



# THE VOTER

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL YAVAPAI COUNTY**

[LWVCYC@gmail.com](mailto:LWVCYC@gmail.com)

P. O. Box 11538, Prescott, AZ 86304-1538

January 2013

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**The League of Women Voters presents:**

## **Local and State Program Planning and Arizona Education – We Must Expect More**

### **Some Current Educational Issues: Educational Financing**

Low per-pupil spending and lack of state funding to renovate and maintain physical school plants influence student and teacher performance.

### **Arizona's Common Core Standards -**

These new standards, along with a new accountability system, are hoped to improve students in English and math fields and also assist them with learning through critical thinking, problem-solving and effective communication.

### **Move on When Reading Program**

will begin for those attending third grade in the 2013-2014 school session. Its purpose is to help students who are struggling with their reading and hopefully will prevent them from being held back.

### **School Vouchers and Charter Schools**

are enrolling increasing numbers of Arizona's children, changing ideas about privatization of education and the use of public funds for school financing.

**When: Saturday, January 19, 2013**

**9 AM Social Time;  
9:30 AM Program Planning  
10:30 Education Program**

**Where: Lower level Community Room,  
Las Fuentes Village, 1035 Scott, Prescott**

**LWVCYC Website: <http://goo.gl/5R9xU>**

Please bring your copy of the VOTER to the Jan. 19 meeting!!



## President's Message

Happy New Year and I hope you haven't had to correct too many 2012's to 2013's on your correspondence! Everything is off to a fresh start and we have been busy planning for the months ahead.

If you missed our Holiday Luncheon, we missed you. We had a good turnout of members and invited guests. The Olive Garden did a very good job of service and food, and we had the opportunity to get to know one another better. We'll do it again sometime soon and I hope you will all be able to participate. Our Meet and Greet was a huge success, as usual, even at a new venue. The parking was a help at the Community Center on Rosser. I want to thank all of our volunteers and those that donated all of the wonderful food and wine. This is a

very popular event and it is always nice to meet our newly elected officials who attend and see all of our colleagues in the elected officials who attend and see all of our colleagues in the non-profit sector.

This month our general meeting will be our study and program planning meeting. Included in this issue are some forms for you to fill out and bring with you to the meeting which will be Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>. Also included are our positions so that you can review them and decide whether they need changes or updating. We have received some really interesting ideas from our state League, and they will also be presented at our meeting. If you are a new member, this is actually a very stimulating exercise. This is the heart of League of Women Voters. We get to choose the issues upon which we want a voice. If suggestions are taken to the study step and then to a concurrence, a position is formed that we can officially publish and act on. It is an exciting process; ordinary people making an extraordinary difference. Please attend and contribute. The second hour of our meeting will be an update on the education changes in Arizona presented by a speaker from Expect More Arizona, Donna Davis. What will our legislators be doing this year?

There will also be an orientation meeting for our many new members on Feb. 2. Please read the notice in today's issue. We will send an email invitation soon. This will be a pleasant discussion of how the League of Women Voters came to be, what it means, and what it does. You will leave knowing you have made the right step by joining. I will host it at my home and I'm looking forward to it. It's a great opportunity to meet you.

May we all have a healthy and productive year in our private lives and all of our civic interests. See you Jan. 19 at 9:00 am.

Vicky O'Hara, President 708-0608,  
[vohara@cableone.net](mailto:vohara@cableone.net)





## 10:30: Education Program

**Donna Davis** is the Senior Community Mobilizer of **Expect More Arizona**, a statewide public-private partnership dedicated to creating a movement of Arizonans who value education as our state’s top priority. Donna has over 20 years of experience in the non-profit sector, devoting most of her time to organizations that focus on youth, education and workforce development.

She has been with Expect More Arizona since 2010 and has helped the organization reach more than 12,000 individuals with the message of world-class excellence for all. Currently Donna is a member of the Governor’s Workforce Policy Council, as well as the Arizona Commission on Service and Volunteerism and is a graduate of Leadership West, Class 3.

She coordinated the Jobs for Valley Youth program for Valley of the Sun United Way and Greater Phoenix Leadership for six years. After 4 years of program management at Communities in Schools, Donna became a contractor. She did fund development for the FFA (Future Farmers of America ) Foundation and coordinated a teacher training program called PASS (Partners Advancing Student Success) for the Arizona K-12 Center in which teachers visited workplaces for a week in the summer. Those experiences required statewide outreach and helped to develop Donna’s extensive professional network.

Donna spent 23 years traveling the world as a military spouse and arrived in Phoenix in 1990 from Yemen. She has taught Reading Improvement at a Community College, 3 year olds at a pre-school, outdoor skills to Girl Scouts, and English to Yemeni military members. She worked at the American Embassy in Sana’a Yemen as the Community Liaison Officer and was awarded a Meritorious Honor Award for improving post morale and quality of life.

Donna holds a bachelor’s degree in health education from the State University of New York, College at Brockport. She is a member of the Governor’s Workforce Policy Council as well as the Commission for Service and Volunteerism and a graduate of Leadership West, Class 3. Donna and her husband of 37 years, Jeff, are the proud parents of 3 children and even prouder grandparents of 2 grandsons, Tyler age 6 and Griffin age two.

