members in *Voters* or in meetings.

**Caution:** The position refers to the districting process and may not be used in communities that do not presently have a governing body elected by districts. It may not be used to establish a local position on the validity of districting at that level. That requires the adoption of a local study and consensus.

### Background: Apportionment/Districting

Interest in this issue cycles with the census. League history shows similar fluctuations. In the 1940s, League redistricting studies resulted in no consensus. Positions developed in the 1950s and '60s were dropped in favor of wording under an LWVUS position. In the 1970s, LWVO Convention adopted a not-recommended study "Evaluation of alternative standards and methods of districting for the state legislature, in preparation for action before 1981," which resulted in the positions we have today. In the 1980s, the LWVO board voted to support the Fair And Impartial Redistricting (F.A.I.R.) amendment petition effort. In the first year, the amendment did not reach the ballot; the second F.A.I.R. amendment went before the voters but was defeated.

Ohio's congressional representation was reduced from 21 to 19 after the 1990 census. The state legislative districting plan, adopted by the Republican-controlled Apportionment Board in 1992, was challenged by the Democrats, and counter-suits were filed by the Republicans. The primary election was delayed until June, but both the General Assembly and the congressional delegation were elected according to the new districts.

In August 1995, a U.S. District Court ordered that eight Ohio state legislative districts be redrawn by November 1, 1995. Those districts had been drawn by the Ohio Appor-

tionment Board to be "packed" with African-Americans, but the court found that the Board "lacked a compelling state interest for its racial gerrymandering," and concluded that the "House districts violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution." The case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which said the district court had used an incorrect legal standard in making its decision, and remanded the case to the district court. In August 1997, the district court reversed itself, and held that the districts were drawn constitutionally.

While few members of the general public had begun to think about the apportionment/districting to be done after the 2000 census, the governor, auditor, and secretary of state were well aware that those elected to these offices in 1998 would serve on the Apportionment Board, helping to draw legislative district boundaries in effect for the next ten years.

In the fall of 1998, before the general election that elected members of the Apportionment Board, League began an initiative petition drive to submit an improved version of its nonpartisan, mathematical districting plan to the voters. All that fall and winter of 1998-1999, we collected signatures and attracted other organizations to join in coalition with us, eventually having 14 partner organizations.

As our petition drive garnered interest and picked up steam, the Republican legislative leadership approached us in summer 1999 about pursuing a legislative solution to change the districting process, rather than our petition drive. Their plan, HJR 13, was introduced in January 2000. While substantially identical to League's initiative, there was one major difference: the effective date of the change would have been 2011 rather than 2001. Still this resolution had many of the elements of League's positions, and we testified in favor of it, while simultaneously pursuing the ballot initiative.

Both League's drive and HJR 13 failed, leaving the responsibility for drawing the district lines with the Apportionment Board. The new districts were adopted along party lines in the fall of 2001. Ohio lost another Congressional representative after the 2000 census, down to 18. Both the Congressional and state legislative districts were determined by the same old partisan methods in 2001, although the Apportionment Board went through the motions of listening to public comment.

The 2005 Convention dropped the requirement for a nondiscretionary districting process, but left the primary criteria in place.

### Outlook: Apportionment/Districting

We expected this issue to come to the forefront again closer to the 2010 census, and we were right. An initiative petition has been submitted for the 2005 ballot to abolish the current Apportionment Board and replace it with a process that is similar to the League's 1998 plan. Although it provides some flexibility, it is based on measurable criteria, including competitiveness of districts. LWVO has chosen to endorse this initiative.

# GOVERNMENT: State Government Finance

## Positions: State Finance

### Criteria (Adopted July 1989)

LWVO supports the following tax principles as criteria to be used in evaluating individual taxes and the tax mix in Ohio. Taxes should:

1. be fair and equitable;
2. provide adequate resources for government programs while allowing flexibility for financing future program changes;
3. be understandable to the taxpayer and encourage compliance;
4. be easy to administer.

### Corporate Franchise Tax (Adopted July 1989)

As a source of state revenue LWVO supports the corporate franchise tax especially because businesses should help pay for services received.

### Income Tax (Adopted July 1989)

As a source of state revenue LWVO supports a personal income tax because it meets the tax principles particularly in that it is fair and equitable. The state income tax rates should be graduated.

### Property Tax (Adopted March 1983)

1. LWVO supports real property tax relief, financed by the state, in the form of the Homestead Exemption based on age, income, and disability income.
2. LWVO supports the elimination of the real property tax rollbacks, both across-the-board and for owner-occupied homes.

### Sales Tax (Adopted March 1983; revised June 1989)

3. LWVO supports a change in the base rather than a change in the rate of the sales tax. We favor broadening the base by reducing the number of exemptions.
4. LWVO supports application of the sales tax to non-essential services, tickets for professional athletic and entertainment events, and prepared food purchased for on- or off-premise consumption.
5. LWVO supports exemptions for food, other than prepared food, sold for off-premise consumption, prescription drugs, prosthetic and surgical devices, and items for direct use (components in manufacturing and agricultural use).

### Tax Mix (Adopted July 1989)

LWVO supports the state taxes that are currently in effect. If an increase in state taxes is needed, LWVO prefers the income tax as a source of revenue because it tends to be progressive rather than regressive. Taxes on alcohol and cigarettes are another revenue source if needed. An increase in sales tax, although less desirable, is another possible revenue source.

If a decrease in state taxes is called for, LWVO supports reducing the sales tax because it is regressive and less equitable Tax Relief for those at the lower end of the income scale should be considered if there is a decrease in state taxes.

## Background: State Finance

The state government finance study was recommended by the state board in 1981 on the basis of local League recommendations. The previous LWVO study of state finance, which focused on major services (education, welfare, mental health), was completed in 1969. The board felt that members were no longer adequately informed to support/oppose major changes proposed in state financing.

During 1981-83, we reached consensus on aspects of the sales tax and property tax. By February 1984, not enough information was ready to continue preparation of material for local Leagues by the March deadline, so the study process was stopped. The 1985 Convention readopted the study for the 1985-87 biennium but modified the scope to focus only on the two remaining major taxes: corporate franchise and income (*note change*). It kept the stipulation that funding must be found before we began the study. Funding was found in 1987 for an educational publication on state revenue and expenditures. In May 1988 *It's Your Money: Ohio Government Finances* was published.

In 1994, a constitutional amendment to repeal the wholesale tax on soft drinks was opposed by LWVO, but was passed by the voters. The biennial budget for the years 2002-03 had been balanced with one-time monies, and the several sources of revenue continued to decline, forcing cuts in all departments and programs. Hence, Governor Taft introduced a budget for 2004-05 proposing some changes in taxes, and the General Assembly appointed a Committee to Study State and Local Taxes. While the final 2004-05 budget did include some tax changes, it neither addressed the structural deficit nor reduced the tax equity gap. It did make changes in the sales, corporate franchise and property taxes, and increased tax credits to businesses. Seventy-seven percent of the taxes *would* be paid by individuals and 23 percent *would* be paid by businesses.

The momentum for tax reform continued into 2005 with the development of the 2006-07 biennial budget. Governor Taft met with legislative leaders in advance of budget deliberations to craft the reforms and a budget package intended to stimulate jobs and capital investment in Ohio, and to slow down the rate

of growth in government spending. The enacted reforms are to be phased in over five years, and significantly alter both business and personal taxes. The major components of tax reform include repeal of the corporate franchise tax and the tangible personal property tax on business machinery and equipment, to be replaced by a new tiered commercial activity tax (CAT). Businesses with taxable gross receipts up to \$150,000 will incur no tax liability, while businesses with taxable gross receipts between \$150,000 and \$1 million will pay a minimum tax of \$150.00. Businesses with taxable gross receipts at \$1 million or more will incur a tax of 0.26%. The reforms also set the permanent sales and use tax at 5.5% (a decrease of half a penny from the previous permanent rate). The legislature cut individual income taxes by 21% across the board, and included a low-income tax credit that eliminates liability for taxpayers with Ohio taxable incomes at or below \$10,000. Finally, the legislature increased excise taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco products, and authorized school districts to increase levies by 4% annually to offset inflation.

While the League supported a nonrefundable tax credit for low-income taxpayers, we had serious reservations about the tax reform package as a whole and opposed its enactment. The primary reasons for opposing the reforms were that we believed that (1) there was insufficient evidence that the new CAT tax would be an effective or even appropriate vehicle for generating economic growth and job creation in Ohio; (2) with state income as a result of the reforms expected to be approximately \$2.8 billion less than 2003-04 biennium, tax revenues would fail to meet state financing requirements in both the long and the short term, and would result in severe cuts to vital state programs and services and local governments; (3) implementation of the package as a whole would result in a further shift of the larger share of tax responsibility from the business sector onto individual taxpayers, and away from wealthier to low- and middle-income individuals. A disproportionate share (41%) of the tax cut in the personal income tax is projected to accrue to individuals with incomes in the top two income tax brackets. Repeal of the tangible personal property tax is especially problematic because both local governments and the state's public schools depend on the tax for revenue. While the legislature agreed to reimburse local governments and public schools fully for projected losses through 2010, the reimbursements will be phased out completely over the following eight years. In addition, the legislature diverted \$216 million from the state's Tobacco Fund to pay for school construction projects.

On the spending side, projected cuts to local governments and library districts were offset by additional unanticipated revenues from one-time savings due to lower Medicaid caseloads. Nevertheless, low-income parent eligibility for health care services under Medicaid was reduced, and the state's Disability Medical Assistance program for very low income adults was cut by at least 40%. The League opposed the cuts to these vital health care programs.

Another important development during 2005, was the introduction of HJR4 and a separate proposed state constitutional amendment, each of which proposed to limit state spending to a formula based on the rate of population growth and inflation. After analyzing the potential impact of a spending cap on the state's ability to collect adequate revenue and examining the impact of a similar measure in Colorado, the League adopted a position opposing spending limits. The League joined in efforts organized by the Coalition for Ohio's Future intended to defeat the proposals. The Coalition for Ohio's Future will continue efforts to educate Ohio voters about the dangers of spending limit proposals.

## Outlook: State Finance

It is difficult to predict the fiscal impact the tax reforms will have over the biennium, much less over the five years in which the reforms are to be implemented. The CAT as enacted in Ohio is largely untested by other states, and further adjustments may be made over time. In addition, we anticipate that efforts to contract state spending will carry over into the 2006 legislative session and into the budget deliberations for the 2008-10 biennium. As the largest component of the state budget, the Medicaid program is likely to be targeted for additional savings. Although the legislature reversed projected budget cuts to local governments and library districts through the use of one-time monies, it may well look to these entities for savings in the future. While neither proposal to impose spending caps was enacted, we anticipate that spending limits will again be brought up during the 2006 gubernatorial campaign and may be reconsidered during the 2006 legislative session as well. The League will maintain its partnership with the Coalition for Ohio's Future and monitor developments related to these proposals.

**SOCIAL POLICY** positions pull together various program areas that concentrate on government services to people. LWVO's positions address primary and secondary education, higher education, and juvenile justice. In 1997, delegates to Convention dropped the LWVO children services position, working under LWVUS early intervention for children at risk positions instead. Other LWVUS positions are child care, equality of opportunity, health care, meeting basic human needs, gun control, urban policy, and violence prevention.

LWVO and LWVUS positions under social policy are both used for state and local action. See *Impact on Issues* for complete LWVUS social policy positions.

## SOCIAL POLICY: Primary and Secondary Education

### Positions: Primary and Secondary

#### State Board and Department of Education

(Adopted January 1983)

1. The League of Women Voters of Ohio supports the continuation of a State Board of Education which should be elected, rather than appointed.
2. The primary responsibility of the State Board of Education should be policy making/planning.
3. The primary responsibilities of the State Department of Education should be administrative and regulatory.
4. The LWVO identifies two main areas of State Board of Education operations that need improvement: communications and management of responsibilities.
  - a. Improved direct communication is needed between the State Board of Education and the public, educators, and the legislature to increase public awareness and State Board of Education visibility.
  - b. State Board of Education responsibilities should be reduced and priorities set so that the Board can function effectively and efficiently as a policy making/planning body.

#### State Education Standards

(Adopted January 1984; updated May 1995) LWVO supports:

5. The use of state education standards as a method of "requiring a general education of high quality."
6. Compliance with the same state standards by all chartered schools.
7. The establishment of guidelines for granting any exceptions to the state education standards by the State Board of Education for "good and sufficient reason."
8. The development of a timely, open process for the evaluation and improvement of the state education standards. Standards should include appropriate multiple forms of assessment.

#### Education Finance

LWVO supports the following principles as the role of the state in funding elementary and secondary education in Ohio:

9. LWVO supports a funding system for public elementary and secondary education that is accountable and responsive to the taxpayers. LWVO believes that public funds should be used only for public schools. (Adopted May 1994)
10. LWVO supports a guarantee by the state of a realistic level of per pupil expenditure in all school districts, including compensatory education programs where needed. (Adopted March 1969)
11. The equalizing function of the distribution formula for Foundation Basic aid should be enhanced by decreasing the use of Basic Aid Guarantees. (Adopted January 1985)
12. Additional state education funding to school districts should be allocated primarily through Foundation Basic Aid, as these moneys are unrestricted in use. (Adopted January 1985)
13. State aid should be distributed to compensate for variations among school districts in their ability to raise local revenue to fund education. (Adopted May 1991)
14. The state aid formula should be calculated to reflect the effects of the tax reduction factor on the amount of revenue school districts can raise through property taxes. (Adopted May 1991)
15. The state aid formula should be calculated to reflect income wealth of school districts. (Adopted May 1991)
16. The state aid formula should be calculated to reflect:
  - a. the actual costs to school districts for state-mandated programs;
  - b. meeting the educational needs of the children within the district;
  - c. consideration of the economic/geographic characteristics of school districts statewide. (Adopted May 1991)
17. The state should be able to assist school districts in capital improvements and building construction to comply with appropriate codes in order to ensure health and safety. (Adopted May 1991)

18. Tax revenue from commercial/industrial/mining/public utility property should be distributed to compensate for variations in taxable wealth among school districts. (Adopted May 1991)
  19. The General Assembly should establish a method to minimize fluctuations in state funding for elementary and secondary education programs. (Adopted May 1991)
  20. The state share of the cost of pupil transportation should be separated into two budget line items: public and nonpublic. (Adopted January 1985)
  21. The functions and operations of the county school system should be evaluated for possible action by the State Board of Education and/or the legislature. (Adopted January 1985)
- LWVO supports the following principles as the role of the local community in financing elementary and secondary education in Ohio:
22. Individual school districts should be required to assume a reasonable share of the financial burden and should retain the option of increasing per pupil expenditure beyond this level through local taxes. (Adopted March 1969)
  23. School districts should be participants in the decision-making process when tax abatements are being considered. (Adopted May 1991)

## Background: Primary and Secondary Education

LWVO involvement and advocacy on education issues date back to the 1930s when LWVO supported the first state foundation program to fund schools. In 1967-69 LWVO studied education in a series on state financing of major services, and positions were reached on education standards, resource centers, district boundaries, and financing. These positions were reviewed in 1977 at Convention, and only the funding positions were retained.

The roles of the State Board of Education and the Department of Education were the focus of LWVO studies during the 1980s. At Convention 1983 LWVO approved a study of state minimum standards and school finance, which resulted in the LWVO positions on an elected State Board of Education, state minimum standards, and school finance. The high number of local Leagues participating in these studies and three consensus efforts demonstrated strong member interest.

Delegates to the 1989 Convention voted to study the roles of state and local government in financing primary and secondary education. The two-year study produced *Financing Education in Ohio*, a highly acclaimed comprehensive book on the subject, which was used by League members to educate citizens and policy makers. Member interest and par-

ticipation were high, and in 1991 several new positions on school finance were adopted.

