

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST
POLITICAL ACTIVITY POLICY (Adopted 2003, Amended 2007)**

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The purpose of the League of Women Voters is to encourage political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League is a nonpartisan political organization: nonpartisan in that it never supports or opposes any candidate or political party; political in that it does act on those governmental issues selected by its members and on which a position has been reached through study and member agreement. In all League activities members should avoid conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest with the League's nonpartisan policy.

RATIONALE

The LWV must be nonpartisan so that:

- Its position on an issue can be readily accepted and independent.
- It will not be obligated to any political party or faction.
- It can seek solutions in the public interest on the basis of fresh inquiry and objective study.
- Its Voter Service work will have wide public acceptance and trust.
- League membership will appeal to individuals of varying political views.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY POLICY COMMITTEE

The committee shall consist of at least two Board members, one of whom should be the President or Co-President, and one or more non-Board member(s). The Board will appoint the committee for a one-year term. The committee shall review the Political Activity Policy at least once a year and report to the Board of Directors. It shall also consider any questions which arise concerning political activity and report its recommendations to the Board.

MEMBERS

A. League members as individuals are encouraged to:

- Seek an active role in the nomination/election of candidates for public office.
- Run for elective office themselves.

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- Hold office in a political party.
 - Stimulate public discussion of candidates and their views.
 - Take part in the political activities of their choice.
- B. League members may not speak or write in the name of the League unless specifically authorized to do so by the President(s) or Board of Directors.

PRESIDENT(S) AND VOTER SERVICE CHAIR(S)

- May not circulate petitions for candidates (whether partisan or nonpartisan elections).
- May not circulate petitions on issues which disagree with League positions or on which the League has no position.
- May not host candidate coffees, rallies, etc.
- May not display candidate buttons, bumper stickers or other campaign paraphernalia.
- May not take part in any political activity which might be construed by the public as League endorsement of parties or candidates.
- May not publicly support or finance any candidates.
- May not hold office or participate in slating candidates for, or work actively or publicly in, a political party or organization.

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

A. All other Board members and official League Observers should consider the sensitivity of their particular portfolio when considering participation in political activities. None of the activities listed below are allowed at League sponsored events. These activities should be clearly done as individuals and not in the name of the League.

After such considerations Board members may:

sign candidate petitions; circulate candidate petitions; serve as poll workers; attend political party caucuses; distribute campaign literature; contribute to political parties; display campaign buttons, bumper stickers, etc.; contribute to candidates; attend candidate coffees, rallies, etc.; host candidate coffees; serve as election judges.

At League-sponsored open meetings, Board members and official League Observers should not display any campaign paraphernalia that indicates support of a political candidate or likewise any issue that has not been approved by the League.

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B. Board members and official League Observers considering an active political role must offer their resignation when the member:

- Decides to run for public office (whether partisan or nonpartisan).
- Is appointed or elected to elective office (whether partisan or nonpartisan).
- Wishes to serve as campaign manager for a candidate (whether partisan or nonpartisan).

When a Board member or official League Observer resigns to pursue political activities, public notices announcing the resignation of a Board member or official League Observer should be carefully worded to avoid the appearance of endorsement of the candidacy or activities of the resigned member.

ISSUE CAMPAIGNS

When the League has a position:

- The Board should plan appropriate campaigns to further League goals.
- The Board may remain silent, but may not oppose a League position.
- The Board should inform the members of the issue to allow individual action.

AREAS OF POSSIBLE CONCERN

When a League member participates in a community or governmental committee, commission, or board, she or he should make it clear that she or he is participating as an individual unless directed by the Board to represent the League's position. In that case she or he cannot testify or represent herself or himself as an individual.

Political activities of a spouse or relative of a Board member are to be considered separate and distinct from the activities of the Board member.

For the duration of a study, study chairs may not speak out for or against the issue being studied.