### Dates to Put on Your Calendar

Sat., Jan. 19	9:30 AM	State and Local Program Planning, Education	Las Fuentes
Tues., Jan. 22	8 AM	LWVCYC Board Meeting	Mary Mallory’s
Sat., Febr. 16	9:30 AM	Water	Las Fuentes
Sat., March 16	9:30 AM	Legislative Update	Las Fuentes
Sat., April 20	TBD	Annual Meeting and Talk	TBD
Sat., May 18	9:30 AM	TBD	Las Fuentes

**Recent Education Articles from azcentral.com**

**Reformer: Prepare Arizona students to compete globally**

By Cathryn Creno The Republic | azcentral.com Sun Jan 6, 2013

Craig Barrett, a former Intel chief executive and an outspoken critic of Arizona’s education system, said Common Core will demand more of students and better prepare them to compete with students around the world.

Since retiring from Intel in 2009, Barrett has devoted about 25 percent of his time each week to improving education. He chairs Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer’s Arizona Ready education council, which includes education and business leaders and meets regularly to track student achievement and advocate for such reforms as Common Core.

Barrett is known for fiery speeches in which he says weaknesses in Arizona’s K-12 education hinder the state economy. In 2011, he told lawmakers and business leaders that Arizona might not make the list of finalists if Intel were looking for a new location today.

Barrett said it’s not that students here are getting worse. It’s that students in other nations are getting better. When looking at just the U.S., the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a test commonly referred to as the Nation’s Report card, shows Arizona students fall below the national average in math and language.

In addition, Arizona only has about a 78 percent high-school graduation rate. And, of those who go on to college, 60 percent need remedial help in math or English, according to a 2011 report by a national organization called Complete College America, based on information shared by state universities.

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**Arizona's public schools facing tougher standards**

By Cathryn Creno The Republic | azcentral.com Sun Jan 6, 2013

More rigorous academic standards are coming to Arizona’s public schools this year, but the transition, which some schools have already begun, will be difficult and expensive.

Some districts are scrambling to find money to train teachers in the new Common Core Standards, and most say their teachers won’t be fully versed by the fall.

The consequences are severe. As the state is struggling to implement the standards, it is also doing away with the high-stakes AIMS graduation test and introducing tougher achievement exams in 2015. And student performance on those exams will be used to judge school, as well as teacher, performance.

The changes, which are challenging the teachers who are preparing for them, are part of a national trend toward raising academic expectations in public schools.

In the spring of 2015, AIMS will be out and PARCC, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, will be in. The readiness assessment will be given at every grade level instead of just third through 10th. It is expected to be an online assessment in math, reading and writing that will include multiple-choice questions as well as essay-style answers.

The board recently approved a plan to phase out AIMS as a graduation test by 2017. Students who graduate in 2015, 2016 and 2017 will need to pass the 10th-grade AIMS to get their diplomas. After that, the PARCC assessment will measure student readiness to move beyond high school and enter college or the workforce.

The board has not yet decided whether the new assessment will be used as a graduation test in the way AIMS is now. Instead, scores may simply be used as a percentage of a student's course grades, much like college exams figure in final grades. The board is expected to make a decision on the matter by spring. Also unknown is exactly how the new test will be used to determine eligibility for scholarships, school-employee bonuses and school grades.

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## **Expansion of state's school-voucher system takes effect today**

By Anne Ryman The Republic | azcentral.com Tue Jan 1, 2013

One out of every five Arizona students in public schools becomes eligible today to apply for public money to attend private schools this fall under an expansion of a controversial voucher-type program.

The program, Empowerment Scholarship Accounts, allows parents to receive a debit card from the state preloaded with money to pay for educational expenses, such as private-school tuition, with state funds.

A recent change in state law expands the program to include children at the state's lowest-performing public schools. If schools receive a D or F letter grade from the state, their students can apply for the scholarships, estimated to be worth an average of \$3,000 to \$3,500 for the 2013-14 school year.

Also eligible are children of active-duty military and children in foster care who have been adopted or are being adopted. The original law provided scholarships only for disabled students.

The additions are likely to be popular with parents who are looking for other options for educating their children. But public-education groups are already suing the state over the scholarships. They contend the program is bad public policy because it takes money from public schools and gives it to private schools that don't have the same state-mandated academic requirements.

The additions to the Arizona law boost eligibility to more than 200,000 students this fall. State officials predict that fewer than 1,000 will apply, or as many as 6 percent of eligible students, which would be roughly 12,000.

"I would not predict a mass exodus (from public schools)," said John Huppenthal, Arizona's superintendent of public instruction. But he added that as word-of-mouth spreads, "I think it will start picking up pretty quickly."

Arizona's scholarship program is a type of voucher because parents can withdraw their children from public schools and apply that public money toward private schools. The program also allows parents to spend money on educational expenses besides private school. They can purchase tutoring, curricula, online classes and even pay for tuition at the state's public colleges.

Students with special-education needs receive more state money on average than those who don't require special services. Even so, the scholarship doesn't cover all the costs.

Besides Arizona, 11 other states and the District of Columbia have voucher programs. Many of them started in the past decade. The idea, though, has been around more than 100 years, since Maine and Vermont began allowing students in rural areas without public schools nearby to use state money to attend private schools.

Wisconsin started the country's first modern school-voucher program in 1990 for low-income families in the Milwaukee Public Schools. A few years ago, the state removed the cap on the number of families who could enroll. Vouchers also were expanded to the nearby city of Racine.

Indiana launched the nation’s first statewide voucher program in 2011 for low-income students. This school year, 9,324 students enrolled, more than double the first year.