In 1994 Leagues concurred with an emergency program measure to adopt a League position stating that public funds should be used only for public schools. At Convention 1995 LWVO positions on education standards were revised as a result of a two-year update, and members adopted a position pertaining to the evaluation of the standards.

Financing education, vouchers, and community schools became issues in the mid-1990s as the Ohio General Assembly extended the use of public dollars to support charter schools and voucher education programs, and attempted to find ways to meet the directives of the Ohio Supreme Court in *DeRolph v. State I-IV* to “create an entirely new school funding system.”

The League sponsored a series of statewide meetings on proposed school funding remedies in response to the first *DeRolph* ruling by the Ohio Supreme Court in 1997. This led to a statewide televised town meeting on school funding with WOSU in February 1998. In 1999 and in 2001 the League filed amicus briefs supporting the League’s position that the state had not complied with the Supreme Court’s directives in *DeRolph I* and *II*. The League joined the Ohio Fair Schools Campaign (OFSC) and a school funding task force led by the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) in 2002. The OSBA Task Force was formed to develop a constitutional amendment to support a thorough and efficient system of funding schools in Ohio following the failure of the General Assembly to comply with the fourth *DeRolph* ruling issued in 2002. The task force prepared recommendations which were shared with Governor Taft’s Blue Ribbon Task Force on Funding Student Success (2003-2005). Few of the recommendations were incorporated into the FY06-07 budget bill 126-HB66 (Calvert), which was approved by the General Assembly in June 2005. Work on the constitutional amendment continues.

The League joined the Coalition for Public Education (CPE) which filed a lawsuit in 1995 to oppose legislation to divert state funds to nonpublic schools through vouchers. The case involved the constitutionality of the Cleveland Scholarship Program, which provides a voucher for students in the Cleveland Municipal School District to attend eligible private schools. Most of the participating schools are religious. The program was found constitutional by the Ohio Supreme Court, but unconstitutional in December 2000 by Judge Solomon Oliver of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio and by the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in March 2001 (*Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*). The federal court found that the program violated the First Amendment, which prohibits the establishment of religion by the state. This decision was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which found the program constitutional on June 27, 2002.

The League also joined in a lawsuit, *Ohio Congress of Parents and Teachers, et. al. v State Board of Education, et.al.*, regarding the constitutionality of charter schools, which are referred to as community schools in Ohio. This lawsuit was filed in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas by the Coalition for Public Education in May 2001. The lawsuit alleges that the state's community school program violates the state constitution because community schools are not held to the same standards as public schools, are not administered by elected boards of education, and local property taxes are diverted to private operators without voter approval. The suit also alleges that the state has failed to enforce current law governing community schools' contract obligations, and has allowed private schools to convert to community schools in violation of state law.

Judge Patrick McGrath dismissed four of the ten counts in the Coalition's complaint on April 21, 2003, but allowed the charges regarding the legality of e-school contracts and the conversion of private schools to charter schools to move forward. The plaintiffs appealed the dismissed constitutional issues to Ohio's 10th District Court of Appeals. That court issued a ruling on August 24, 2004, which sustained and reversed several rulings issued by Judge McGrath. The plaintiffs then appealed that decision to the Ohio Supreme Court, which agreed on February 16, 2005 to hear the appeal. In August 2005 the CPE filed briefs with the Ohio Supreme Court. The League also testified in May 2003 as an interested party, along with the other members of CPE before the State Board of Education on the proposed,

rules for defining "sponsors" of community schools, as required by 124GA-HB 364. The League also participated in press conferences and meetings with editorial boards in 2004-2005 regarding ways to improve the accountability of community schools, and testified before committees of the General Assembly opposing a new voucher proposal included in 126GA-HB66 (Calvert), the FY06-07 budget bill for Ohio.

### **Outlook: Primary and Secondary Education**

The League will continue to advocate individually and with coalitions when appropriate for laws to eliminate vouchers, create an all-elected State Board of Education, improve the state's system for funding schools, and improve the accountability of community schools. The League also will monitor the progress of the school funding, voucher, and community school lawsuits before the courts, and will take appropriate actions. Members will be kept informed through weekly online updates on education issues and through The Voter, post-board mailings, and special reports and workshops. The complexity of these issues provides the League with opportunities to inform and engage citizens, and to work with the State Board of Education, the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio General Assembly, and education and community organizations on ways to improve Ohio's education system.

## **SOCIAL POLICY: Higher Education**

### **Positions: Higher Education**

LWVO believes that: (adopted May 1997)

1. The Board of Regents should be a planning and coordinating Board with broad policy-making powers.
2. The Board of Regents should be appointed by the Governor with confirmation by the Senate. The legislature should establish appropriate criteria for board members to ensure that the Board can function effectively and efficiently as a policy-making/planning body.
3. The state should provide funding to ensure that all Ohio citizens (meeting given institutional academic standards) have access to higher education that provides general education and job preparation. Ability to pay should not determine admission. (Amended May 2005)
4. In order of priority a state funding system for public higher education should be to: (Amended May 2005)
  - a. provide a basic level of support to all public institutions of higher education,
  - b. provide partial funding for capital improvements and maintenance, and
  - c. provide scholarships.

### **Background: Higher Education**

Delegates to the 1995 State Convention voted to study the role of state government in policy making and financing

of higher education in Ohio. The study focused on the role of the Ohio Board of Regents, Boards of Trustees, the Government and the state legislature and outlined the revenue sources for higher education in Ohio.

After the 1995-97 member study of higher education in Ohio, the League of Women Voters of Ohio, through

its Education Fund, researched and published a monograph on higher education, *Before the Students Arrive* (LWVOEF, 1998). Following the terms of grant monies received, this publication was widely distributed to legislators, Boards of Trustees, other policymakers, and the public. The basic information from the 1998 monograph has been periodically updated for members' use and to support the League's work in monitoring the biennial state budget deliberations related to higher education and other proposed legislation affecting the Board of Regents, educational access, and affordability. In May 2005, LWVO revised its original positions to clarify its priorities and to strengthen its advocacy posture for Ohio citizen access to higher education.

## Outlook: Higher Education

The State of Ohio's need for a well-educated populace may be widely recognized, but this need has been only perfunctorily addressed in recent legislative actions. The \$51.2 billion, two-year budget passed in June 2005 continued to short-change higher education, providing almost no extra money while it established tuition caps at 6 per cent annually. According to the Ohio Board of Regents (March 2005), state appropriations for higher education have been cut by \$344 million since 2001. The 37 campuses covered about 25% of that "lost" revenue through cost reductions and then used tuition increases as the primary source for funding the difference.

A national study rating the 50 states on several higher education issues gave Ohio an "F" on affordability in fall 2004. An Ohio student paid about 48% of the total cost of attending a public college or university in 2004-05, compared to a national average of about 31%. (Average annual tuition as reported by the Ohio Board of Regents in January 2005 was \$7,508.) Although tuition costs at the state's two-year colleges may seem like a bargain by comparison to the four-year institutions, those costs in Ohio were found to be 56% higher than the national average.

To complicate the critical thinking that is needed about higher education in Ohio, enrollments have climbed for seven straight years. One side of the debate contends that this is "a clear sign that Ohioans can pay a large portion of their college costs out of pocket." Other voices cry that more attention needs to be given to those who are not enrolling, to see how serious the affordability factor really is.

In 2005, the percentage of Ohio residents with bachelor's degrees still lagged the national average (21% in Ohio

compared to 24% nationally). Ohio ranked 39th among the states in the percentage of adults with at least a four-year degree.

Despite Ohio's effort to put public-supported colleges within easy "driving distance" for all its citizens, the state's educational attainment record has barely shifted in the past five decades of Census tracking, even though Ohio ranks above the national average in the percentage of its citizens who hold high school diplomas.

Legislation introduced in the 125th and 126th General Assembly displayed a scatter-shot approach to higher education issues. Affordability was not addressed on a wide scale, although special scholarship programs were approved for special groups such as Iraq war veterans and their dependents and for safety forces and their dependents. Accessibility was both praised and damned as some legislators believed they had spurred enrollments and others called for reductions in programs and facilities. The need to "do more with less" spawned innovative collaborations among institutions as well as a united outcry about the state's "dismal" per capita investment in its future.

While costs (and enrollments) climbed and appropriations were cut, other issues rocked the higher education community, giving rise to many questions about the current and future roles of the legislature and the Ohio Board of Regents. There was widespread alarm when proposed legislation threatened to dictate instructional matters. "Academic freedom" was alternatively discussed, disavowed, and championed before the proposed bill died in committee. In its place, the Inter-University Council of Ohio has proposed to adopt a resolution which states that universities are committed to respecting diverse viewpoints. A governor's commission urged that the state support a 30% increase in undergraduate and graduate enrollment by 2015, while policymakers used anecdotal information to deplore program proliferation. University officials talked about earmarking a portion of the sales tax to assist with lowering tuition while the sales tax was lowered in the final budget bill. The legislature worried about the number of students that need remedial courses in college and about students' difficulties in attempts to transfer from one institution to another, but side-stepped affordability issues.

Ohio's Tuition Trust Authority (a federally sanctioned "529 Plan") marked 15 years in operation in 2004 and continued to improve and expand its college-savings

offerings. But even that resource for families planning ahead ran into difficulty with one of its funds when tuition increases outpaced projected investment income. OTTA has projected that it will not need a state appropriation to back the Guaranteed Savings Fund until 2017.

Other federal policies have complicated affordability and accessibility. Changes in 2005 to eligibility rules for Pell Grants resulted in reduced awards to many students and ineligibility for others. Private educational-loan firms have been allowed to collect federal government subsidies in excess of their costs, using dollars that could have expanded the Pell Grant program or other education aid.

In summary, the outlook for public-funded higher education in Ohio is not rosy. Although tuition increases are capped for two years, the increases are still above the rise in the cost of living and represent a hefty portion of family income. Enrollments are expected to continue to climb but many students will take lighter class loads in order to work to cover their costs, extending

their degree completion time and even reducing their ability to qualify for financial grants and loans. The individual institutions are likely to be caught in a tightening web of requirements and expectations for collaboration and coordination that will complicate their planning processes. The executive and legislative branches of government will continue to vacillate in their attention to the crucial link between Ohio's economy and the education of its populace. The time is right for the public, as well as the business community, to work themselves into the cracks of this scene, to press for positive advancements that will enhance the value of a college education for students as well as for the state.

The League of Women Voters of Ohio will continue to support a strong governance system for higher education that can provide broad access to higher education for academically qualified Ohioans and will lend its voice wherever it can to those calling for a more affordable public higher education system.

## **SOCIAL POLICY: Juvenile Justice**

### **Positions: Juvenile Justice**

The LWVO supports the following principles and policies: (Adopted May 2003)

1. The LWV of Ohio supports the principle that children under the age of 18 are not adults and that their treatment within the juvenile justice system should relate to their stage of development. (Amended May 2005)
    - a. Children should not be held in adult prisons or detention facilities.
    - b. Unruly children should not be placed in secure facilities (defined as those with architectural barriers).
  2. The LWV of Ohio supports rehabilitation as the purpose of the juvenile justice system.
    - a. Development and use of local diagnostic and treatment/resources are desirable alternatives to large centralized institutions.
    - b. Development and use of local social service programs to provide appropriate treatment for unruly and delinquent children and their families are preferred.
- c. Development and use of a variety of alternatives to secure facilities within a child's own community are preferred. Alternatives could include group homes, foster homes, drop-in shelters, and other non-secure programs.
  - d. County Juvenile Courts and the Ohio Department of Youth Services are responsible for providing positive, individualized, humane treatment for children.
  - e. Each case should receive individual evaluation before the court. Judges should use their discretion to find the best resolution of each case.
  - f. The "least restrictive" option should determine placement of children awaiting court action as well as after adjudication. A child should not be detained in, or committed to, any facility or program that would physically restrict him/her beyond that degree of restriction needed to assure the child's safety, the safety of others, or the child's appearance at a scheduled court hearing.

3. The LWV of Ohio supports the protection of children's legal rights.
  - a. If adjudicated not guilty, children have the right of expungement of all juvenile records pertaining to that case and the right of state-mandated written notification of eligibility for expungement review.
  - b. There should be statewide uniform standards for maintaining, disseminating, and/or inspecting juvenile records. These standards should be designed to protect the offender, as child and as adult, from unnecessary consequences of criminal behavior and the taint of criminality. Expungement procedures should be easy for a youth and his/her family to access.
  - c. Children have the right to bodily safety and integrity; freedom from physical and mental abuse; mental and physical care; drug and alcohol treatment; an education appropriate to the child's intellectual, emotional, and physical capacities; access to the courts for enforcement of rights; and periodic review of placement and treatment.
4. The LWV of Ohio supports the development, establishment, and enforcement of state standards for detention and treatment facilities. These standards should be continually reviewed for improvement. Standards for facilities used for detention or disposition should meet the following minimum requirements:
  - a. Protection of the rights of youth to personal possessions, privacy, freedom of and from religion, personal communications, limitations and procedural requirements for discipline, grievance and appeal mechanisms, bodily safety, and periodic review of placement.
  - b. Program requirements should include: initial physical, mental, and psychological evaluation; medical and dental care; recreation and exercise; education designed to meet individual needs; vocational training; psychiatric and psychological services; and aftercare.
  - c. Facilities should be required to maintain a minimum ratio of staff to youth; staff should have appropriate qualifications for working with youth; and standards for staff supervision and accountability should be maintained.
5. The LWV of Ohio supports the development within each county or multi-county region of a comprehensive system of children's services for the prevention and treatment of children at risk as well as juvenile offenders; a system that utilizes the resources of the extended community to give each individual child a *continuum of care*. A comprehensive system would require the intentional collaboration of the court, families, schools, and community agencies and organizations to create a holistic system for the benefit of the children.
6. The LWV of Ohio supports the provision of public innovative *alternative educational services*, K through 12, to address the specific and individual needs of children who do not perform successfully in, or face expulsion from, the traditional public school setting.
7. The LWV of Ohio supports the philosophy of a *restorative system of justice* for children as a dispositional option for juvenile court judges. A restorative justice approach to delinquency requires the voluntary participation of three essential groups: the offender, the victim, and the community. Key components are restitution to the victim and the community, offender self-improvement, and possible mediation with the victim. If successful, the offender would assume responsibility and take action to repair the damage caused. If the offender recidivates, traditional rehabilitation alternatives would be available at the discretion of the judge.
8. The LWV of Ohio supports the development and utilization of *gender-specific treatment* programs.
  - a. Treatment programs should meet the specific needs of each individual.
  - b. Research-based gender-specific services should be available for both boys and girls.
  - c. Research on effective services and treatment for girls is needed. It should be encouraged and funded.
9. The LWV of Ohio supports the right of juveniles to *unbiased treatment* regardless of race or ethnic

## Background: Juvenile Justice

The LWVO was one of the first groups to study unruly children and to consider the rights of children in the juvenile justice system. Positions adopted in 1973 affirm the "purpose clause" of the 1969 revision of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and its implementation, and the development of local programs, as alternatives to cen-

tralized institutions, for unruly and delinquent children. In 1974 the LWVO adopted support for 1) including in the ORC the responsibility of the courts and Department of Youth Services (DYS) to provide positive, individualized and humane treatment, and the protection of the legal rights of juvenile offenders, 2) development of uniform standards for maintaining, disseminating, and inspecting juvenile records (standards designed to protect the offender, as child and adult, from unnecessary consequences of criminal behavior and the taint of criminality); and 3) the expungement of all juvenile records, and mandated written notification of eligibility for expungement review.

