LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MASSACHUSETTS

Guidelines for Local Leagues on Ballot Questions

THE FOLLOWING MEASURES WILL APPEAR ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT

Question 1: Expanding the Public Records Law

Question 2: Collective Bargaining for CPCS Employees

Question 3: State Primary Elections

Question 4: Election Day Registration

Question 5: State Revenue Limit & Rebate

Question 6: Natural Resource Conservation Fund

Question 7: Single Family Homes

Question 8: Prohibit Retail Sale of Adult Recreational Use Marijuana

Question 9: Firearms Regulation

✓ **LWVMA SUPPORTS**	**Question 1:** Expanding the Public Records Law **Question 4:** Election Day Registration **Question 7:** Single Family Homes **Question 9:** Firearms Regulation: Vote YES to uphold the current firearms law
✕ **LWVMA OPPOSES**	**Question 5:** State Revenue Limit & Rebate
– **LWVMA TAKES NO POSITION**	**Question 2:** Collective Bargaining for CPCS Employees **Question 3:** State Primary Elections **Question 6:** Natural Resource Conservation Fund **Question 8:** Prohibit Retail Sale of Adult Recreational Use Marijuana

Ballot Question Do's and Don'ts

DO

- Do check in with LWVMA regarding statewide ballot measure campaigns and information events.
- Do share LWVMA information events with your local League and the public.
- Do separate voter service and advocacy on public information tables. Information on questions we support or oppose is advocacy. Information on questions on which we have no opinion is voter service.
- Do remember that LWVMA endorsement covers all 44 local Leagues.
- Do identify yourself as a League member when working on a ballot measure we support/oppose.

DON'T

- Don't endorse statewide ballot measures as local League. Local Leagues are covered by state endorsement and cannot take a different stand on a question.
- Don't identify yourself as a League member when working on a ballot campaign listed as Take No Position.
- Don't include LWV stances in voter service materials.
- Don't invite the opposition to speak on ballot measures for which we have stands, e.g. don't invite the NRA/GOAL to speak at a firearms ballot question event.

As we enter the general election season, we remind members that lobbying activities and voter services activities must be kept completely separate, and voters' guides and other voter services materials and publications must not contain statements of League stands. League stands on ballot issues may only be discussed at voter service events when and if the event is delineated clearly into separate advocacy and voter education sections.

Local Leagues may decide whether to support, oppose or take no position on **local** ballot questions based on the local League's review of local, state, and national positions.

★ "Both sides" does not equal nonpartisan

The League does not present "both sides" of an issue for a ballot measure **where we have positions to support or oppose and we have publicly taken a stand.** We would do advocacy for those questions, while a "both sides" presentation would be voter service, and we can't offer advocacy and voter service at the same time, event, or voter guide. Nonpartisan means we do not endorse political parties or candidates, but we do take positions on issues.

Public Materials on Ballot Questions

Ballot question information may be presented as a voter service, in a public document such as a letter to the editor encouraging being prepared to vote or on League web/social media sites.

The information presented should refer to the LWVMA Online Voters' Guide VOTE411 and the "red book" sent to every household by the Secretary of State, which will also be available for download at the Secretary of the State's website. In this case, the information should be presented factually, with both pro and con arguments if arguments are listed. **The League's stands on the questions should not be stated in this type of information.** Letters and online materials that advocate for or against ballot questions that LWVMA supports or opposes should be treated as advocacy pieces, and not be presented as impartial voter information.

For an advocacy piece, see LWVMA guidance for the official presentation of the League's stands on each question.

League Information Tables

Voter service/citizen education and advocacy are equal but separate parts of the League's mission. It would be ideal to have a separate table for voter and membership information and for ballot question information, but that is not a feasible option in many cases. Try to put voter service information on one side of the table and advocacy information on the other side. LWVMA encourages local Leagues to promote all sides of the League.

Individual Member Activities

Individual League members are, of course, free to advocate for any ballot question.

Speaking on Local Ballot Questions at Meetings in Your Community

Local Leagues may be invited to explain the ballot questions by a community group. This should be considered a voter service and should not include advocacy unless advocacy is the requested purpose and the League has been specifically invited to present one side of a ballot question. Please contact the state League for next steps if you are contacted by a local community group.

References

LWVMA Bylaws, Article X, Program, Sec. 8.: Local League Action

Local Leagues and Units of LWVMA may take action on state governmental matters only when authorized to do so by the state board. Local Leagues and Units of LWVMA may act only in conformity with, or not contrary to, the position taken by LWVMA and/or LWVUS.

LWV Member Rights and Responsibilities Policy, Section III, Member Responsibilities, number 6

Not act in opposition to a League position or policy when authorized to act on behalf of LWV or when identifying themselves as LWV members. Members are not required to agree with all LWV stands and may choose to not participate in activities that promote stands they oppose.

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Voters' guides and other voter services materials must not contain statements of League positions, and League positions on ballot issues must not be discussed at voter services events.