Although voucher programs vary by state, there are some common themes. States usually limit vouchers to specific groups such as students with disabilities or from low-income families. A few states allow vouchers for students in schools labeled as failing. Families usually have to try public schools first to get vouchers to pay for private school.

Arizona’s voucher program is part of a larger school-choice movement that has been under way since the 1990s. Championed by Republicans, the goals of the movement are to give parents more options and increase academic achievement.

The 1990s saw the introduction of charter schools, which are public schools that are independently run. That same decade, the state passed an open-enrollment law, allowing students to apply for admission to any public school as long as space is available.

The school-choice movement has its critics, including some school-district officials who oppose voucher-type programs because public money is going to the private sector.

Supporters of vouchers contend that allowing more choice increases competition among schools. This leads to better student achievement and lower education costs, they say.

The Goldwater Institute, a conservative watchdog group, has been a big supporter of Arizona’s program. Jonathan Butcher, the institute’s education director, said the scholarships give parents more options for educating their children. Some students do very well in their neighborhood public school, he said. Others don’t.

Critics, including Tim Ogle, executive director of the Arizona School Boards Association, say the program has no accountability for educational quality. For example, he said, unlike students in public schools, students in private schools aren’t required to take state tests that measure their achievement.

Private schools can set special admission requirements, he said, unlike public schools. So, while the school-choice movement is supposed to be about parents getting more choices, the schools are really the ones choosing the students, he said.

“You have created an elitist environment using taxpayer money,” he said.

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## Information from Expect More Arizona

### Currently in Arizona:

- 16 Out of 100: The number of 9<sup>th</sup> graders who graduate from high school on time, go to college, and graduate within **6** years.
- 74% of 4<sup>th</sup> graders are **below proficient** in reading
- 69% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders are **below proficient** in math
- 30% of high school students **don’t graduate**
- 50% of graduates don’t **qualify to enroll** in Arizona’s public universities
- 30% of Arizona graduates **require remediation** upon entry into college

<http://www.expectmorearizona.org/learn-more/how-it-affects-us/>

## HOW CAN I PREPARE MYSELF FOR PROGRAM PLANNING?

If considering a change/update/review/new study in program planning, ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ Can it be solved by government action?
- ✓ Is it of interest to our members, to other groups, and to the larger community? Does it provide opportunities for League action?
- ✓ Am I willing to work on the study?
- ✓ How timely is it? How might the study be done? How much might it cost?
- ✓ Can the League make a difference? Will it raise our visibility and credibility?
- ✓ How many people are necessary to carry out the “platform?” Is our League willing to take the lead on the “platform?”

### Local LWVCYC Program Planning Form 2013-2014

Bring this form to the January 19 meeting or, if you cannot attend, send your response no later than February 1 to Juliana Goswick. By snail mail: 600 Lee Blvd., Prescott AZ 86303, or by e-mail: jgos06@cableone.net

- Retain** - keep this position unchanged;
- Drop** - delete any part of or all of this position;
- Update\*** - wish more current information;
- Re-study\*** - circumstances/situations have changed/needs a new consensus;
- Change \*-** editorial word change or other change. \*

Current Local Position	retain	drop	update*	re-study*	change*
Water					
Juvenile Justice & Social Issues					
Meeting Basic Senior Needs					
Workforce Housing					
Public Transit					

\*Please explain any suggested update, re-study, or change.

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**If you would like to propose a NEW LOCAL study, please be as specific as possible:**

Study:

Scope:

Chair and committee members:

If you propose a new study, please sign your name so we can contact you if we have questions.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

## LWVAZ – State Program Planning Form 2013-2015

**“Program Planning” is the establishment of the LWV AZ PLATFORM for the next two years. It no longer includes “retain” or “drop” suggestions, nor a review of each and every position. It is assumed that existing positions are “just fine” unless you ask for an update or review.**

<i>Current Program Item</i>	<i>Update / Review</i>	<i>Concurrence</i>	<i>No Recommendation</i>
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### **GOVERNMENT**

Arizona Election Law			
Election Systems Reform			
Legislative And Congressional Redistricting			
Initiative And Referendum			
County Government			
Campaign Finance Reform			
Reorganization Of The Arizona Executive Branch			
Arizona Corporation Commission			

### **JUDICIAL**

Juvenile Justice			
Judicial Selection And Tenure			
Lower Court Reform			
Reproductive Choice			

### **SOCIAL POLICY**

Human Needs			
Victimization Of Children And Intrafamilial Abuse			

### **EDUCATION**

Public School Finance			
Charter Schools			
High-Stakes Testing			

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

Land Use			
Water			

**Each local League may suggest only ONE issue for an Update/Review OR New Study OR Concurrence.**

**New Study Recommendations: Include suggested scope. Use back if necessary.**

Priorities or Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL YAVAPAI COUNTY PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS 2012-13

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND SOCIAL ISSUES

*LWVCYC Membership Adopted 2001*

**Summary Statement:** The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County encourages and supports the continuance and introduction of programs for children (birth to age 18) in the areas of health, mental health, care and supervision that are provided by parents, public, and voluntary agencies. These programs must be funded, timely, appropriate, coordinated, available, and accessible by public transportation.