The 1977 Convention decided to study and develop standards for all juvenile facilities and for determining who should be placed in secure facilities. The 1979 positions reflect member interest in limiting use of secure facilities and developing community services and non-secure facilities as alternatives. Also adopted were: 1) individual evaluation of each case; 2) “least restrictive” concept in determining placement while awaiting court action and after adjudication; 3) development of alternatives to secure facilities within the child’s community; 4) establishment of minimum standards for secure facilities, including protection of the rights of youth, staff qualifications and ratio of staff to youth; and 5) services designed to meet the physical, mental, and psychological needs of youth. The 1979 positions opposed holding any children in adult jails and holding unruly children in secure facilities. The 1987 Convention amended the position to clarify that it does support drug and alcohol treatment for addicted youth. A 1993 update did not result in any new positions.

The 2001 Convention again voted to update the position and the 2003 Convention voted to add to and amend the positions as follows:

- The former purpose section of the ORC was deleted because it was changed. During the 1990s the public focus on violent juvenile crime, brought about by gang activity and the shootings in Columbine, shifted the pendulum toward punishment and public safety. This shift toward “accountability” was evidenced by the passage of SB 179, which created a new chapter of the ORC. The prior statutory goal of protecting the child from the “taint of criminality” was removed and the goal of the juvenile system was changed to public safety and accountability.

- The philosophy of the position was retained:

- 1) children are not adults and treatment should relate to their stage of development;
- 2) rehabilitation is the purpose of the juvenile system;
- 3) children’s legal rights should be protected; and
- 4) state standards for detention and treatment facilities

should be enforced.

However, the right to expungement of all juvenile records was amended to the expungement of records only for those children adjudicated not guilty.

- New positions were added:

- 1) Support for a comprehensive system of services using the resources of the entire community.
- 2) Support for the development of alternative educational services, K through 12, for children who are not successful or face expulsion from the traditional school.
- 3) support for the development of gender-specific treatment and programming.
- 4) support of the right to unbiased treatment regardless of race or ethnicity.
- 5) support of the philosophy of a restorative system of justice as a desirable disposition option.

In 2004 the LWVO invited local Leagues to conduct studies of their county juvenile courts. Recommendations resulting from the fourteen county courts studied are listed in the following section.

At the 2005 Convention, the term *children* was defined to mean “under the age of 18.”

## Outlook: Juvenile Justice

Public perception of rampant juvenile drug abuse and serious crime will likely continue without regard to the numbers of youths actually involved, and elected officials will likely continue to advocate for more restrictive laws. Serious juvenile offenders clearly need intervention and programs that provide structure and supervision, and develop social and personal controls. Programs of this type may be offered within the juvenile system, but are not found in the adult system. The League’s long-held position requiring individual evaluation of each case would certainly provide a tool to oppose mandatory sentences.

Concerns about drug abuse, violence, sexual offenses, and the availability of firearms have led to some systemic changes in Ohio. Local Leagues should determine what programs are available in their communities and whether they are effective in rehabilitating offenders. Several counties operate drug courts. Sex offenders are now required to register with the county sheriff. Schools are expected to develop programs to stem truancy.

The 2002 Bench-Bar Conference focused on the need for different and appropriate treatment modalities for girls in the juvenile justice systems. Local Leagues should keep abreast of the developing research and follow their local court’s interest and activities in this area.

Restorative justice is a relatively new concept in the juvenile justice area and should be encouraged. The traditional treatment for both children and adults is punishment – the retributive method. The restorative mediation model with the support of the community can result in a positive learning experience for youth. The new purpose clause of the ORC may be interpreted to support the restorative concept. Leagues should keep abreast of model restorative programs and encourage their county courts to use the restorative approach.

To assist local Leagues with these efforts, and to improve its own advocacy at the state level, LWVO designed a juvenile justice project for local Leagues in 2003. Local Leagues were invited to conduct studies of their local county juvenile courts. Fourteen county courts were studied, resulting in the following recommendations:

- State level recommendations that would require additional study:
  - 1) Review of the qualifications for juvenile judge;
  - 2) Evaluation of the effectiveness of the new laws on recidivism and rehabilitation;
  - 3) Reassessment of expungement and evaluation of the impact of a juvenile record on the youth's future;
  - 4) Review of how Ohio funds its courts;
  - 5) Study of the issue of juvenile competency and quality of legal defense.
- Recommendations for action at both state and county levels:
  - 1) Support for collaboration among youth-serving agencies.
  - 2) Support for continuing education for all persons who work with juveniles.

- 3) Support for adequate funding for prevention and early intervention, gender-specific, mental health, drug, and sex offender treatment programs.
- 4) Support for adequate funding for county juvenile courts.
- 5) Encourage local Leagues to monitor their local courts and juvenile facilities and to take action when appropriate under LWVO positions.

During 2004-5 conditions at Ohio's juvenile correctional institutions have been under scrutiny by state and national advocacy groups and the U.S. Department of Justice. Reports of abuse of youth, inadequate legal representation, and lack of adequate medical, mental health and education services have been investigated and several former employees of the DYS have been indicted on charges of abuse and rape. The LWVO through its participation in the Juvenile Justice Coalition of Ohio has advocated for legislative oversight resulting in legislation that gives the Ohio Institutional Inspections Commission the responsibility for inspecting youth as well as adult detention facilities. The Coalition is now working to educate the Commission as to the needs of incarcerated youth and the importance of quality staffing and programming.

RECLAIM Ohio was enacted in 1993. It gives local judges more options by providing state subsidies for local programs. It has been successful in reducing the population of the Department of Youth Services facilities and in assisting counties in developing community-based programs. Local Leagues with DYS institutions located in their counties are encouraged to learn more about what is happening inside the walls. Local Leagues should also monitor the implementation of RECLAIM Ohio in their counties. If RECLAIM is successful, then the number of youth sent to state institutions will be reduced and their rehabilitation is more likely to occur.

## SOCIAL POLICY: Capital Punishment

### Position: Capital Punishment

The LWVO supports the following:  
(Adopted January 2005)

1. Abolition of the death penalty
2. A moratorium on use of the death penalty

### Background: Capital Punishment

The 2003 Convention voted to study Ohio's system of capital punishment, enacted in 1981, as concerns grew across the United States about the just administration of the death penalty. Governor Ryan of Illinois, for example, suspended executions in 2000 over concerns that innocent people had been sentenced to death, as did Governor Glendening of

Maryland in 2003, citing concerns about racial bias and fairness issues. Similarly, legislators in New Jersey and a Supreme Court committee in Pennsylvania had recommended moratoriums. Indeed, a majority of Ohioans (51 percent) in 2000 believed that innocent people would be put to death in capital cases.

In this context, delegates to the 2003 Convention adopted a resolution calling for a study of Ohio's death penalty system. The study was to consider: (a) crimes punishable by the death penalty; (b) the impact on the poor and minorities; (c) due process issues; (d) the role of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA); (e) the effect of court-appointed lawyers; (f) relative costs to the State of Ohio of life without parole (LWOP) versus the death penalty; (g) the effectiveness of capital punishment as a deterrent; and (h) the advantages of capital punishment.

An 18-month comprehensive study of the issue was completed in the fall of 2004. The study examined both the pros and the cons of the issue, the role of DNA testing, capital punishment as a deterrent to crime, public support for execution, victims' rights and the appeals process. After discussion of the study at the grassroots level, members across the state concluded that the death penalty should be abolished in Ohio because of violations of due process, systemic bias against minorities, inequalities in legal representation of defendants and the uneven application of the death penalty inherent in the system. During the consensus process, members also voiced support for a statewide moratorium on the death penalty until a task force could look further into the matter. These positions were confirmed by the LWVO board in February 2005, and were immediately put to use:

- LWVO issued a press release announcing the new position
- The 2005 Convention passed an Action Resolution urging Governor Taft to immediately impose a moratorium on executions in Ohio until a task force could examine the issue, and the Ohio General Assembly to abolish the death penalty.
- LWVO joined the coalition Ohioans to Stop Executions and appointed a representative.
- LWVO sent letters to the editors of the major Ohio newspapers stating its position following a series of articles on Ohio's death penalty by the Associated Press that cited many of the same problematic issues as the League's study.

- LWVO participated in a press conference with other coalition members of Ohioans to Stop Executions to urge Governor Taft to immediately declare a moratorium on executions in the state while an independent and through review of the state's death penalty system was conducted and its recommendations addressed.

## Outlook: Capital Punishment

In Ohio, State Rep. Shirley A. Smith (with 26 cosponsors) reintroduced a bill in the spring of 2005 to study the death penalty system (HB 260). The bill is similar to one approved in 2004 by the House, but which was refused consideration in the Senate. "Taft has ruled out a moratorium, but [said, after the Ohioans to Stop Execution press conference calling for a moratorium and study, that] for the first time he would consider a study under certain conditions. Senate President Bill M. Harris said he'll consider the legislation if it comes to the Senate but is personally opposed to a study." (*Dispatch*, May 20, 2005).

Nationally, nine state Leagues (Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, and Ohio) have abolition positions. At the 2006 Convention, the Illinois League will again propose that the LWVUS adopt the position that the death penalty be abolished, a position supported by a majority at the 2004 LWVUS Convention, but requiring a supermajority to pass. LWV-IL is currently seeking the support of local Leagues and League members for this initiative. LWVO received a letter from LWV-IL seeking active support and cosponsorship for their effort to reach concurrence on an anti-death penalty position at LWVUS Convention in 2006, and has agreed to cosponsor.

The growing public debate about capital punishment at the highest legal levels is evidenced by Supreme Court Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who have voiced concerns about the inadequate representation of defendants in capital cases. And Justice John Paul Stevens noted that DNA evidence has shown "that a substantial number of death sentences have been imposed erroneously....It indicates that there must be serious flaws in our administration of criminal justice." (July, 2005)

And in 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court, which has repeatedly dealt with cases involving the death penalty, overturned the death sentences of four inmates, ruling that states cannot put to death convicted killers who were minors at the time of their crime.

# NATURAL RESOURCES

**NATURAL RESOURCES** is the heading for positions covering water, solid waste, hazardous materials and hazardous waste, land use, and interbasin water transfers. It also covers LWVUS positions on resource management, environmental protection and pollution control, public participation, water, air, solid waste, land use, energy, and the criteria for hazardous and nuclear waste storage and disposal. These state and national positions augment and complement each other and are to be used together for state and local action. See *Impact on Issues* for complete LWVUS positions.

Unlike the other program areas, which pull together independent program items under a consolidating title, this area has grown like a tree, with branches spreading from a trunk. Beginning with water, it has expanded to include other natural resources and the problems and management which are intertwined in the environment.

## NATURAL RESOURCES: Water

### Positions: Water

LWVO supports policies and procedures that provide for:

(Adopted 1961)

1. Joint, cooperative planning and administration along watershed lines and across political boundaries

(Adopted 1967)

2. Stringent water quality standards accompanied by strong enforcement and means of implementation.
3. Adequate state financing, including incentives to local governments and industries for expediting water pollution abatement.

### Background: Water

The LWVO has covered the waterfront—from septic tanks and flood plains to lake drilling, megafarms, and scenic rivers.

1955: LWVO studied Ohio Department of Natural Resources (then six years old).

1956: LWVUS four-year study of federal water management. Consensus reached in 1958 and 1960.

1960: LWVO one-year study of Ohio’s water development and management problems.

1965: LWVO Convention adopted not-recommended two-year study of water pollution control policies, programs, and laws. Consensus announced in 1967.

1967: LWVUS announced consensus on financial incentives to industry to abate water pollution.

2005: LWVO Convention adopted a resolution requesting that the General Assembly support a moratorium on new permits for megafarms in Ohio.

For the last 20 years the League has monitored the Great Lakes Governors and Premiers in their development of a set of principles included in the Great Lakes Charter to guide them in developing, maintain-

ing and strengthening the regional management regime for the waters of the Great Lakes Basin. The “lake area” Leagues have closely followed Annex 2001, an amendment to the Great Lakes Charter of 1985, developed to update the Great Lakes regional water management system and ensure that the Great Lakes are protected, conserved, restored and improved for future generations. League members have continued to voice on-going concerns of the damage to the Great Lake Basin from pollution, environmental disruptions, and unsustainable water resource management that may individually and cumulatively alter the hydrology of the Great Lakes ecosystem. The League also has closely monitored legislation that could directly and indirectly affect the health of Ohio’s vast number of streams, rivers, and lakes.

## Outlook: Water

### Outlook

Water quality has improved from Lake Erie to the Ohio River but problems of both surface water and groundwater quality and management continue. As population shifts make unbearable demands on the arid southwestern U.S., water may be recognized as essential for Ohio’s people and economy—agriculture, industry, and tourism. However, agriculture and the megafarms, industry and deregulation, and tourism and increasing population will be issues that will need continuous monitoring of state offices and legislation that affect water. This increased awareness of water as one of Ohio’s greatest resources will call for strong protection and management efforts including conservation and education. The League will continue its support of the Great Lakes Water Quality Initiative and Annex 2001 and efforts to strengthen protection of the waters of the Great Lakes and its basin, including guarding against drilling in Lake Erie. The League monitors legislation that could directly and indirectly affect Ohio’s vast number of streams, rivers, and lakes to take action to maintain and improve water quality in all of Ohio’s lakes and streams.

## Natural Resources: Solid Waste

### Positions: Solid Waste

(Adopted March 1973)

LWVO supports:

1. The philosophy that solid waste, from generation to ultimate disposal, must be purposefully and systematically controlled by all levels of government in order to provide efficient service, protect the environment, and achieve successful resource recovery.
2. The strengthening, expansion, and enforcement of state solid waste laws. The state should encourage reclamation and volume reduction.
3. Measures to forestall depletion of our natural resources and to recover nonrenewable resources.
4. Financing of solid waste facilities by a variety of methods, including user fees, or a combination of fees and/or taxes with state and federal aid; the use of private capital whenever possible.

### Background: Solid Waste

Separate state consensus questions were asked as part of the LWVUS 1972-73 study of solid waste. Fifty-seven Leagues participated in developing these LWVO positions. LWVO's 1977 Convention dropped portions of the position statement covered by the LWVUS solid waste position.

In 1974, a constitutional amendment was passed authorizing industrial revenue bonds for disposal of solid waste. LWVO took no position.

LWVO's main action from 1975 to 1979 was the unsuccessful effort to enact a mandatory bottle deposit law. When the legislature balked, we joined a coalition to enact it by initiative. Local Leagues played a major role. The initiative failed; however, the Office of Litter Control was established in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Lack of landfill space brought on the passage of HB 592 in 1988, increasing the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's authority over solid waste. Regulations for HB 592 included a goal of 25 percent reduction of waste through recycling that was to be reached by 1993. Markets for recyclables still fluctuate widely, even though 117-HB 592 required the Ohio Department of Administrative

Services to adopt guidelines that favor the purchase by state government of products containing recycled materials when products are available and meet performance standards.

Most of Ohio's Solid Waste Management Districts have operated very successfully under 117GA-HB 592 and revisions that have been made. However, situations developed in a few districts that prompted legislators in 1997 to once again look at the solid waste law. Legislation was introduced but died in committee.

- The Ohio 2006-07 budget bill, HB66, impacted the future of recycling and litter reduction with a loss of funding going to recycling programs through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Recycling and Litter Prevention. Advocacy on the part of state and local Leagues will be needed for alternative funding and legislation to keep existing programs

- HB66 placed a moratorium until January 2006 of new Construction and Demolition Debris (CDD) landfills. The budget bill formed a committee to work to review the aspects of how CDD disposals are regulated in Ohio and make recommendations to the general assembly for needed change. Several bills originated in the 2005 legislature dealing with CDD landfills. The League will need to monitor this committee and legislation that will secure solid waste landfill regulations.

- Governor Taft has directed the Ohio EPA to create rules for the disposal and beneficial use options for certain industrial and manufacturing waste. Public advocacy for flexible, common sense rules will be needed to regulate non-hazardous industrial waste.

