

## League of Women Voters of Salem Nonpartisan Policy

The following Nonpartisanship Policy was adopted at the League of Women Voters of Salem Steering Committee meeting on **6 April 2018**. This policy will be readopted annually, with revisions, if the Steering Committee so votes.

**Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to enable the League as an organization to provide service to voters, information to citizens, and lobby and campaign on issues. The League can only render effective voter services activities and gain a wide base of support for its positions on governmental issues if the public and its elected officials are convinced of the League's genuine nonpartisanship. The policy distinguishes between the League as an organization and the rights of its individual members.

**General.** The League of Women Voters Salem Unit is a nonpartisan organization that does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. The League's effectiveness lies in its ability to take strong positions on issues in the public interest without regard for partisan affiliation. The League also encourages participation in local government by informing the citizens of Salem about their rights and responsibilities as voters.

**The Policy as it applies to Members.** The League prides itself on having a membership composed of diverse, informed people. Its individual members are encouraged to participate fully in party politics and in government at all levels. Many League members have strong affiliations with political parties or candidates, or are elected officials themselves.

### **The Policy at it applies to Steering Committee Members:**

#### **Appointive Office**

A Steering Committee member may accept an appointment to local commissions, boards, or committees if such service would not be in conflict with League program. Steering Committee members should notify the Steering Committee before accepting such appointments.

#### **Political Party Office**

The Spokesperson/Convener and Voter Service Chair shall not serve in any position in a political party at any level. Other Steering Committee members may serve on a local political party committee, with notification given to the League Steering Committee, but may not serve in a party leadership position.

#### **Support of Candidates for Elective Office**

a. The Spokesperson/Convener and the Voter Service Chair shall not publically support any candidate for elective office at any level. Activities permitted under this policy include: attending informational campaign functions and signing nominating petitions.

Activities prohibited include but are not limited to: circulating nominating petitions; making campaign contributions; displaying lawn signs; assisting with a campaign's mailings, signing

cards or literature encouraging a vote for a candidate; supporting candidates or parties on social media; or adding one's name to an endorsement.

b. Steering Committee members must not host or sponsor a campaign gathering or function or run for elective office. In other political activities, Steering Committee members should use discretion to ensure that their personal political activities are not identified with the League in the public mind.

c. Candidates for elective office and their campaign managers cannot serve on the Steering Committee.

### **Campaigning for an Issue**

Once the League (Local, State, or National) takes a position on an issue, the Convener and the Voter Service Chair(s) may not identify themselves as League members in publicly expressing an opinion that is in opposition to a League position. They also may not identify themselves as League members in publicly endorsing an issue with no League position. Other members of the Steering Committee do not have limits on their ability to campaign for or against an issue.

### **Other Board Positions outside League**

Steering Committee members may not hold leadership positions (either active or honorary) in any group whose stated position is in opposition to the League program.

Steering Committee members may hold leadership positions and be members of neighborhood associations, as long as those associations remain nonpartisan.

If any questions arise regarding the nonpartisan policy, the matter will come before the Steering Committee for interpretation and discussion. If a Steering Committee member resigns because of a conflict with this policy, that member shall not return to the Steering Committee until after the next Annual Meeting. Final decisions about implementing this nonpartisan policy rest with the Steering Committee.