**POSITIONS:** The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County encourages and supports:

1. Funding of all mandated health, inpatient and outpatient mental health and substance abuse programs for underinsured and uninsured children.
2. Preventive and treatment programs for children in health, mental health care and substance abuse that are easily accessible, timely and appropriate.
3. Program of parent education and involvement, both in groups and individually, providing understanding of parenting skills, health and mental health of children and youth, sex education programs, educational programs for pregnant teenagers, teen development programs and classes in parenting skills.
4. Employment of at least one counselor in each school to address students' needs and act as a resource to families and staff. In addition, schools are encouraged to provide sex education programs, educational programs for pregnant teenagers, teen development programs and classes in parenting skills.
5. Programs that provide protection and services to children. Such programs must be easily accessible by citizens and professionals, provide sufficient foster home placements for children and juveniles with different needs, enforce state laws, provide shelters for youths and stipends for older teens.
6. Recreational programs and after-school programs for children. In addition, teenagers must have access to locations offering information on teenage employment, community service, shelters, mentoring programs, medical services and distribution of food.
7. Community diversion programs and counselors available to school, police departments and other public and voluntary agencies.
8. Court coordinated community programs (such as Drug Court).
9. Policies and programs which treat all juvenile offenders with special consideration to age appropriate needs for mental and physical health care and treatment, safety and protection, and education with emphasis on rehabilitative services.

## MEETING BASIC SENIOR NEEDS

*LWVCYC Membership Adopted 2002-2003, Revised 2007*

**Summary Statement:** The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County encourages and supports the continuance and introduction of programs and services for seniors in the areas of health, care giving, jobs, recreation/socialization, transportation and affordable housing to be provided by private and public entities, the goal of these programs and services should be to pursue coordination, build coalitions, educate the public, and to oversee and monitor the process and results.

**Position:** The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County encourages and supports:

1. Adequate services in the areas of health promotion and wellness, mental health, dental health and palliative care, accessible to all seniors.
2. Adequate funding for Medicare, AHCCCS and ALTCS to cover comprehensive health services.
3. Medicare funding to be equally distributed between rural and urban areas.
4. Incentives and funding for recruitment, training and retention of health care providers by private and/or public institutions.
5. Adequate home and community based care giving services and programs to ensure the safety of patients and the support for and oversight of care givers.
6. Programs assisting seniors to update and enhance job and business skills, providing incentives for employers to utilize, train and incorporate seniors into the workforce, and for seniors to engage in entrepreneurial pursuits.
7. Adequate funds to develop community centers for seniors as focal points in order to provide information/referral services, socialization and recreation, nutrition, education counseling, and other professional services, physical services programs, and/or transportation to community services not on site.
8. An adequately funded, reliable public and/or private regional transit system.
9. A regional housing agency providing and administering affordable housing for seniors by planning and developing new housing and rehabilitating existing housing units.
10. A continuous source of funding for housing and home repair to meet the needs of low-income elderly, rural residents.
11. A central information referral system.

## **WATER**

LWVCYC Membership Adopted 1999 and Revised in 2006

**Summary Statement: The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County encourages and supports the effective use of water and effluent, controlled development and use of alternative water sources (all sources other than ground water) increased water conservation and education and cooperation of communities in Central Yavapai County.**

**Position:** The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County encourages and supports:

1. Public and private accountability of water usage and conservation.
2. Acquisition and development of water and sewage systems by local government.
3. Taxes and cost reduction incentives, which result in water conservation and effluent reuse.
4. The study, development of alternative water sources when effective use of available effluent has been made.
5. Public education that communicates the need for conservation and the results of regional water studies.
6. The regulation and effective use of effluent for recharge and direct public use.
7. Measures that stress or require water conservation in the planning and conversion of developments.
8. The cooperation of communities within Central Yavapai County.
9. The attainment of safe yield in the Prescott Active Management Area no later than 2025.

## **WORKFORCE HOUSING**

### **LWVCYC Membership Adopted 2006, Revised 2007**

**Summary Statement:** The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County encourages and supports affordable housing for the workforce that provides vital community services in the areas of education, health care, public safety and retailing.

**Position:** The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County supports continuance of existing development policies and introduction of additional new development policies that result in:

1. timely decisions on new development to minimize financing costs
2. local officials working with developers on development agreements that include incentives for diversity of zoning
3. variety in housing density and a reduction of exclusionary zoning which limits buyer's choices
4. diversity of zoning that includes rental housing
5. housing within redevelopment projects
6. annexation development agreements which feature inclusive zoning
7. aggressively seeking companies whose wage rates relate to housing costs in the quad-city area

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

### **LWVCYC Membership Adopted 2007**

**Summary Statement:** The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County encourages and supports the establishment of an affordable and accessible regional public transportation system to serve the needs of residents and visitors in Central Yavapai County.

**Positions:** The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County encourages and supports:

1. A public transportation system which meets the needs of "transportation dependent" residents and visitors, such as disabled, homebound, low income workers and residents, non-driving seniors and youth. In addition, the system provides options for workers, shoppers, tourists and students.
2. A public transportation system based on existing research results, environmental impact, demographics, population density, community support and cost/benefit analysis.
3. A regional transportation authority.
4. The establishment of a regional transportation system beginning with intercommunity service between the quad cities, to be followed by expansion of intra-community service and eventually extending the intercommunity corridor within Central Yavapai County.
5. A transportation system which stimulates economic development through improving mobility of workforce, creating jobs, reducing traffic congestion, improving traffic safety, extending longevity of road infrastructure, increasing consumer activity, improving access to educational opportunities, attracting retirees and enhancing community business image.
6. A regional public transportation system which is funded by all appropriate federal, state and local grants and resources including use of lottery money, a dedicated tax, fare box recovery, advertisement and public/private partnerships.
7. An accessible and affordable regional public transportation system, the accountability of which is reviewed periodically against updated research, environmental impact, ongoing cost/benefit analysis, ridership and community support.
8. A public transportation system that is integrated with other aspects of the inter-modal transportation network, such as carpools, agency vans, bike lanes, and park and ride facilities.