## NATURAL RESOURCES : Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste

### Positions: Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste

(Adopted June 1981; amended May 2003)

1. LWVO supports state policies and programs which emphasize the following hazardous waste management options *in order of priority*:
  - a. waste reduction, toxicity reduction, and waste elimination;
  - b. waste separation and concentration;
  - c. energy/material recovery;
  - d. waste exchange;
  - e. chemical, biological, physical, and thermal treatment;
  - f. underground injection and land disposal.
2. **Roles:** LWVO supports private-sector ownership and operation of hazardous waste management facilities. Federal, state, and local government should all be involved in monitoring and surveillance. (Amended May 2005)
3. **Siting:** Decisions on siting of hazardous waste management facilities should be made by the state, with local government representation in the decision-making process. Eminent domain should be exercised by the state as a means of acquiring land for hazardous waste management facilities only after all other methods of acquisition fail. LWVO does not support use of eminent domain by the private sector, which includes public utilities, for hazardous waste siting. (See Land Use for other eminent domain positions.)
4. In Ohio, siting of nuclear waste disposal or storage facilities should not take place in areas:
  - a. where natural resources exist that are passed on to consumers with minimal processing or change;
  - b. where oil and gas exploration and/or development has occurred.

(See also LWVUS *Impact on Issues* for additional siting criteria.)

5. **Responsibility:** Generators should bear primary responsibility and liability for hazardous waste. Transporters and waste facility owners and operators should also handle wastes in a responsible manner and be held liable if negligent. The League supports measures to assure financial responsibility (such as insurance and performance bonds) by all parties involved, from generation to final disposition of wastes. Hazardous waste management is a responsibility to be shared by generators, transporters, waste facility owners, operators, and the public.

6. **Costs:** Generators should bear the major share of direct costs for hazardous waste management. Adjacent property owners, residents, and users of surface and ground water should not bear the burden of improperly managed hazardous materials.

(Adopted September 1988)

7. For hazardous materials transportation, LWVO supports, in order of priority:
  - a. strict enforcement of container regulation;
  - b. mandatory reporting to state and local authorities of spills of reportable quantities, including those involving intra-state carriers;
  - c. strict enforcement of placarding, labeling, and documenting requirements;
  - d. permits for trucking companies carrying hazardous materials with ability to suspend or revoke such permits;
  - e. routing requirements for certain selected extremely hazardous materials, including:
    - 1) the specification and/or the disapproval of some routes for some shipments,
    - 2) requirements for an escort for some shipments, and
    - 3) prenotification for some shipments;
  - f. state-regulated training for drivers and loaders;
  - g. collection, coordination, and analysis of data.
8. For right-to-know/emergency response, LWVO supports:
  - a. strong enforcement of laws and regulations;
  - b. more concentration on prevention of accidents involving hazardous materials.

### Background: Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste

GENERAL. The 1979 Convention voted to study the entire hazardous materials area, from transportation of raw hazardous materials to disposal of hazardous waste. However, since the subject of hazardous waste alone was found to be sufficient for one year's study, the 1981 study covered only this aspect. Sixty Leagues participated in the consensus reached in March 1981 and approved in its entirety at the 1981 Convention. LWVO's 1983 Convention dropped portions of the state position statement covered by LWVUS positions.

The 1987 Convention voted to complete the study. The 1988 consensus covered the remaining topics of hazardous materials transportation and community

right-to-know. In September 1988, the LWVO board approved the new position and changed the title of this section from “Hazardous Substances” to “Hazardous Materials” to correspond with current usage. The title was further changed at the 2003 Convention to “Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste.”

During the LWVO study, the legislature enacted Ohio’s first hazardous waste management laws. In 1984, industries in Ohio joined a hazardous waste exchange, and a more stringent hazardous waste law was passed. Emergency response/community right-to-know legislation was enacted in 1988.

At the 2005 Convention, the position was modified to drop a statement regarding federal ownership and nuclear waste facilities.

LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE. LWVO considers that radioactive waste comes under the Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste position. Ohio is an “agreement state,” meaning that the Department of Energy allows the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) to do its own inspection and licensing of any radioactive materials used in Ohio, and is responsible for supervising low-level radioactive waste. Responding to a statutory requirement, ODH established a Radiation Advisory Council and a Radioactive Waste Committee to help develop the necessary rules for handling low-level radioactive waste. There has been a League member on both bodies since their inception. Public participation rules are in now place to allow local monitoring of proposed licenses for facilities that generate and store radioactive waste in the state of Ohio. Currently, rules for final disposal of low-level radioactive waste are progressing through the approval process. No objection to these rules was received during the public-comment period. All of the administrative rules are in agreement with LWVO positions, particularly those embodied in ORC 3747 and 3748, the statutes governing radioactive waste.

HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE. A Federal responsibility, this waste is generated by the two nuclear reactors in Ohio. Currently it is stored at the reactors, but is scheduled to be sent to the Yucca Mountain repository in Nevada. The location of the site was approved by Congress in mid-2003 (LWVUS opposed this legislation). Yucca Mountain is scheduled to open in 2010, but may be delayed by litigation

and technological difficulties. In the interim the Goshute tribe in Utah has petitioned the Federal Government to open a temporary storage facility for high-level radioactive waste.

### **Outlook: Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste**

GENERAL. Eliminating pollution at its source, drastically reducing the amount of waste generated, and properly disposing of such waste will continue to be the goals of both industry and the Environmental Protection Agency for the next few years. Such programs have the potential for making real contributions toward improving environmental quality.

LWVO will use its positions, including transportation and right-to-know, to improve current law and practices whenever feasible. Right-to-know legislation ensures that citizens can find out what hazardous materials exist in their communities and the nature and amounts of toxic substances released into the environment. Local Leagues can monitor local situations to see if the laws are implemented and enforced.

LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE. Presently radioactive materials are being used in more than 200 places across Ohio. Low-level radioactive waste from Ohio is sent to the Barnwell disposal site in South Carolina, which will discontinue accepting our waste in 2008. Possibly this will not be a restriction. Barnwell may extend the deadline and/or new sites will open. It is unlikely that any disposal site will open in Ohio, since other states have either less-strict administrative rules or have not yet formulated any rules. LWVO’s position on the Radiation Advisory Council will provide an early warning to any change in this situation.

HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE. It appears that high-level radioactive waste will continue to be generated and stored at the two Ohio reactors during this biennium, since Yucca Mountain will not open and the Goshute application will take time to process.

## NATURAL RESOURCES: Land Use

### Position: Land Use

(Adopted May 1999; amended May 2003)

1. LWVO supports both urban revitalization and farmland preservation and the curbing of suburban sprawl.
2. The State of Ohio should provide authority and incentives for local governments to plan together regionally as well as to exercise innovative additional land use planning and regulatory techniques such as land banking, planned unit developments, purchase and transfer of development rights, limited development ordinances, scenic easements, agricultural districts, cluster development, conservation reserves and land trusts, urban enterprise zones, environmental impact assessments, impact fees, tax abatement, and zoning efforts.
3. There should be an enforcement system that includes a method of appeal or arbitration where conflicting land use needs exist.

(Adopted March 1977)

4. Eminent domain shall be used by the appropriate governmental or “quasi” governmental body as a means of acquiring land for the following purposes, providing that good land use planning and decision-making procedures have been instituted and provided that such application is used only after all other methods of acquisition fail:
  - a. highways and railroads;
  - b. parks and open spaces;
  - c. utility corridors;
  - d. power siting;
  - e. public developments (i.e., schools and hospitals);
  - f. urban renewal;
  - g. transportation terminals;
  - h. areas of critical concern such as fragile or historical lands.

### Background: Land Use

League interest in land first developed as members realized how much land use figured in both our human resource and environment concerns.

The positions above include portions of the specific LWVO consensus reached in 1975 and 1977. During the 1972-75 LWVUS study of land use, state-related material was sent to local Leagues, and there were

LWVO and LWVUS consensus questions. Sixty Leagues took part in consensus. The state positions originally announced incorporated provisions from the LWVUS consensus to make them more comprehensive. In 1977 part of the duplicate language was dropped. The 1983 Convention dropped additional portions of the positions.

To clarify member attitudes toward eminent domain, the 1975 Convention approved further study of the issue. The position was adopted in 1977. At Convention 1997, delegates voted a two-year expansion study of our land use positions. We voted to add to our land use position in 1999, which resulted in an expansion of our position in 1999.

In 2003, a clarification was added to the positions to emphasize the need for state support for regional planning.

### Outlook: Land Use

Ohio’s long, strong commitment to local control makes increasing the state’s role in land use planning and growth management difficult, but there is evidence of recent progress.

LWVO endorsed “Greater Ohio: A Campaign for Ohio’s Cities, Towns and Countryside.” This statewide effort to bring about smarter growth in Ohio, formed by scores of organizations and individuals across the state in 2003, launched a three-year process of creating the political will to change the patterns and location of growth in Ohio.

Greater Ohio initiated Senate Bill 60 (Sponsor, Senator Kirk Schuring, R-Canton), which would authorize nonrefundable, transferable tax credits for rehabilitation of historic buildings. At a second hearing of this bill on April 20, 2005, compelling, supportive testimony from national experts was presented.

HB 299 (Sponsor, Jon Peterson, R-Delaware), introduced in June 2005, would authorize counties, townships and school districts to levy impact fees on new development to finance capital improvements necessitated by that development. Currently, only cities in Ohio have this authority. Passage of this bill would give a significant tool to counties, townships and school districts as they attempt to manage growth.

There is some indication that a bill on transfer of development rights may be introduced. Currently, Ohio’s cities and home rule townships have this power, which permits the developer to have higher density projects for the trade-off of purchasing development rights on undeveloped land. Representative Larry Wolpert, in his December 27, 2004 report of the conclusions of his subcommittee on Growth and Land

Use, recommended that TRDs be extended to all of Ohio's 88 counties and all townships because of Ohio's "massive exurban growth." Representative Wolpert also called for historic tax credits for rehabilitation of historic buildings and the expanded use of impact fees.

Funds from Governor Taft's \$400 million bond fund, the Clean Ohio Fund, passed in November 2000, have been issued yearly as matching grants to communities throughout the state for farmland and open space conservation and urban revitalization. At least one additional round of funding will become available through the Capitol Budget for brownfields revitalization, Ohio trails, and greenspace; more than one round will occur for agricultural easements.

The General Assembly's Biennial Budget Bill, HB 66, passed in June 2005, serves to further LWVO's land use objective of regional cooperation. The bill requires (Section 557.12.0) every county and cities of over 100,000 in population to submit a report to the Auditor of State by October, 2005 on efforts by these entities to engage in regional cooperation and consolidation of services. Some areas where cooperation could occur are in jurisdictions' provision of fire protection, sewers, solid waste, law enforcement and geographic information services.

Significant impacts upon land use in Ohio are likely to occur if the Amtrak Authorization bill is enacted. U.S. Senator Mike DeWine became a co-sponsor of S.B. 1516 in August, 2005. Investments provided for in the bill would prepare the way for the Ohio Hub, an 860 mile, 32 station 110 mph rail system that would link Ohio's cities with each other and with lines serving major cities in neighboring states and in Canada. Measurable increases in the public's use of rail should affect patterns of land use in Ohio.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in June 2005, permitting governments to use eminent domain for private economic development, federal, state and local lawmakers have expressed concern about abuse of this power. We can expect to see legislation regarding the issue at all levels of government. At the state level, two bills and a resolution have been introduced in the 126<sup>th</sup> session: SB 167, sponsored by Sen. Grendell, to establish a moratorium on use of eminent domain; and SB 180, sponsored by Sen. Coughlin, to prohibit the use of eminent domain when the primary purpose is economic development. SJR 6, also sponsored by Sen. Coughlin, would amend the Ohio Constitution to eliminate eminent domain as a home rule power.

## NATURAL RESOURCES: Interbasin Transfer of Water

### Positions: Interbasin Transfer of Water

(Adopted May 1987)

Interstate and interbasin transfers of water have been made in the past to serve municipalities, industries, energy development, and agriculture. However, approval of those transfers was based on less complete information about their effects on aquatic ecosystems than is now available. It is inevitable that requests for such transfers will be made in the future and will require carefully considered responses. However,

- a. Construction costs of large-scale water transfers are high, and economic losses in the basin of origin may also be high;
- b. Environmental costs of water transfers may include quantitative and qualitative changes in lake levels, wetlands, and related fisheries and wildlife, diminished aquifer recharge, and reduced stream flows;
- c. Lowered water tables may affect ground water quality and cause land subsidence.

Therefore, any diversion plan:

- a. Must include an understanding of the fragility and the incomplete knowledge of the ecological, economic, and social nature of the area of origin, the area through which the water must pass, and the receiving area;
- b. Must contain methods for reviewing and adapting the plan to protect the affected areas during all stages of development, operation, termination, and post-termination of the interbasin transfer.

As we look to the future, water transfer decisions will need to incorporate the high costs of moving water, the limited availability of unallocated water, and impacts on the affected ecosystems.

LWVO believes that the criteria for evaluating both the decision-making process and the suitability of a proposed interbasin transfer of water should include:

1. Ample and effective opportunities for informed public participation in the formulation and analysis of

- proposed projects;
2. Evaluation of all economic, social, and environmental impacts in the basin of origin, the receiving area, and any area through which the diversion must pass, so that decision makers and the public have adequate information on which to base their conclusions;
  3. Examination of all short- and long-term economic costs including, but not limited to, construction, delivery, operation, maintenance, and market interest rate;
  4. Examination of alternatives including, but not limited to, supply options, water conservation, water pricing, and reclamation;
  5. Participation and review by all affected governments;
  6. Accord with international treaties;
  7. Procedures for resolution of intergovernmental conflicts;
  8. Responsibility for funding to be borne primarily by the user with no federal subsidy, loan guarantees, or use of the borrowing authority of the federal government unless the proposal is determined by all levels of League to be in the national interest;
  9. An enforceable intergovernmental agreement with supervision separate from implementation and with assurances that any mitigation offered to alleviate any adverse impacts be financed.
- As the waters of the Great Lakes basin are interconnected, the present and future condition of the Great Lakes' ecosystem should be a primary consideration when weighing the water needs of other areas. LWVO recommends that:
10. Water conservation should be a goal of all concerned governments in the Great Lakes Region;
  11. All concerned governments in the Great Lakes Region should have water accounting systems and should adopt water use plans as a basis for prudent management of the Great Lakes;
  12. Canadian interests must be considered in Great

Lakes resource decision making. At a minimum, existing mechanisms for these international discussions, such as the International Joint Commission, and ad hoc technical task forces should be strengthened;

13. Because the Great Lakes are international, future investment and development in the region should include cooperative United States-Canadian management of the water resource;
14. Since the Great Lakes' waters are currently used for multiple and competing purposes, any proposals for additional diversion decisions must take into account the potential impact on ecological, economic, aesthetic, navigational, energy generation, national security, and general welfare values.

## **Background: Interbasin Transfer of Water**

Lake Michigan Inter-League Group (LMILG) asked LWVO to concur with its position on Interbasin Transfer of Water in April 1986. Since LWVO cannot concur without more than 50 percent of our local Leagues concurring, a study packet was sent to our local Leagues. At least 79 percent of our Leagues participated and unanimously concurred with the LWVUS (from *Impact on Issues* 1986-88) and LMILG positions on Interbasin Transfer of Water.

## **Outlook:**

This position is a natural extension of our water position developed in the 1960s and further recognizes water as a tool for Ohio's people, agriculture, and economy. The League will continue to support and monitor the Great Lakes Charter and its companion Annex 2001 to achieve the following objectives.

- Ban the diversion of water to areas outside the Great Lakes Basin with limited exceptions.
- Establish new, consistent standards for the review of proposed uses of Great Lakes water.
- Strengthen technical data collection and sharing among the States and Provinces to assist in decision-making.
- Require current and future water users to practice improved conservation measures.
- Encourage lasting economic development while making sure withdrawals do not damage the Great Lakes
- Commit to an ongoing process that allows for public involvement.

## League Principles

The League maintains a set of governmental standards and policies from which all activities and action derive. The League believes:

- in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States;
- that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible;
- that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination;
- that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government;
- that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy, and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems; and
- that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that the development of an international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

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

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

### Advisories:

### Please Read Before You Speak on Any Position or Principle

- Local Leagues may *never* take action in opposition to a state or national League position. If your League disagrees with a position statement, you should remain silent.
- Leagues may contact their own representatives at the state and national levels, and leadership in the legislature, regarding local issues.
- Generally, the president or her designee speaks for the League. The rest of us speak as constituents supporting this particular League position on this particular legislation.
- Local Leagues should send copies of all communication with state officials to the state League; copies of communications with federal officials should be sent to the national office.
- Always notify the state League and the national League concerning contacts with the respective officials.

## State-Level Action Using State Positions

The following is a summary of action taken on state positions. See Acton on LWVUS Positions for action taken under the national positions.

### **Government**

#### Ohio Constitution

- 2001-02** **124<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Issued press release opposing Issue 1, amendment to allow those charged with drug possession to request treatment instead of jail; which failed on the ballot in November 2002.

- 2003** **124<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Issued press release citing more than 100 budget items with no fiscal impact (violation of single-subject rule). Received wide publicity but no legislative action.

#### Taxation

- 1995-96** **121<sup>st</sup> GA**
- Op-ed piece in opposition to supermajority for taxes appeared in *Akron Beacon Journal*, opposite a pro article by Ohio Treasurer.

- 2002-03** **125<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Sent letter to Secretary of State Blackwell opposing his proposal to repeal penny tax increase.
  - Issued press release urging caution in repeal of penny increase in sales tax.
  - Issued press release opposing repeal of penny increase in sales tax.

- 2005** **126<sup>h</sup> GA**
- Issued “FYI” on Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) proposal
  - Testified on HB 1 before House Ways and Means Committee, raising concerns over governor’s tax reform package.
  - Issued press release re Statehouse Day and opposition to Taxpayer Bill of Rights

#### Judiciary

- 1998-99** **122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**
- Supported move to get candidates for Governor to pledge use of nominating committees for judges. Met with Governor-Elect Taft to discuss proposal further.
  - Testified before the Ohio Courts Futures Commission to express support for their efforts to include the public in the process of evaluating the courts, to expand the juror pool, and to implement nominating councils to fill judicial vacancies.

- Worked in coalition to promote the Higher Ground Standards.
- Issued post-election op-ed on Supreme Court races.

- 2000-01** **123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Testified in support of HB 201 to provide for greater disclosure of campaign contributions in Supreme Court races.

- Worked in coalition to draft disclosure legislation and to promote Higher Ground Standards.

- 2002-03** **124<sup>th</sup>/ 125<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Worked with coalition to organize a judicial forum that addressed a wide spectrum of concerns about judicial independence. League members joined all four working committees that followed up on those concerns.

- Testified before Senate State & Local Government Committee on SJR 7 in favor of merit selection bill.

- 2003-2004** **124<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Testified on HB 181 before the Senate Judiciary supporting government accountability. Enacted.

#### Term Limits

- 1998-99** **122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**
- Held discussions with legislators about repeal resolution.

- 2002-03** **124<sup>th</sup>/125<sup>th</sup> GA**
- No action taken, though there were periodic informal inquiries about whether it was time to revisit the issue in the legislature or on the ballot.

#### Apportionment/Districting

- 1998-99** **122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**
- Testified in favor of 122-HJR 25, which would make Ohio’s reapportionment/redistricting system one based on objective criteria, rather than one decided by a partisan board or through the legislature.

- Held press conference to formally announce our redistricting petition initiative.

- Started petition drive and coalition building to put nonpartisan plan on the ballot.

- Held press conference to announce endorsing organizations of LWVO redistricting effort.

- Sent Action Alerts to all League members urging them to participate in a signature drive on primary and general election days in support of the LWVO initiative on redistricting.

- 2000-01** **123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Continued active work on League’s initiative petition drive on redistricting.

- Testified in favor of HJR 13, the Republican leadership’s alternative redistricting plan.
- Local Leagues testified at regional meetings of the apportionment board.

**2001-02** **124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified on redistricting at several public hearings in support of an equitable plan, but the outcome was not affected.

**State Government Finance**

**2000** **123<sup>rd</sup> GA**

- Issued press release and wrote letter to members of the conference committee opposing the biennial budget bill Am. Sub. HB 94 that denied public access to the working papers of General Assembly members and legislative staff members involved in preparing legislation.
- Issued press release opposing a version of the state budget that would remove tax credit for small political donations.

**2001-02** **124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Sent letter to Committee to Study State and Local Taxes outlining LWVO’s positions on taxes and encouraging consideration of increasing income to the state.

**2003** **125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified at budget hearings on schools, human services, housing, and health, urging increased taxes if necessary to provide sufficient funds for these services.
- Questioned inclusion of nonfiscal items in budget, in letter to the governor urging line-item vetoes.
- Sent letter to Governor outlining LWVO’s positions on taxes.
- Issued press release supporting increasing taxes to remedy budget woes.
- Testified before the House Human Services Subcommittee supporting funding for human services.
- Sent letters to the House Ways and Means Committee supporting funding for human services.
- Issued action alerts to members urging support for the Emergency Campaign to Protect Ohio’s Future, a diverse coalition working to restore cuts to human services programs through tax revenue.
- Passed Action Resolutions at Convention calling on legislators to structurally balance Ohio’s tax system, provide stable and sufficient resources to support state services, and restore the compact between Ohio’s government and its citizens.

**2003-2004** **125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Issued Action Alert urging members to contact legislature to support Senate version of budget, HB 95.
- Sent letters to conference committee urging Senators and Representatives to vote for Senate version of budget bill. Senate version enacted.
- Testified on HB 95 before the Senate Finance Committee supporting health and human services. Passed Senate
- Sent letter of thanks to Senate Finance Chair for restoring funding for health and human services and schools in HB 95, the budget bill. Cuts to vital services restored.
- Sent out “FYI” on state budget briefings alerting members to meetings across the state.

**2005** **126<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified on HB 66, House Finance and Appropriations Committee, opposing cuts to human services programs, Medicaid and Disability Medical Assistance in the Budget.
- Issued Action Alert on budget urging contact with state representative to protest cuts to health care and local government, and expansion of vouchers in budget .
- Testified on HB 66 before the House Finance and Appropriations Committee with input on funding for Ohio education programs before Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee.
- Testified before the House Finance and Appropriations Committee opposing cuts to human services programs, Medicaid and Disability Medical Assistance in Budget.

**Social Policy**

**Primary and Secondary Education**  
**1995-96** **121<sup>st</sup> GA**

- Sent written testimony on education portions of the budget advocating per pupil basic aid, phasing out of guarantees, adjusting formula to reflect phantom revenues, an elected State Board of Education, and opposing Cleveland Scholarship voucher program and increased auxiliary funds for private schools.
- Sent Action Alert to local Leagues, asking them to urge that vouchers be removed from budget bill. Final budget bill included a voucher pilot project for Cleveland.
- Testified in opposition to SB 42, another voucher pilot project.
- Issued Action Alerts, Action Resolution at Convention, letters, and testimony opposing replacement of elected State Board of Education with

# State Level Actions Using State Positions

- one appointed by the Governor. Final bill kept elected members; added 8 members appointed by Governor.
- Signed on to an amicus brief in the case *Gatton vs. Goff*, as a member of the Citizens Against Vouchers coalition, which opposes using state funds to support the Cleveland voucher program.
- 1997-98** **122<sup>nd</sup> GA**
- Passed Action Resolution in Convention urging elimination of public funds for private schools in the budget.
  - Advocated against school vouchers and for responsible education finance in budget at State-house Day.
  - Issued press release supporting Ohio Supreme Court ruling declaring school funding system unconstitutional.
  - Sent an Action Resolution from Convention urging that LWV Education Finance positions are taken into account when devising an education finance solution.
  - Testified on HJR 16 and 17 and SJR 3 and 4, proposed ballot issues addressing education finance issues. They did not make it to the ballot.
  - Followed SB 55, performance standards, and HB 412, fiscal accountability. Both passed.
  - Undertook major citizen education project “How Should We Pay For Schools: Citizens Speak Out” including public forums by 20 local Leagues statewide.
  - Took part, by Local Leagues, in regional education finance hearings.
- 1998-99** **122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**
- Passed Action Resolution in Convention urging elimination of public funds for private schools in the budget.
  - Issued press release supporting Ohio Supreme Court ruling declaring school-funding system unconstitutional.
  - Passed Action Resolution in Convention urging that LWV Education Finance positions be taken into account when devising an education finance solution.
  - Testified in opposition to HJR 16/SJR 3, which would have allowed the legislature to define “thorough and efficient” education.
  - Testified before the Ohio House and Senate with comments for improvement on education funding proposals HJR 17/SJR 4.
  - Followed: SB 102, a highly technical bill establishing a process for addressing facility needs of schools.
  - Followed HBO 412, a fiscal accountability bill including requiring that a certain percentage of each school district’s local budget be set aside
- into a rainy day fund;
  - Followed SB 55, a bill increasing accountability for schools by setting higher graduation requirements, including a 10<sup>th</sup> grade competency test and increasing the number of credits required for graduation.
  - Followed HBO 650, revising the funding formula for schools.
  - Sent a letter to Governor Voinovich urging that efforts to correct education funding not end up cutting programs that affect facilities and children, especially those, like children protective services, MR/DD, and Medicaid, that help children come to school ready to learn.
  - Supported Issue 1, allowing GO bonds to be used for public school facilities; issued press release, made information available on web page.
  - Opposed Issue 2, raising sales tax for education and property tax relief.
  - Issued a press release, published “20 Questions and Answers about Issue 2”.
  - Passed Action Resolution in Convention urging members of General Assembly to address the issues ordered by the Ohio Supreme Court in the *DeRolph* decision; determine and fund a realistic per-pupil amount for all school districts; and ensure changes in the tax mix to provide additional funds for education that are not regressive.
  - Sent letter to the Senate Education Committee to share LWVO’s views on Am. Sub. 282, the biennial budget proposal for education.
  - Passed Action Resolution in Convention urging members of the General Assembly and the State Board of Education to take a leadership role in resolving the school funding issue and revising Ohio’s system of funding schools to ensure that it provides an adequate level of state support to address the needs of all students.
  - Sent Action Alert to members urging them to contact members of Senate to oppose the expansion of the Cleveland Voucher Program in FY 2000-01 Education Budget.
  - Sent Action Alert to members asking them to contact the Conference Committee on the FY 2000-01 Education Budget to oppose the expansion of the Cleveland Voucher Program.
  - Filed amicus brief in support of plaintiffs in *DeRolph* cases.
- 2000** **123<sup>rd</sup> GA**
- Commented to the Governor on school funding decision in the *DeRolph* case and issued press release with comment.
  - Opposed efforts to maintain appointed members of the State Board of Education (123 – HB 602

and HB 711).

**2001-02**

**124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Issued press release opposing school funding plan in Am. Sub. HB 94
- Testified before House Education Committee supporting provisions in HB 364 that strengthen community schools and opposing provisions that will not improve accountability or responsiveness to the public; the bill was enacted with numerous amendments.
- Testified before and sent letters to House Education Committee supporting HB 446, which calls for the election of all members of the State Board of Education; the bill died in committee.
- Issued Action Alert urging members to contact legislators and oppose HB 364, which does not address LWVO issues of accountability and expansion of community schools; the bill was enacted.

**2003-04**

**125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified before House Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education and the Senate Education Committee supporting funding for primary and secondary education in HB 95, the budget bill.
- Testified before State Board of Education recommending changes in the draft rules for community schools per HB 364.
- Passed Action Resolutions at Convention calling for specific changes to HB 95, the budget bill, to ensure that all students in Ohio are provided a high quality education program that meets their educational needs and to remove funding for vouchers.
- Passed Action Resolutions at Convention calling for the General Assembly to adopt legislation requiring all schools to be accountable to taxpayers.

**2005**

**126<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Issued news release: “Keep the Cap,” news conference remarks re charter schools cap by Scott Britton.
- Passed Action Resolutions at Convention urging the General Assembly to amend HB 66, biennial budget bill, to ensure that all students in Ohio are provided a high quality education program; and to eliminate the Cleveland Scholarship program, the Educational Choice Scholarship Program, and the voucher program for autistic children from HB 66.

- Passed Action Resolution at Convention urging the General Assembly to adopt legislation that supports accountability and responsiveness to taxpayers of community schools in compliance with “Operating Standards for Ohio Schools.”

### **Higher Education**

**2003-04**

**125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Sent letter to Senate Finance Committee supporting funding for higher education in HB 95.

### **Juvenile Justice**

**2000-01**

**123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified for improvements to 123-SB 179, the juvenile justice bill, including alternative schools, competency testing, and a study of racial representation in the juvenile justice system.

**2004**

**125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Contacted State Legislators requesting action on problems brought to light in Fred Cohen’s report to the Juvenile Justice Coalition regarding treatment and safety of residents at DYS facilities
- Sent Letter to Hon. Mike Gilb, Juvenile and Family Law Committee, with recommendation for items to be included in juvenile records laws.
- Sent letter to U.S. Senator DeWine opposing S. 1735, “Gang Prevention,” youths being prosecuted as adults.

### **Capital Punishment**

**2005**

**126<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Issued news release in which LWVO announced opposition to death penalty.
- Participated in coalition press conference opposing death penalty.
- Passed Action Resolution in Convention urging the governor to immediately impose a moratorium on executions in Ohio, and urging the General Assembly to abolish the death penalty.

### **Natural Resources**

#### **Water**

**1997-98**

**122<sup>nd</sup> GA**

- Sent letters supporting water quality planning in the budget bill.
- Wrote to Ohio EPA in support of Great Lakes Water Quality Initiative and opposing proposed anti-degradation rules.
- Provided written comments on a draft modification to an Ohio EPA permit that would tighten the requirements for development that affects Ohio’s streams and wetlands.

# State Level Actions Using State Positions

**2000-01**

**123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Notified local Leagues about revisions to water quality standards and the impact on river basins throughout the state.
- Worked with Great Lakes United to submit letters to the governors and premiers in states and provinces surrounding the Great Lakes and commented to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources regarding Annex 2000 and provisions regarding the interbasin transfer of water.
- Sent letter of support to governor regarding his opposition to drilling in Lake Erie.

**2003**

- Testified on HB 218 to House Energy and Environment Committee opposing actions to endanger Lake Erie. Bill died in Senate committee.

**2004**

**125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Sent letter to Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water, supporting the OEPA Clean Water Act, Section 401 Program for protection of wetlands and streams.
- Testified on HB 411 before the House County and Township Government Committee supporting policies and procedures providing stringent water quality standards.

**2005**

**126<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Passed Action Resolution in Convention urging the General Assembly to support a moratorium on new permits for mega farms in Ohio.

## Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste

**1995-96**

**121<sup>st</sup> GA**

- Testified, wrote letters, issued press release, focused Statehouse Day lobbying efforts, and passed Action Resolution at Convention in favor of SB 19, implementing LLRW. Passed.
- Published second LLRW fact sheet, outlining provisions in SB 19.
- Sent letters, fact sheets to all Ohio county commissioners, with Action Alert to local Leagues, urging commissioners not to sign on to anti-LLRW siting resolution.

**1997-98**

**122<sup>nd</sup> GA**

- Passed Action Resolution at Convention urging the General Assembly, which oversees the LLRW Advisory Board, to make concerted progress on LLRW siting.