# LWVAZ ACTION AGENDA 2011-2013

## GOVERNMENT

### ARIZONA ELECTION LAW

Consensus 1972; revised 1973, 1991; Reviewed 1995, Amended 2009

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports an accessible system of registration and election, with uniform and standardized procedures throughout the state. Therefore, the League supports:

- Mail-in registration procedures, but opposes election day registration at the polls as an invitation to fraud.
- Increase in pay for legislators.
- Four-year terms for State Legislators, with no limit on the number of terms which they may serve,
- An income tax check-off to provide partial funding of legislative elections through the subsidy of some television time for issue discussion by ballot qualified candidates.
- A requirement for complete financial disclosure by candidates for public office.
- A cap on gifts to public officials, and reporting of all gifts.
- Prohibiting elected officials lobbying for remuneration of any kind for at least one year after leaving office.
- Prohibiting election officials from using surplus campaign funds for personal use, or from taking them along when leaving office.
- All government agencies being required to report all their lobbying activities, expenditures and gifts to public officials.
- The monitoring of vote counting in state and local elections.

### ELECTION SYSTEMS REFORM Consensus 2005; Amended 2008, 2011

The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes in the election system principle of greater vote representation. The LWVAZ maintains that election system reform that provides a stronger voice for the greatest number of voters should have a positive effect on voter participation. Therefore, the LWVAZ:

- Supports changing the present election systems so that they more accurately represent the wishes of voters: Adopting the Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) system for single seat races; Adopting proportional representation for multi-seat races, specifically Ranked Choice Voting.
- Believes that education of the voting public is important to election systems.
- Supports giving Arizona voters the option of more choice among election systems.

### LEGISLATIVE AND CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

Consensus: 1967; Revised: 1979, 1995, 2005, 2011 The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports measures to ensure the regular redistricting of Arizona legislative and congressional districts on an "equal population" basis. The LWVAZ supports:

- The retention of an independent commission to redistrict legislative and congressional districts at regular intervals, subject to judicial review. The Legislature itself should not be the reapportioning agency.
- Legislative districts that provide more equitable representation, more accountability and responsibility, more competitive elections, and closer contact with constituents.

(Footnote: To allow for greater flexibility, this position was amended on March 5, 2005, by removing the words "single member." As background information, three points were made: 1) impacts may differ in rural and urban districts, 2) the change is neither an automatic endorsement for multi-member districts nor an automatic opposition to single member districts, 3) even members who strongly favor multi-member districts often do so only when such districts are accompanied by other electoral changes.)

**INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM** Consensus: 1976; Reviewed 1995, 2003; revised 2004

The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes in the constitutional right of the people to enact direct legislation (enacting, amending, or repealing legislative acts and amending the Arizona Constitution); therefore, the League supports:

- The requirement that only qualified electors (registered voters) may sign any initiative, referendum or recall petition.
- The reduction of the required number of signatures on a statutory initiative petition to qualify placing it on the ballot from ten per-cent to not more than eight per-cent of the votes cast for governor at the last gubernatorial election.
- The amendment of the constitution to limit the power of the Legislature to repeal or amend the initiative or referendum measures by means such as requiring more than just majority approval, or setting a minimum time limit before the Legislature can act on such measures, or some other limitation short of complete elimination of power.
- Removal of the governor's power to veto initiative or referendum measures.
- Funding sources (for initiatives) should be identified, if practicable.
- The disclosure of financial contributions to committees supporting and opposing an initiative and referendum.

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT** Concurrence 1977; Reviewed 1995

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports an amendment to the Arizona Constitution to permit counties to decide, by a vote of the people in each county, the governmental structure which best meets county needs.

The LWV of Metropolitan Phoenix supports home rule for Maricopa County. The LWV of Greater Tucson supports a long term goal of consolidated government for Pima County. The League position supporting local option for county governmental structure gives the LWVAZ a position from which to lobby, but does not restrict other local Leagues from positions they may take regarding their own county government.

**CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM** Consensus 1983; Reviewed 1995 The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes that the political process must be open, equitable and honest. The process must provide opportunity for maximum citizen participation. There should be limits on the size and type of campaign contributions. There should be full disclosure of contributions and expenditures to combat undue influence in the electoral and governmental processes.

**REORGANIZATION OF THE ARIZONA EXECUTIVE BRANCH** Consensus 1963; revised 1965, 1968, 1969, 1974, 1985; reviewed 1995; update study adopted 2009

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports measures to strengthen the executive branch of state government, and to integrate its administration by centralizing authority and responsibility in the governor's office.

The LWVAZ believes that a clear line of succession in the Executive Branch of the State of Arizona should be more obvious to the public than it is in the current system where the Secretary of State assumes the role of Governor in times of absence, removal, resignation, death or other such changes. To avoid mid-term changes in party, continuity problems or policy reversals, LWVAZ supports the creation of an Office of Lieutenant Governor with duties separate from that of the Secretary of State.