**1999-2000**

**123<sup>rd</sup> GA**

- Passed Action Resolution at Convention urging the General Assembly, which oversees the LLRW Advisory Board, to make concerted progress on LLRW siting.
- Attended the final meeting of the Ohio Low-Level Radioactive Waste Facility Development Authority, at which the Midwest LLRW Compact voted not to site a facility in Ohio or any of the com-

pact states.

- Served on the Radiation Advisory Council of the Bureau of Radiation, Ohio Department of Health.
- Participated, while serving on the low level radioactive subcommittee of the Radiation Advisory Council, in assuring that the LWVO Hazardous Materials Positions (adopted June 1981) regarding roles, siting criteria, responsibility, and costs were included in the proposed rules. League members also participated in developing the rules for anticipated privately owned Assured Isolation Facilities within the state.
- Testified in the Cleveland DOE hearing regarding LWVUS and LWVO positions on the transportation of hazardous wastes through the state of Ohio.

**2001-02**

**124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Continued on Radiation Advisory Council and Radioactive Waste Committee.
- Appointed League representative to Radioactive Waste Committee, Ohio Department of Health.

**2003**

**125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Submitted proposed AIF rule to Legislature's Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review for final approval. Work on disposal rule was initiated in Committee.
- Wrote US Senators from Ohio opposing approval of Yucca Mountain radioactive waste disposal site. Site was approved.

## Land Use

**1996-97**

**121<sup>st</sup>/122<sup>nd</sup> GA**

- Testified, sent letters, and issued Action Alert in opposition to "takings" legislation, HB 533 and SB 221. Bills died in committee.

**1998-99**

**122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**

- Followed HB 294, the latest version of "takings" legislation to come before the Ohio Legislature.
- Signed on to a letter with Great Lakes United to Senator DeWine in opposition of federal "takings" legislation, HR 1534.
- Followed farmland preservation bills: HB 645, which provides incentives to encourage farmers to continue farming instead of selling their land for development.
- Followed SB 233, which will allow local governments and nonprofit organizations to acquire conservation easements to preserve agricultural land.
- Supported Urban University Public Policy Forum on land use.
- Sent letters to members of the Senate Finance Committee outlining LWVO's concerns about the FY 2000-01 budget.

## 2000-01 123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA

- Testified against a bill that would have restricted the growth of the Wayne National Forest.
- Joined thirty environmental organizations in support of the Governor’s \$400 million Clean Ohio Fund for urban revitalization, green space and farmland preservation. This ballot initiative was passed by the voters in November 2000.
- Testified against HB 231 re: wetlands mitigation owing to the bill’s lack of public participation and inadequate provisions for wetlands’ preservation and mitigation.
- Advocated for the creation of the Little Darby Wildlife Refuge Area.
- Testified in support of HB 367, which provided incentives to farmers to keep their land as farmland for ten years.
- Participated in informal Ohio Smart Growth network to develop legislative agenda.
- Protested defunding of Office of Farmland Preservation.
- Sent letter to Ohio Department of Natural Resources opposing the use of Site 14 for deposit of dredged materials.

## 2001-02 124<sup>th</sup> GA

- Opposed HB 231, which undermines preservation of wetlands.
- Sent Letter to Senator Voinovich supporting amendment to Energy and Water Appropriations bill to protect Great Lakes from oil and gas drilling.
- Supported SB 212, the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact.
- Signed on to coalition opposing proposed rules that would weaken wetlands protection.
- Participated in the September 2002 meeting and subsequent meetings that laid the groundwork for “Greater Ohio: A Campaign for Ohio’s Cities, Towns and Countryside.”
- Testified before House Energy and Environment Committee endorsing HB 3, the Blueprint for a Clean Ohio Fund, implementing State Issue 1; the bill was enacted.

- Sent letters to Rep. Householder and Sen. Finan protesting elimination of funding for Office of Farmland Preservation from biennial budget; the funding was not restored.
- Testified before House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee supporting HB 367, for preserving agricultural farmland; the bill died in committee.

## 2003-04 125<sup>th</sup> GA

- Sent letters to Speaker of the House and Rep. Wolpert supporting creation of a legislative study committee on growth and economic development issues in the state; the committee was created with Wolpert as chair.
  - Passed Action Resolution at Convention calling on Governor to appoint an Ohio land use leadership council.
  - Testified on HB 414 before the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee in support of urban revitalization and farmland preservation and land use planning. Enacted.
  - Testified on HB 414 in Senate Agriculture Committee in support of urban revitalization and farmland preservation. Enacted.
  - Testified on SB 206 before the Senate Finance and Financial Institutions Committee supporting new and existing enterprise zone program creation for Ohio.
  - Sent letter to Representative Larry Wolpert requesting inclusion in activities of Subcommittee on Growth and Land Use and restating LWVO land use positions
  - Testified on SB115 before the House County and Township government committee supporting changing definitions of subdivisions in platting law. Enacted.
  - Testified on SB 115 before the Senate State and Local Government supporting changing definitions of subdivisions in platting law. Enacted.

## 2005 126<sup>th</sup> GA

- Sent letter to Governor Bob Taft requesting veto of SB 18 from 125<sup>th</sup> session because of last-minute amendment deleting zoning powers. Bill became law without signature.

## State-Level Action Using National Positions

This section lists action taken by LWVO based on the positions of the League of Women Voters of the United States. Positions under which LWVO has taken state action are listed below.

### **Representative Government**

#### Voting Rights

**1995-96** **121<sup>st</sup> GA**

- Monitored implementation of Motor Voter.
- Testified in opposition to bills to close polls early, SB 13 and HB 100.
- Testified with the League's concerns about HB 215, 17-year-old poll worker bill.
- Testified in favor of SB 80, voting by mail, with suggestions for improvements.
- Sent letters to conference committee, House and Senate leadership, Governor, and Secretary of State opposing an amendment to HB 99, elections, that would have eliminated a stub from a written ballot. Bill as passed modified section LWVO opposed.
- Quoted extensively in *Plain Dealer* article about early poll closing bills.
- Wrote to Secretary of State, as he was attending the National Association of Secretaries of State Conference, urging that the Secretaries of State not consider substantive amendments to NVRA until the law was fully implemented.
- Developed materials for local Leagues to use to investigate local progress of NVRA legislation.
- Launched major media campaign highlighting agencies doing well (Democracy In Action) and poorly (Democracy Inaction) at implementing NVRA.
- Testified against early poll closing bills, SB 13 and HB 100. Bills died.
- Testified in favor of HB 215, allowing 17-year-old registered voters to work the polls. Signed by the Governor 7/96.

**1997-99** **122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**

- Participated in a town meeting on voting by mail absentee ballots broadcasted on Ohio News Network.

**2003-04** **125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified before the Secretary of State's implementation commission for the Help America Vote Act outlining approach to implementation of new federal voting law and grant to state.
- Passed Action Resolution at Convention asking Secretary of State to develop a voter guide for every voting household in the state, draft legislation defining "valid vote," and require that new voting machines permit a fair vote count.

- Issued press release celebrating 83<sup>rd</sup> anniversary granting women right to vote.

**2005** **125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Passed Action Resolutions at Convention asking Ohio Senate members to amend Sub. HB 3 to expedite voter registration, to count provisional ballots for statewide and countywide candidates and issues that are cast in the correct county, and to mandate adequate funding, materials, and training for all board of elections staff and poll workers.

#### Election Process

**1995-96** **121<sup>st</sup> GA**

- Testified, met with Secretary of State and legislators to improve the various campaign finance reform bills introduced. SB 8 passed.
- Testified in favor of HB 658, which would prohibit elected officials of political subdivisions soliciting contributions from employees. Died in committee.
- Testified in support and recommended improvements for HB 637, absentee ballot procedures. Died in committee.

**1997** **122<sup>nd</sup> GA**

- Passed Action Resolution at Convention urging Secretary of State to provide the computer programs mandated in SB 8 so that citizens and the media can make use of disclosure of campaign finance reports.
- Testified on SB 116, campaign finance reform.

**1998-99** **122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**

- Created state committees priorities and action plan for Campaign Finance Reform.
- Supported 122-HB 846 which would mandate electronic filing of campaign finance reports.
- Held campaign finance reform forums around the state.
- Cosponsored campaign finance reform conference with Ohio Citizen Action in Columbus.
- Supported HB 119 for mandatory electronic filing of campaign finance reports by sending Action Alerts to League members; testifying before the General Assembly, sending letters to members of the General Assembly and to editors of newspapers throughout the state.
- Formed statewide coalition for Campaign Finance Reform.

**2000-01** **123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified against Internet voting (123-HB 651).
- Attended ballot board hearings and followed up with comments on procedures.
- Testified against 123-SB 196, no-excuse absentee voting.

- Issued op-ed piece on campaign finance reform as key election issue.
- Sponsored post-election forum.
- Testified at Secretary of State's Election Summit.
- Helped draft and testified on HB 5, an elections administration clean-up bill.

## 2001-02

## 124<sup>th</sup> GA

- Issued press release describing results of pilot survey on polling place procedures showing voters were generally satisfied.
- Issued press release withdrawing support for HB 445 because of amendment abolishing mandatory filing of campaign finance reports; the bill was enacted.
- Sent letter to Senate Conference Committee on Am. Sub. HB 94 opposing deletion of \$50 state income tax credit for small contributors to statewide candidates; the credit was restored.
- Testified before House State Government Committee supporting HB 201, providing for greater disclosure of campaign contributions in Supreme Court races; the bill died in committee.
- Issued press release calling for disclosure of contributors to Citizens for a Strong Ohio (negative Supreme Court ads).
- Issued press release and submitted letter to the editor decrying provisions in SB 291 and HB 632 which would legitimize corporate contributions to candidate campaigns; also sent letter to sponsoring Sen. Randy Gardner outlining objections and suggesting improvements. The bill died at end of session.

## 2003-04

## 125<sup>th</sup> GA

- Testified before House State Government Committee supporting moving presidential primary to May in HB 90; the bill passed the House but died in Senate committee.
- Passed Action Resolution at Convention asking legislators to reject attempts to remove limits on corporate contributions and to require full disclosure of campaign contributions.
- Issued press release questioning attempt to sneak election provisions that had no fiscal impact into HB 95, biennial budget bill.
- Sent letter to Governor Taft requesting line-item veto of election-related amendment in HB 95, biennial budget bill.
- Sent news release on campaign finance reform with citizen groups supporting improvements in SB214 to conform to Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act.
- Testified on HB 262 before the House State Government Committee supporting HB 262, expect to pay public employees regular pay and poll pay.
- Sent letter to Controlling Board encouraging Controlling Board not to release HAVA funds until

consensus reached. Controlling Board delayed funding.

- Sent letter to Controlling Board President urging consideration and swift action on recommendations on voting security/systems. Controlling Board released funds.
- Testified on HB 262 before the Senate State and Local Government, supporting reasonable compromise on voting security, access and systems. Passed and signed by Governor
- Testified on SB 214 before the Senate State and Local Government and Veterans Affairs Committee addressing concerns regarding wording of the bill on Electioneering Communications. Passed in Senate, referred to House Committee; replaced by substitute bill in special session.
- Sent out news release: "Let's get it right this time" re campaign finance reform in SB 214.
- Issued public comment on Voter-Verified Paper audit trails before Sec. of State Kenneth Blackwell encouraging fair and open elections and reforms to achieve this outcome.
- Issued news release calling for clear election guidelines from Secretary of State.
- Sent out news release: "5 things Ohioans need to know on election day."
- Issued ActionAlert re letter to editor campaign opposing Sec of State Blackwell's directives on provisional ballots.
- Joined coalition suit against Sec of State re provisional ballots; issued news release. Favorable decision overruled on appeal.
- Sent news release in praise for voter turnout – patience despite inadequate election preparations.
- Issued Action Alert on SB 214 urging contact with state representatives to vote against campaign finance "reform".
- Sent out news release calling for defeat of campaign finance bill.
- Sent news release calling for committee to disclose the Disclosure Bill.
- Issued Action Alert on SB 1/HB 1, Special Session Campaign Finance Reform Urging contact with senators/representatives to vote against special session bill. Bill passed and became law.
- Testified on HB1 House State Government Committee urging rejection of flawed campaign finance reform bill and enactment of a disclosure-only bill. Bill passed and became law.

## 2005

## 126<sup>th</sup> GA

- Testified on SB36, Senate Rules Committee, opposing the requirement of all voters to show ID before being permitted to cast their vote.
- Testified on SB3, Senate Rules Committee, in opposition to sections of bill requiring ID to vote, and in reference to establishment of statewide voter database, optical scans and non-automated

recount to be paid for by requestor.

- Sent out news release: LWVO unveils critical Election Reform 10 Pt Plan.
- Testified on HB 3, House Ethics and Elections Committee, in opposition to sections of bill requiring ID to vote, and in reference to establishment of statewide voter database, optical scans and non-automated recount to be paid for by requestor. Passed House, referred to Senate committee.
- Sent letter to Ohio Congressman Robert Ney, requesting his sign-on to requested funding for 2006 election voter education project.
- Testified on SB 77, Senate State and local Government & Veterans Affairs Committee opposing the postponement of the requirement for a voter-verified paper audit trail until it is technologically and economically feasible.
- Testified on SB119, Senate State and local Government & Veterans Affairs Committee supporting campaign finance reform prohibition against contributions by classified employees of office-holders. Amended and reported out.
- Issued “FYI” on optical scan noting Sec of State Blackwell’s change of position on voting machines.
- Sent News release summarizing Election Reform Bill, Sub. HB 3.

## Citizen Rights

1995-96

121<sup>st</sup> GA

- Produced an LWVO Fact Sheet on the D&X abortion procedure, distributed to all legislators
- Testified, wrote letters, issued Action Alert, wrote letter to editor, passed Action Resolution at Convention in opposition to HB 135, outlawing D&X abortion procedure. Included copy of Fact Sheet. Bill passed, making Ohio first state to outlaw a specific abortion procedure.
- Testified in favor of HJR 18, which would have vacancies in the General Election filled through an election by the people in that district, rather than appointed by the party. Died in committee.
- Filed an amicus brief supporting the case of Liz White, who sued the Clinton County Commissioners to keep complete and detailed minutes. The Ohio Supreme Court ruled in her favor.
- Testified against HB 670, eliminating many state-level citizen advisory boards and commissions. The Governor signed the bill 12/96.
- Helped staff Freedom of Choice Ohio booth at Ohio State Fair.

1997

122<sup>nd</sup> GA

- Helped staff Freedom of Choice Ohio booth at Ohio State Fair.
- Testified and sent Action Resolution at Convention in opposition to bills restricting access to abortions, HB 395 and HB 421.

1998-99

122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA

- Followed SB 184, clarifying that public records will be mailed. This is in response to an Ohio Supreme Court ruling that said that records don’t have to be mailed, the person who wants them can be required to show up in person. The bill also permits the records to be made accessible on electronic media, if that is the method used to store the records.
- Sent letter to members of the Conference Committee on Sub HB 283, the budget bill, urging them to delete the amendment that exempts the Legislative Service Commission from the public records law.
- Cosponsored a rally at the Ohio Statehouse commemorating the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*.
- Testified before the Ohio House and Senate against HB 395, which would deny all state employees health insurance that includes abortion coverage.
- Testified HB 421, which would mandate an additional face-to-face meeting between a woman and a physician at least 24 hours prior to having an abortion and change Ohio’s existing law from parental notification to parental consent.
- Attended press conference opposing HJR 21, which would eliminate affirmative action in Ohio.
- Staffed the FOCO (Freedom of Choice Ohio) booth at the Ohio State Fair.
- Cosponsored a one-day event at the Ohio Statehouse commemorating the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*.
- Sent letters to members of the Senate Judiciary Committee in support of SR 77, which formally condemns acts of violence against reproductive health clinics and their personnel.
- Sent letters to members of the Ohio House and an Action Alert to LWVO members urging opposition to HB 351, a partial birth infanticide bill.
- Sent letters to members of the House Criminal Justice Committee in support of HR 50, which formally condemns acts of violence against reproductive health clinics and their personnel.

2001-02

124<sup>th</sup> GA

- Sent letter to Senate Conference Committee on Am. Sub. HB 94 opposing “secrecy amendment” added to biennial budget; the amendment was dropped.
- Testified before House State Government Committee supporting HB 445, which would require the ballot board to prepare pro and con arguments on state ballot issues; the bill was enacted.

2003-04

125<sup>th</sup> GA

- Issued press release commemorating anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*.
- Testified before House State Government Committee supporting HJR 4, ratification of the 14<sup>th</sup>

amendment to the U.S. Constitution (belatedly); the bill passed.

- Issued press release urging clarification of proposed ballot language on video slot machines included in HB 95.
- Issued press release opposing HB 145, which was amended to the budget bill and would prohibit a state government agency from providing information on government Web sites if there are two or more competing private enterprises providing the same information or services; a substitute bill offered by the Senate removed this amendment.
- Issued action alert encouraging members to request restoration of funding for comprehensive family planning programs in HB 95.
- Testified before House Homeland Security, Engineering and Architectural Design Committee opposing a provision in SB 6, a bioterrorism bill, that would allow the state health department to keep secret public health threats.
- Testified before the Senate Finance Committee on Sub. HB 6, opposing provisions to remove public domain health information. Enacted.
- Testified before House Health and Family Services Comm. requesting a No Vote on HB 68, which would allow Pharmacists to refuse to fill Rx's for contraceptives (conscience clause). Died in committee.
- Issued remarks of Terry McCoy, President, LWVO at the Alliance for Contraceptive Equity News Conference re SB 194. Bill never referred to a committee.
- Sent letter to Gov. Taft opposing passage of HB 272, which declared same-sex marriages were against public policy and denying extension of benefits to nonmarital relationships, urging governor not to sign. Signed by governor.

## 2005 126<sup>th</sup> GA

- Testified on HB9 before the House Civil and Commercial Law Committees supporting making public records available to the public.
- Testified before Senate Committee on Judiciary—Criminal opposing SB 9 anti-terrorism policies.

## Natural Resources

### Environmental Protection and Pollution

#### Control

## 1996 121<sup>st</sup> GA

- Testified, sent letters, and issued Action Alert in opposition to “takings” legislation, HB 533 and SB 221. Bills died in committee.

## 1998-1999 122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA

- Endorsed the Clean Air Proposal as put forth by

the Ohio Environmental Council.

## 2001-02 124<sup>th</sup> GA

- Testified before House Energy and Environment Committee opposing HB 231, which would undermine preservation of wetlands; the bill was enacted.
- Sent letter to Governor Taft thanking him for not supporting drilling for oil and gas under Lake Erie.

## 2003-04 125<sup>th</sup> GA

- Signed on to coalition letter to Governor urging the refund of all monies removed from the ratepayer-funded Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund.
- Sent letter to Energy Policy Committee outlining LWVO's position on a state energy policy.
- Passed Action Resolution at Convention calling on Gov. Taft, the Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the Ohio General Assembly to act to protect the Dike 14 area on Lake Erie.
- Sent letter to Gov. Taft urging veto of HB 179, gas theft, which, without public testimony, extended environmental audit privilege. Signed by governor.
- Sent letter to Director of OEPA, addressing concerns about the potential exemption of small business from regulation and the level of pollution emissions by these and other companies.

## Social Policy

### Equality of Opportunity

## 1996 121<sup>st</sup> GA

- Testified against HB 492, to ban restrictions based on race, sex, religion, etc. in clubs not distinctly private. Bill died in committee.
- Testified and took part in press conference opposing HB 509, limiting number of persons allowed in rental housing to two persons per bedroom. Died in committee.

## 1998-99 122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA

- Spoke at a press conference in support of pay equity legislation, HB 316
- Passed Action Resolution in support of pay equity legislation.
- Testified in support of HB 316, pay equity legislation.

## 2000-01 123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA

- Passed a resolution and sent copies to Ohio Senators urging them to restore the Women's Commission's line item funding of \$250,000 in the state budget.

**2003-2004**

**125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified before the House Juvenile and Family Law Committee opposing HB 272, which bans access to health care for same sex couples. Enacted.
- Sent letter to Chair of Senate Finance committee opposing HB 272 denying health care to same-sex couples. Enacted.
- Sent letter to Governor Taft, urging veto of HB 272.
- Issued news release in opposition to Issue 1 – definition of marriage.
- Testified before Senate Finance Committee supporting SB 206, which would provide state support for new and existing job programs.
- Testified before House Finance and Appropriations Committee supporting HB 427, which would provide state support for new and existing job programs.

## Fiscal Policy

**1995**

**121<sup>st</sup> GA**

- Testified before the Ohio House State Government Committee in opposition to HJR 3, asking Congress to pass a balanced budget amendment.

## Health Care

**1997-99**

**122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**

- Wrote to Governor, urging him to fully implement the new federal State Child Health Insurance Program by building on the current Medicaid program.
- Sent letters to members of the House Health Retirement and Aging Committee and Senate Health, Human Services and Aging Committee in support of expanded health care consumer protection as outlined in HB 4, SB 5, HB 52 and HB 53,
- Supported the Ohio Child Health Coalition.
- Sent letters to members of Human Services Subcommittee of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee urging them to expand Medicaid to include uninsured, low-income, working parents with incomes under 150 percent of the federal poverty level.
- Passed Action Resolutions in support of the Ohio Patient Bill of Rights and the expansion of Medicaid coverage for working parents at 150 percent of Poverty.
- Testified before the House Health, Retirement and Aging Committee in opposition to the amended version of HB 4, the Patient Bill of Rights.
- Testified before the Senate Health, Retirement and Aging Committee in opposition to the amended version of HB 4, the Patient Bill of Rights.

**2000-01**

**123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Issued press release regarding LWVO's Health Care Project.
- Testified in support of the Ohio bill, HB 248, to establish uniform licensing and procedures for lead abatement.
- Represented LWVO on board of HELP (Help End Lead Poisoning).
- Worked with the Kids and Families Coalition in Ohio to increase the number of children and families enrolled in Healthy Start and Healthy families.

**2001-02**

**124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Sent letters to House Health and Family Services Committee supporting HB 248, to establish uniform licensing and procedures for lead abatement; the bill was enacted.
- Sent letter to foundation supporting goals of coalition, Help End Lead Poisoning (HELP).
- Participated in press conference launching the Alliance for Contraceptive Equity to promote coverage of prescription contraceptives by insurance companies; legislation died at end of session but will be reintroduced.

**2003-04**

**125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Passed Action Resolution at Convention urging legislators to restore support for family health care coverage at 100% of poverty; cuts were restored.
- Testified before Senate Finance Committee supporting health and human services funding in HB 95, biennial budget bill.
- Sent letter to Senate Finance Chair with thanks for restoring funding for health and human services.
- Testified before Senate Health, Human Services and Aging Committee and passed Action Resolution at Convention supporting SB 14, the Ohio Prescription Drug Fair Pricing Act. Through a landmark agreement between the pharmaceutical industry and a coalition including LWVO, a settlement on this matter was reached; new legislation was enacted.
- Testified before House Homeland Security Committee and before the Senate Finance Committee opposing SB 6, requiring public health risks to be kept secret. A companion bill, HB 6, was enacted.
- Testified before House Civil and Commercial Law Committee and issued Action Alert opposing SB 86, that would create a two-tiered system of health care. Enacted.

**2005**

**126<sup>h</sup> GA**

- Testified before House Finance and Appropriations Committee on HB 66, opposing cuts to human services programs, Medicaid and Disability Medical Assistance in budget bill.
- Issued Action Alert protesting governor’s elimination of Disability Medical Assistance in state budget.
- Issued Action Alert urging the House to protest cuts to health care in biennial budget bill.
- Passed Action Resolutions at Convention urging the Senate to appropriate adequate funds to maintain the PASSPORT program for all eligible, frail older adults, to restore Medicaid eligibility for working parents to 100% of poverty; and to fully fund the Disability Medical Assistance program for low-income adults ineligible for Medicaid.

**Meeting Basic Human Needs**

**1995-96**

**121<sup>st</sup> GA**

- Testified, sent letters, focused Statehouse Day lobbying effort, Action Alert in Voter on HB 117 (budget) and HB 167, addressing welfare reform proposals. Bills passed without time limits, caps on family size, and with moderate fill-the-gap provisions.
- Testified in opposition to HB 172, welfare reform with family caps and two year limit.
- Sent letters, focused Statehouse Day lobbying urging inclusion of real estate recordation fees as funding source of Housing Trust Fund in the budget (HB 117).
- Passed Action Resolution at Convention, worked in coalition urging use of real estate recordation fee as a funding source for the Housing Trust Fund.
- Testified before House and Senate on Ohio’s version of welfare reform, in HB 167 and the budget bill. Both passed. Although LWVO didn’t support all provisions, especially a three-year limit, were successful in getting a modified “fill the gap” policy and no cap on family size.
- Sent letter to Director of Department of Human Services urging that time spent in basic or remedial education, vocational education, skills training, and similar activities count toward required work under welfare reform rules.

**1997-99**

**122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**

- Sent letters, Action Resolution at Convention urging that County Human Services Planning Committees to implement welfare reform are broadly representative of the community.
- Sent letters, Action Resolution at Convention opposing strict time limits in welfare reform implementation bill, HB 408.

- Sent Action Alerts to local Leagues, encouraging them to attend regional welfare reform hearings.
- Took part in press conference about concerns with HB 408, welfare reform implementation bill. Signed by Governor, 2/97.
- Testified, sent letters, issued Action Alert, and lobbied at Statehouse Day for funding for the Housing Trust Fund in the budget. Although GRF funds were allocated, real estate recordation fees were not.
- Sent “Welfare Reform is Local” implementation action kit to local Leagues.
- Wrote to Ohio’s Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review, urging them not to write rules that would cut food stamps as sanctions under new welfare reform program.
- Sent Action Resolution at Convention opposing strict time limits in welfare reform implementation bill, which is HB 408
- Sent letters, Action Resolution at Convention urging that the County Human Services Planning Committees appointed to implement welfare reform are broadly representative of the community.
- Sent “Welfare Reform is Local” implementation action kit to local Leagues.
- Wrote to Ohio’s Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review, urging them not to write rules that would cut foods stamps as sanctions under new welfare reform program.
- Sent a letter to Governor Voinovich urging that efforts to correct education funding do not end upon cutting programs that affect facilities and children, especially those, like children protective services, MR/DD, and Medicaid, that helps every child come to school ready to learn.
- Participated in a Have a Heart Ohio press conference to announce results of a baseline study by Tufts University about states’ implementation of the new federal welfare reform bill. The study found that only 12 states have adopted policies that are likely to improve the financial conditions of the poor, Ohio ranks near the bottom, one of the 14 lowest scores.
- Sent letter to Governor Voinovich urging him to reconsider the decision to not accept the \$88 million in the Welfare to Work grant from the federal government.
- Testified before the Income Tax Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee in Support of HB 10 which would grant a refundable state earned income tax credit equal to 15 percent of the federal earned income tax credit.
- Sent letters to members of the Finance and Appropriations Committee outlining LWVO’s social policy priorities: income assistance and support services.

# State Level Actions Using National Positions

- Testified before the Welfare Oversight Council concerning the implementation of Ohio Works First (OWF) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) in Ohio.
  - Sent Action Alert to local Leagues regarding the Welfare Oversight Council Hearings around the state.
  - Sent a letter to the Director of the Ohio Department of Development urging him to reconsider a proposal that would drastically change the use of the Housing Volume Cap allocation.
  - Sent letters to members of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee urging them to increase funding for the Housing Trust Fund.
  - Passed Action Resolutions regarding: increased funding for the Housing Trust Fund, Earned Income Tax Credit, and earnings disregard.
  - Sent letters to members of the Senate Finance Committee outlining LWVO's concerns about the FY 2000-01 budget.
  - Sent letters to Conference Committee outlining LWVO's concerns about the FY 2000-01 budget.
- 2000-01** **123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Sent letter to Governor urging full funding of the Housing Trust Fund in proposed budget.
  - Sent letter to House Finance and Appropriations committee urging rejection of crippling amendments to Housing Trust Fund enabling legislation, supporting additional funding for the Trust Fund, and encouraging the use of TANF funds for a pilot transitional housing subsidy. Amendments were dropped.
  - Passed Action Resolution supporting using \$20 million of TANF reserves for a pilot rental assistance program for low-income families.
  - Sent comments on Workforce Investment Act Plan. Concerns included citizen participation, appropriate training for participants (especially "non-traditional") and accountability.
  - Sent letter to Governor Taft, Senator Finance, Speaker Davidson, and Director Romer-Sensky urging support for the pilot housing subsidy program, using TANF funds.
  - Sent letter to Governor Taft urging reprogramming surplus TANF dollars to assist Ohio families in becoming self-sufficient and stable.
  - Presented testimony to Human Services Subcommittee of House Finance and Appropriations Committee, urging leadership and support for creation of an Ohio Earned Income Tax Credit, and for restoration of proposed cuts in Adult Emergency Assistance Program.
  - Passed resolution at Convention addressed to members of the Senate, urging restoration of the funding level for Adult Emergency Assistance Program.
- Issued press release opposing cuts in the state budget to state agencies providing basic human services.
  - Joined Coalition for Responsible Lending to fight predatory lending and endorsed the Coalition's Principles for Responsible Lending.
  - Issued press release protesting HB 386's preemption of municipalities' authority to enact anti-predatory lending legislation while state action would be studied for two years.
  - Sent Action Alert to local Leagues to encourage Senate to defeat HB 386.
- 2001-02** **124<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Sent letters to Senate on Am. Sub. HB 94, supporting adequate funding for social and health programs in biennial budget; although most items received cuts, there were moderate inroads.
  - Issued press release expressing surprise at House passage of HB 386, blocking city action to curb predatory lending.
  - Testified before Senate Finance and Financial Institutions Committee and issued an Action Alert urging members to contact the Senate to oppose HB 386.
  - Issued a press release opposing Senate passage of HB 386, but the measure passed.
  - Issued an Action Alert urging members to request that the House reject Am. Sub. HB 386, and that the Governor veto the bill if passed; the bill was enacted but a study committee was appointed.
  - Issued press release deploring state budget cuts to human services.
  - Testified before Senate Ways and Means Committee supporting SB 113, for a refundable state earned income tax credit; the bill died in committee.
  - Testified before Senate Highways and Transportation Committee supporting SB 212, the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact; the bill was enacted.
  - Testified before Predatory Lending Study Committee supporting the need for comprehensive legislation to control predatory lending; committee recommended only modest reforms.
  - Submitted letter to editor showing that affordable housing is out of reach for many Ohioans.
  - Testified before Affordable Housing Task Force supporting strong consumer protection against predatory lending; final recommendations supported homebuyer education programs.
- 2003-04** **125<sup>th</sup> GA**
- Participated in coalition press conference and passed Action Resolution at Convention promoting a permanent, dedicated source of funding for Housing Trust Fund; the budget included this landmark provision.

- Passed Action Resolution at Convention urging the Predatory Lending Study Committee to include mortgage lenders in the Consumer Sales Practices Act; not included in report.

### **Early Intervention for Children at Risk**

**1995-96** **121<sup>st</sup> GA**

- Testified, wrote letters, focused Statehouse Day lobbying efforts on budget bill line items focused on children at risk, including Head Start.
- Cosponsored a series of statewide educational forums with the Children’s Defense Fund on budget issues called “Making Change Work for Children.”
- Testified in favor of HB 274, changing laws regarding child abuse intervention. Signed by the Governor 5/96.
- Represented by Marge Trumbull on the lead abatement committee established by the legislature.
- Cosponsored statewide educational forums with the Children’s Defense Fund called “Act for Children,” focused on helping Ohioans become better advocates for children.