In addition, the LWVAZ believes that the governor and the elected office, which is next in line of succession to the governor, should run on the same party ticket. If that office continues to be held by the Secretary of State, LWVAZ strongly believes that all partisan aspects of elections should be removed from the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State and managed by an independent body/commission.

**ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION** Consensus 1983; Reviewed 1995, Revised 2011 The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports adequate protection and representation of consumers, including

residential consumers, in the Arizona Corporation Commission process and supports measures to encourage conservation as well as the development and use of renewable energy sources.

## **JUDICIAL**

### **JUVENILE JUSTICE** Consensus 1999

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports early intervention programs beginning in elementary schools with the help of:

- counselors, social workers, psychologists, volunteers in school programs and individualized programs, including those that foster self-esteem,
- clinics on parenting skill
- conflict resolution skills training,
- drug education. Funding for the above should come from federal, state, local, private and corporate sources.

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports measures for adequate funding with emphasis on prevention, rehabilitation, incarceration and non-incarceration facilities, and intervention programs, trained personnel and education for parents of problem children. State funding should be dispersed to the local levels. The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes that programs and policies should be adopted which promote rehabilitation and education within the Juvenile Justice system and should include:

- schooling while in detention,
- counseling for the family and the individual while in detention,
- alternative living and educational programs and experiences to prevent and discontinue gang involvement.

The League Women Voters of Arizona believes that for the protection of the community and schools, delinquent children should:

- receive swift and firm justice,
- be removed from dysfunctional homes after family intervention and long-term family counseling,
- and be treated as an individual according to the age, need and type of crime and be sent first to juvenile court.

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports laws that include:

- swift punishment for weapon possession by juveniles,
- swift and harsh punishment of adults who provide weapons to juveniles,
- the exchange of records among schools, court and social agencies but not to the public or the media,
- a juvenile hearing before transfer to adult court.

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports the concept of an approach to juvenile problems through Restorative Justice programs, which give priority to and accountability for wrongdoing by repairing the damage or harm done to victims and the community through a process of victim involvement, community participation, mediation and reparation. Skilled mediators should be involved in this process.

**JUDICIAL SELECTION AND TENURE** Consensus 1969; Reviewed 1995 The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports the selection of judges by appointment, with voter approval for retention; adequate judicial salaries; longer terms; higher qualifications for justices of the peace and magistrates; a judicial nominating commission, responsible to the governor; and a competency review commission.

To assure that our judges are free of political bias and possessed of the proper qualities of temperament and intellect, and yet retain ultimate control of the courts in the hands of the people.

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports:

- Appointment of judges by the governor from list of qualified nominees submitted by a bipartisan commission of legal and lay members.
- Retention of a judge in office, after an established period of time, only by a "yes" vote of the people, a "no" vote requiring a new appointment by the governor.

(This system of judicial selection and tenure has been adopted for Pima and Maricopa counties and is optional for other counties. Although we have basically accomplished our goal, we retain the position because in each session of the Legislature, there are efforts to return to the old elective system.)

**LOWER COURT REFORM** Concurrence 1983; Reviewed 1995 The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports legislation which would give Arizona counties the option to consolidate their lower courts in order to promote uniformity in the administration and quality of justice, and effectiveness and efficiency in court administration.

**REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE** Concurrence 1983; Reviewed 1995 The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes in the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

## **SOCIAL POLICY**

**HUMAN NEEDS** Consensus 1971; Revised 1985; Reviewed 1995, Amended 2007 The League of Women of Arizona supports a state system that provides for a positive program to assist the economically disadvantaged in obtaining a greater measure of financial, physical and personal well-being, with emphasis on meeting basic human needs rather than on maintaining minimum expenditures.

In order to assist persons in need, to assure the basic essentials of health and adequate standards of living, reduce dependency, and break the welfare cycle, the state of Arizona should:

- Assure supportive programs and services integrated with those for the general public on an available-to-pay basis, including legal services, comprehensive health care, child care, transportation, family planning, home management, family counseling, vocational training, and educational enrichment.
- Work with private and public agencies, and utilize community services to the fullest.
- Encourage recipients to work when possible, with child care, counseling, job training and financial incentives available and to participate in program development and implementation.
- Disseminate information on welfare programs and interpret the needs of the community to the public.
- Provide adequate funds for capable, qualified staff, manageable case loads, information and referral services, and accessible office facilities.
- Administer funds and programs wisely, according to sound management and accounting principles, while preserving the rights and dignity of recipients

**VICTIMIZATION OF CHILDREN AND INTRAFAMILIAL ABUSE** Adopted 1985; Revised 1995 The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes that government, both state and local, including the state legislature and state and local agencies, should assure that necessary services are readily available to serve and protect the abused. These persons should be the focus of careful and timely long- range planning by these agencies and by the courts.

Adequate resource allocations shall be made within child protective and state agency budgets, within police and law enforcement budgets, and within the court system to assure the proper training and education of those who deal with these issues. The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports violence prevention programs in all communities and action to support:

- Public and private development and coordination of programs that emphasize the primary prevention of violence.
- The active role of government and social institutions in preventing violent behavior.
- The allocation of public monies in government programs to prevent violence.