**1997** **122<sup>nd</sup> GA**

- Cosponsored statewide educational forums with the Children’s Defense Fund called “Act for Children,” focused on helping Ohioans become better advocates for children.
- Sent letters urging support of child care funding in budget.
- Wrote to Governor, urging him to fully implement the new Federal State Child Health Insurance Program by building on the current Medicaid program.

**1998-99** **122<sup>nd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Sponsored a statewide educational forum with the Children’s Defense Fund called “Act for Children,” which focused on helping Ohioans become better advocates for children.
- Sent letters urging support of child care funding in budget.
- Wrote to Governor, urging him to fully implement the new Federal State Child Health Insurance Program by building on the current Medicaid program.
- Signed onto a letter to support the state Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) with the Children’s Defense Fund and more than 30 other organizations. The letter states that Ohio should cover all children up to 200 percent of poverty, as allowed by federal law.

### **Violence Prevention**

**2005** **126<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified on SB9 before the Senate Comm. on Judiciary-Criminal opposing SB9 anti terrorism policies. Passed Senate and “informally passed” House.

### **Gun Control**

**1998-99** **122<sup>nd</sup>/123<sup>rd</sup> GA**

- Supported HB 574, requiring trigger locks in handguns for the protection of children, and HB 560, requiring a background check on people looking to purchase weapons.
- Sent letters to members of the House Criminal Justice Committee in support of HB 46 which would require that firearms be sold with a trigger lock as an accessory or that the trigger lock is an integral part of the weapon.
- Passed Action Resolution to the General Assembly outlining LWVO’s gun control position.

**2000-01** **123<sup>rd</sup>/124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Passed resolution opposing any bill permitting concealed carry.
- Joined the Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence.
- Testified against and issued press release and Action Alert to all local Leagues opposing HB 274, which permits concealed carry.

**2001-02** **124<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified before House Civil and Commercial Law Committee opposing HB 274, which would allow citizens to carry concealed weapons; the bill passed both the House and Senate but did not go to conference committee.
- Issued Action Alert encouraging members to oppose passage of HB 274 by House Civil and Commercial Law Committee; the bill passed committee.
- Testified before House Civil and Commercial Law Committee opposing HB 303, preempting local governments from local gun control; the bill died in committee.

**2003-04** **125<sup>th</sup> GA**

- Testified before House Criminal Justice Committee and Senate Criminal Justice Committee opposing HB 12, carrying of concealed weapons.
- Issued a total of four action alerts to members, re the topics of concealed weapons and assault weapons ban renewal.
- Passed an Action Resolution at Convention, and participated in a coalition news conference on HB 12. Enacted
- Press conference opposing HB12, concealed/carry legislation. Enacted
- Issued “FYI” on Million Mom March alerting members to Mother’s Day march and goal to renew Assault Weapons Ban.
- Participated in Ohio Coalition against Gun Violence Press Conference opposing S659, giving gun manufacturers immunity from consumer safety protections
- Sent letter to the Columbus Dispatch supporting renewal of Federal Assault Weapons Ban.

## Action Using League Principles

2005

- Passed Action Resolution at Convention urging the General Assembly to reject any and all attempts to impose state control over the free exchange of ideas in the classroom.
- Sent letters to Ohio Senate President Bill Harris and Speaker of the House Jon Husted urging careful consideration of substituting bills and passing them as emergency legislation, as on SB115, election petitions, without hearing.

## Federal Action Using State and National Positions

This section lists action taken at the federal level based on the positions of LWV of the United States.

## **Representative Government**

### Election Process

1998-99

- Sent letters to the Congressional delegation regarding Shays-Meehan and McCain-Feingold for campaign finance reform legislation.

2001

- Sent letter to U.S. Sen. DeWine supporting S.379, the Federal Election Modernization Act.
- Sent letters to U.S. Representatives re discharge petition on campaign finance reform supporting signing of discharge petition to bring Shays-Meehan bill to floor for discussion

2003-2004

- Sent letter to US Rep. Ralph Regula urging support for National Student/Parent Mock Election
- Sent letter to US Senators Voinovich and DeWine urging full funding of HAVA
- Sent thank you letter to Peter Levitas, office of Senator Mike DeWine, for meeting regarding the Presidential Funding Act and encouraging a yes vote.

### Citizen Rights

1996

- Wrote to Ohio delegation to Congress in opposition to "Istook Amendment" that would ban lobbying by non-profit organizations.

1998-99

- Followed court decision: the U.S. Supreme Court took that will stop Ohio's ban on D&X (dilation and extraction) abortion procedures from going into effect. The Supreme Court allowed the decision of the circuit court to stand, and Ohio's law cannot be enforced.

2003

- Passed Action Resolution at Convention urging the Congressional delegation to repeal portions of the USA PATRIOT Act that limit or violate fundamental rights and liberties.
- Press release endorsing S1497, Free Airtime Bill before election in Congress. No Action.
- Sent letters to editors for Dayton, Akron, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Toledo papers supporting national legislation, Our Democracy, Our Airwaves Act, providing free airtime to candidates for federal office. No Action.

2004

- Sent letter to Senator Voinovich thanking him for a meeting regarding the SAFE Act S1709, a bill to amend the Patriot Act.
- Sent letter to Robert Steinbuch, office of Senator Mike DeWine, thanking him for a meeting and Prue regarding the SAFE Act S1709, a bill to amend the Patriot Act.

## **International Relations**

### United Nations

2002

- Submitted letter to editor urging U.N. cooperation on Iraq conflict (published in *Toledo Blade*).

### Military Policy and Defense Spending

1998-1999

- Sent letters to Congress in support of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.
- Sent Action Resolution to Congress in support of the United Nations Convention for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
- Sent letters to Congress in support of paying of the U.S. arrears to the United Nations.

## **Natural Resources**

### Environmental Protection and Pollution

#### Control

1996

- Signed on to a letter written by National Audubon Society to U.S. Sen. DeWine opposing S.605, "takings."

1998-1999

- Sent letter to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in support of the Tier 2 proposal which would tighten emissions standards for the mobile sources and lower the level of sulfur in gasoline.

## 2001

- Sent letter to U.S. Sen. Voinovich supporting amendment to Energy and Water Appropriations bill to protect Great Lakes from oil and gas drilling.

## 2002

- Signed on to ad thanking Sen. DeWine for opposing oil drilling in Arctic refuge.
- Sent letter to U.S. Senators Voinovich and DeWine protesting selection of Yucca Mountain site for nuclear waste depository. The site was selected anyway.
- Signed on to coalition letter to Environmental Protection Agency opposing proposed rules that would weaken wetlands protection.

## 2004

- Sent letter to U.S. Senators Voinovich and DeWine urging them to block energy bill.

## Social Policy

### Fiscal Policy

#### 1995

- Wrote to U.S. senators and representatives in opposition to federal balanced budget amendment.

#### 2005

- Sent letter of thanks to Senator Mike DeWine for helping to defeat US Senate budget resolution calling for major cuts in Medicaid.

### Health Care

#### 1998-99

- Sent letter to Sen. DeWine urging him to support S.1890, the Patients' Bill of Rights Act of 1998. Sent similar letters to Reps. Regula and Ney in support of its companion bill, H.R.3605.
- Sent letters to Ohio's Congressional delegation asking them to vote in favor of the Patients' Bill of Rights, S.6 and H.R.358 respectively.
- Sent letters to Ohio's Congressional delegation urging them to support H.R.2723, the Bipartisan Managed Care Improvement Act.

#### 2000-01

- Sent letters of support for S.283, the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act, and H.R.2563, a similar House bill.

#### 2001

- Sent letter to U.S. Sen. DeWine supporting S.283, Bipartisan Patient Protection Act.
- Sent letters to U.S. representatives re patient protection, supporting H.R.2563, for basic health care protections for patients and opposing H.R.2315, the Patients' Bill of Rights; did not pass.

### Meeting Basic Human Needs

#### 1996

- Thanked U.S. Sens. Glenn and DeWine for voting against the family-size cap in national welfare reform.

#### 2000-01

- Joined with Midwest Partners to support TANF reauthorization.
- Sent comments regarding TANF Reauthorization to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Prepared a packet of materials about TANF for local League use in study prior to responses to Action Alert for TANF Reauthorization

#### 2004

- Action Alert urging members to contact U.S. Representatives to save Section 8 housing vouchers.

### Gun Control

#### 1995

- Lobbied congressional delegation not to introduce a bill overturning the ban on assault weapons.

#### 1998-99

- Sent letters to the Ohio delegation strongly urging their support for the reasonable gun safety provisions adopted by the U.S. Senate.

#### 2003

- Sent letters to U.S. Senators Voinovich and DeWine opposing S.659, which would grant special immunity to gun manufacturers and sellers; also sent action alert to members asking them to contact the senators.

#### 2004

- Action Alert urging members to contact U.S. representatives regarding the Assault Weapons Ban Reauthorization. Ban allowed to sunset.
- Action Alert urging members to contact U.S. Senators to oppose S. 659, S. 1805 and S. 1806.
- Sent Letter to Columbus Dispatch supporting renewal of Assault Weapons Ban.

#### 2005

- Sent letter to Senator Voinovich opposing S397, Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act.

### Juvenile Justice (State)

#### 2004

- Sent letter to U.S. Sen. DeWine opposing S. 1735, "Gang Prevention;" youths being prosecuted as adults.
- Action Alert encouraging members to contact Senator DeWine and Representative Regula to

## State Ballot Issues

The League of Women Voters of Ohio votes to support, oppose, or take no position on each statewide ballot issue. Decisions to support or oppose ballot issues require a two-thirds vote of the board of directors. The following chart details the history of Ohio ballot issues since 1990, using the following key:

- **LWVO Stand:** Indicates whether LWVO supported, opposed, or took no position on the issue; asterisk (\*) indicates a major LWVO campaign
- **Position:** The state or national position on which LWVO's support or opposition was based
- **Source:** The measure was placed on the ballot by **IP**=Initiative Petition; **GA**=General Assembly; **RF**=Referendum (or citizens' veto); **CR**=Constitution requires placement on the ballot every 20 years
- **Result:** Indicates whether the measure passed or failed

# State Ballot Issues

Issue	LWVO Stand	Position	Source	Result
<b>1990 General Election (3 issues)</b>				
• Constitutional amendment to make housing a public purpose in Ohio Human Needs	Supported*	LWVUS: Meeting Basic	GA	Passed
• Extend Homestead exemptions to eligible surviving spouses	Supported	State Government Finance	GA	Passed
• Casino gambling pilot project in Lorain	No Position		IP	Failed
<b>1992 General Election (5 issues)</b>				
• Hold a Constitutional Convention	No Position		CR	Failed
• Constitutional amendment mandating term limits for Ohio members of U.S. Congress	Opposed*	LWVUS position on balance of powers	IP	Passed
• Constitutional amendment mandating term limits for members of the Ohio General Assembly	Opposed*	Ohio Constitution: Term Limits	IP	Passed
• Constitutional amendment mandating term limits for Ohio statewide executive offices	No Position		IP	Passed
• Chemical labeling and notification law	No Position		IP	Failed
<b>1993 General Election (1 issue)</b>				
• Constitutional amendment enabling bonds fund improvements in state parks/natural resource areas	No Position		GA	Passed
<b>1994 General Election (4 issues)</b>				
• Constitutional amendment to eliminate penalty cases by court of appeals review of death	No Position		GA	Passed
• Constitutional amendment guaranteeing crime victims' rights to fairness, dignity, and access to information	No Position		GA	Passed
• Constitutional amendment to back Ohio Tuition Trust Fund Authority credits with the full faith and credit of the state	No Position		GA	Passed
• Constitutional amendment to prohibit wholesale tax on food, ingredients, or packaging, defining soft drinks as food	Opposed*	Ohio Constitution: General Criteria	IP	Passed
<b>1995 General Election (2 issues)</b>				
• Constitutional amendment requiring Governor to follow a procedure to commute a sentence, like required in pardoning a prisoner.	No Position		GA	Passed

Issue	LWVO Stand	Position	Source	Result
Constitutional amendment allowing state to issue bonds for up to \$340 million per year for capital improvements and highways combined	No Position		GA	Passed
<b>1996 General Election (1 issue)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional amendment allowing for the establishment of eight permanently moored riverboat casinos; three in the Cleveland area, three in the Cincinnati area, one in Lorain and one in Mahoning County</li> </ul>	No Position		IP	Failed
<b>1997 General Election (2 issues)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional amendment giving state judges authority to deny bail to non-capital felons</li> </ul>	No Position		GA	Passed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referendum on a worker's compensation bill, SB 45</li> </ul>	No Position		RF	Failed
<b>1998 General Election (3 issues)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional amendment to allow the State of Ohio to issue general obligation bonds to pay for school building construction, maintenance, and repair</li> </ul>	Supported	Primary and Secondary Education	GA	Failed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A statewide 1% increase in sales and use tax to be used for school operations and for property tax relief</li> </ul>	Opposed	State Government Finance	GA	Failed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To classify mourning doves as song bird and prohibit the hunting of them</li> </ul>	No Position		IP	Failed
<b>1999 General Election (1 issue)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional amendment to allow the State of Ohio to issue general obligation bonds to pay for school building construction, maintenance, and repair</li> </ul>	Supported	Primary and Secondary Education	GA	Passed
<b>2000 General Election (1 issue)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional amendment to allow the State of Ohio to issue bonds up to \$400 million for environmental purposes</li> </ul>	Supported	Land Use	GA	Passed
<b>2002 General Election (1 issue)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional amendment to allow those charged with drug possession to request treatment instead of jail</li> </ul>	Opposed	Ohio Constitution: General Criteria	IP	Failed
<b>2003 General Election (1 issue)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional amendment to allow the State of Ohio to issue bonds up to \$500 million for "Third Frontier" economic development in technology</li> </ul>	No Position		GA	Failed
<b>2004 General Election (1 issue)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional amendment to define marriage as union of one man and one woman, and to prohibit benefits of marriage to unmarried couples</li> </ul>	Opposed	Equality of Opportunity	IP	Passed

## Coalitions

The League believes that legislative success is frequently achieved by working in coalition with a wide range of organizations representing voters. By joining coalition efforts, the League broadens the base of support for selected public policies, lends the credibility of its name to important campaigns, and increases the likelihood of success. Coalitions are entered into by the LWVO board only after extensive discussion. Policy considerations include:

- The coalition's major issues should be aligned with League positions and be nonpartisan;
- The aims of the coalition must not conflict with League positions; and
- The coalition's activities should provide additional effectiveness to the overall efforts to achieve the League's organizational, advocacy, or educational goals.

The following represents both the long-term and ad hoc coalitions in which LWVO participated in 2003:

**Access to Benefits Coalition**  
**Alliance for Contraceptive Equity**  
**Campaign Finance Reform Coalition**  
**Coalition for Affordable Healthcare in Ohio**  
**Coalition for Ohio's Future**  
**Coalition for Ohio's Workforce**  
**Coalition for Public Education**  
**Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio**  
**Freedom of Choice Ohio**  
**Great Lakes Restoration Coalition**  
**Greater Ohio**  
**Have A Heart Ohio**  
**Help End Lead Poisoning (HELP)**  
**Juvenile Justice Coalition**  
**Lake Erie Basin Committee**  
**Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence**  
**Ohio Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding**  
**Ohio Coalition for Responsible Lending**  
**Ohio Environmental Council**  
**Ohio Family Coverage Coalition**  
**Ohio Mobility Partnership**  
**Ohioans to Stop Executions**  
**Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio**