## **EDUCATION**

**PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE** Consensus 1975,1979; Reviewed 1995; Revised 1997; Concurrence 1999, Restated 2000

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports a funding plan for public education that enhances the equal opportunity of all students. Such a plan should:

- Provide for the equitable distribution of state funds, including capital funding.
- Establish criteria for a quality education for all students prior to determining the formula for the distribution of monies.
- Recognize the differences in the needs of school districts.
- Provide funds for the special needs of school districts.
- Include measures to equalize the ability of school districts to finance those portions of their budgets for which they are responsible on the local level.
- Require governmental entities that establish mandated programs to continue funding for duration of the project.
- Budget for transportation, social services and special education needs separately from base maintenance and operation support.
- Ensure that all schools using public funds, such as Charters are held as fiscally accountable as are schools in regular established public school districts.

#### FUNDING SOURCES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The League of Women Voters of Arizona recognizes the inequities of the local school property tax. Therefore, the League supports these measures:

- Decrease reliance on the local school district property tax.
- Utilize statewide taxes for support of public school education.
- Require development impact fees to be paid to local school districts.
- Continue use of trust land monies.
- Maintain a policy of local control on spending decisions.
- New monies should be additional funds and not supplant present state funding.

The League of Women Voters of Arizona also supports the following aspects of funding for public schools:

- School districts in Arizona retain ability to bond for building or renovation of schools and for capital expenditures.
- School districts retain the ability to hold override elections.
- Bond and override elections are determined by a simple majority vote.
- Legislature levies taxes for schools by a simple majority vote.]
- Realistic allowances are made for inflation.
- Continued centralized collection and distribution of funding to local school districts enabling distribution of these funds to provide: o a certain basic amount of money for each student, o financing over and above the basic amount to ensure equal opportunity for each child, o equal or equivalent maintenance of buildings, o equal or equivalent supplies, o strong leadership and quality teaching.

#### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports the principle that the governmental entity closest to the school district constituency can best make decisions that will enhance the equal educational opportunity of all students. Therefore, the League suggests these policies:

- The state distributes public school funds equitably to school districts and set minimal general educational guidelines without inhibiting local decision making.
- Local school districts determine how funds are allocated in school district budgets.
- Citizen participation is essential, including funding and representative decision making. The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports policies and practices that encourage responsive government and informed citizen participation in the school district budgeting process. Therefore, the League supports the following:
- The school district budget format should call for specific information, such as program detail, salary schedules, and capital improvement programs.
- The school district budgeting schedule should include citizen input in time to allow for citizen influence on the allocation of funds in the budget.



- Advisory committees, open to all citizens in the school district community, should provide citizen input into the budgetary process,

#### ADDITIONAL CONCERNS:

The League of Women Voters of Arizona is also committed to these goals:

- Public funds should be used only for public schools and not for vouchers to private schools, including tuition tax credits, waivers, or direct payments to parents for school expenses of their children.
- Reorganization of any school districts should be to enhance the educational opportunities of all students.
- Funding for charter schools may negatively impact funds available to local school districts and standardized sequential curriculum may not be utilized.

#### **CHARTER SCHOOLS** Concurrence 1999

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports the following:

##### LIMITATIONS

- Length of charter shall be reduced from the present fifteen years to five to seven years.
- School districts shall be allowed to charter schools only within their own school district geographic boundaries.
- Only school districts in compliance with the USFR (Uniform System of Financial Reporting) shall be qualified/permitted to charter schools.
- The number of schools chartered on an annual basis shall be limited.

FUNDING Charter schools shall be fiscally responsible:

- Shall be in compliance with USFR.
- Shall be required to have an annual external financial review.
- "Start up"/"Stimulus" funds (from the state) shall be eliminated.
- Funding shall be on a monthly basis and shall be based on current monthly enrollment.
- The formula for transportation funding for schools chartered by a school district shall be the same as for schools chartered by the State Board of Education, Charter School Division, or by the State Board for Charter Schools.
- Transportation funding shall be "tied" to actual expenditures for transportation of students.
- Charter schools shall be operated on a not-for-profit basis.

Action for noncompliance, fraud, school closure, etc.

- A percentage of state funding shall be withheld.
- Property/equipment bought with state money shall revert to the state.

##### QUALIFICATIONS

- Charter schools must submit and have as part of their complete charter, the following: a mission statement, a sound business plan, curriculum, evaluation plan, governing board procedures and recruitment, and a statement of compliance with the state's open enrollment law, which mandates that all public school enrollment shall be open to all geographic areas.
- A proportion of teachers in each school shall be certified, those teachers not certified shall meet requirements of education and/or equivalent experience.
- The applicants, operators and governing board members (as well as teachers) shall be fingerprinted and shall submit to a background check.

##### OVERSIGHT

- The State Department of Education shall be responsible for the annual financial and academic review and compliance of all charter schools.
- If a charter school is out of compliance, the State Department of Education has administrative and financial oversight and review.
- In event of fraud, illegal use of money, or abuse, the law shall permit the immediate closure of the charter school without the 90-day waiting period. The chartering entity shall then promptly arrange the transfer/placement of the students into other schools.

## INPUT/INVOLVEMENT

- Mechanism for citizen input/involvement shall be an integral part of governing boards.
- Information regarding Charter schools shall be readily and easily available to the public.

**HIGH-STAKES TESTING** (AIMS -Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards) Consensus 2005 The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes that no single "high-stakes" test (AIMS) should be the deciding factor for graduation from high school. The LWVAZ supports a diploma being awarded to students who satisfactorily complete their course work.

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports the use of AIMS (or other government-mandated) for the following purposes:

- Identifying and alleviating students' academic difficulties, in a timely manner;
- Identifying necessary changes in curriculum, methods, and materials.

The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes it is important for government-mandated tests to be well-crafted, meaningful, and well-matched with the Arizona Standards. Therefore the LWVAZ supports the following:

- Utilizing Arizona educators from K-12 to develop and write the questions and educators from institutions of higher learning to evaluate the tests in their areas of expertise.
- Validating the tests to be sure they reflect the Arizona Standards and appropriate grade levels.

If "high-stakes" testing for high school graduation continues in Arizona, the LWVAZ recognizes that provisions need to be made for those who fail. Therefore, the LWVAZ supports retesting students who fail AIMS during their high school years.

Concurrence 2005 Curricula areas not specifically tested on AIMS (such as vocational/technical/career education, visual and performing arts, social studies, science, health and physical education) shall be encouraged and shall not be curtailed.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

**LAND USE** Consensus 1975; Reviewed 1995

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports:

- Action to achieve a physical environment beneficial to life, with emphasis on achieving an optimum balance between human needs and the carrying capacity of the land and its resources.
- Statewide land use planning which should include economic, social and environmental components, basic services, transportation, new concepts of community design, the best use of resource conservation measures in land use planning, with emphasis on the effects of population growth and distribution.
- Measures to preserve open space and natural habitat, identify and regulate areas of critical concern, including fragile areas, historic areas, riparian habitats, renewable resource lands, and natural hazard lands.
- Statewide authority over areas and activities outside of local government jurisdiction, or which their governmental bodies fail to regulate.
- Protection of private property in accordance with the Fifth Amendment, but retaining the government's right to regulate the use of land through its power to protect the public health, welfare and safety, the decision whether a regulation constitutes a partial taking should be determined by the courts.
- Requirements for evaluation of economic, social and environmental impacts of major land use projects, whether initiated by government agencies or by private interests.
- Policies which assure the quality of the environment for people of all economic levels.
- Increased coordination and communication among land use agencies at all levels of government, and between those agencies and the public.
- Requiring any boards, commissions or agencies having authority or responsibility over land use planning to be comprised of individuals representing a balance of diverse citizen interests and concerns.

- Public input into all stages of planning and decision making.
- Increased technical and financial assistance to localities for growth management, encouragement of local communities to use innovative planning and regulatory techniques, and to incorporate measures to conserve energy, integrate transportation planning, consider availability of water and other resources.

**WATER** Consensus 1975, 1979; Revised 1995, Amended 2009

The League of Women Voters of Arizona supports the following goals:

Water resource management should ensure:

- The sustainability and long term productivity of water resources of the state and their future availability at reasonable costs. Reasonable cost is defined as costs that fairly and accurately reflect the value of this precious resource.
- The equitable utilization of water resources.
- Conservation of water resources.
- Prevention of harmful contamination of our surface and groundwater supplies from all sources.
- Coordination at all levels of government + federal, state and local + in planning for and managing water resources.
- Availability of detailed information on all groundwater withdrawal and hydraulic characteristics of aquifers.
- Energy consideration to be included as part of any water management plan.
- Public participation at all levels of water resource management planning. Arizona water laws should:
- Reflect the hydrologic cycle and treat all water as interrelated.
- Recognize and provide for physical differences between various areas of the state.
- Define and quantify ground and surface rights.
- Consider priority of use and coordination of planning for water and land if water rights are transferred.
- Recognize riparian habitats as beneficial use.
- Assure that riparian habitats and in stream flows are protected when any new water rights are granted, or when there are water exchanges or changed uses.
- Clarify and strengthen in stream flow rights.
- Provide for incentives for stream/habitat restoration.
- Provide authority to:

Monitor water use;

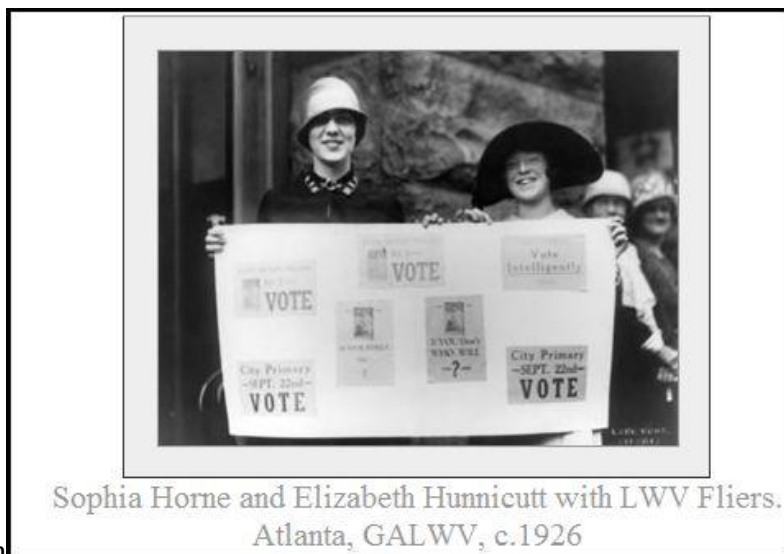
Limit non-beneficial or wasteful use;

Limit new water uses in areas of long-term shortages;

Decide which users should have priorities in times of shortages.

(The administration of the above should be determined at the state level, with emphasis on implementation and enforcement at the local or regional level.)

Require conservation of water by large individual users, such as large industries and agricultural entities, and encourage conservation by all other users. Tax incentives should be utilized.





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**A nonpartisan membership organization, the League of Women Voters neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates, but encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.**