

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DELAWARE PROGRAM 2011-2013

STATE GOVERNMENT

- ▶ **Revenue Sources – Continuing Study:** *A Study of State Government Revenue Sources*
- ▶ **Property Assessment - New Study:** *Study of property assessment for tax purposes in Delaware and the three counties.*
- ▶ **Delaware General Assembly** - Support of measures to promote a more effective and responsive legislative branch of state government, including strengthening the committee system and use of the budgetary process to review and evaluate state programs.
- ▶ **Ethics** - Support of ethics legislation in the areas of campaign finance, conflict of interest, financial disclosure and lobbying disclosure.
- ▶ **Delaware State Constitution** - Support of a Constitution for the State of Delaware which would be confined to broad principles and would promote more efficient and responsive government.
- ▶ **Public/Private Partnerships** - Support the use of public/private partnerships by governments in Delaware if a project can be better undertaken with public/private cooperation. Public input, careful controls and adequate safeguards need to be part of these partnerships.
- ▶ **Reapportionment/Redistricting** - Support for an open unbiased process for reapportionment and redistricting with opportunities for public participation.

SOCIAL POLICY

- ▶ **Justice System - Continuing Study:** *A re-evaluation of Delaware's criminal justice system and the impact of the current policies and practices on society. (Action will continue to be taken under LWVDE current position.)*

The study is worded intentionally broad so that the study committee can start where its sees the most effective effort and timeliness.

Support for the adoption of consistent policies which, within budgetary constraints, will permit the disposition of offenders in the best interests of society, the victim(s), and the offenders and their families.

 - We oppose mandatory sentencing.
 - We support the expansion of drug courts and mental health courts for all nonviolent offenders and the appropriate science based health and mental health treatment of all offenders.
- ▶ **Family Court, Related State Programs for Children, Domestic Violence** - Support of uniformity in operation of the Family Court system; automatic expungement of certain juvenile records; state provided diagnostic services, care, education and treatment to age 21 for youths and young adults who have mental or physical illness or who are developmentally delayed or are substance abusers or abused/neglected; strong educational programs on the rights of victims of family violence.
- ▶ **Before and After School Child Care** - Support for state government involvement in encouraging, establishing and/or supporting child care programs.

- ▶ **Financing Public Education** - Support for methods of financing public education that will promote equal opportunity for quality education and improve both the local districts' and state's budgeting while maintaining a high level of local control.
- ▶ **Gun Control** - Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semiautomatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety. (LWVUS position applies)
- ▶ **Healthcare - Continuing Study: *A study of the financing and delivery of health care in Delaware with emphasis on following the work of the Delaware Health Care Commission and related committees.***

LWVDE also acts under the LWVUS health care position: "Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs."
- ▶ **Needle Exchange Programs** - Support for comprehensive needle exchange programs, which also offer education and referrals to appropriate services, as part of a public health effort to reduce the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C.
- ▶ **Public School Libraries** - Support policies and funding for public school library media centers that promote their central role in providing equal opportunity for all children to achieve educational excellence.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- ▶ **Renewable Energy Portfolio** – Support for an increase in the percentage of renewable energy sources in Delaware’s Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) provided that they: have minimum environmental impact; use the best current technology as measured by reliability, proven effectiveness, and being state-of-the-art; have long range cost effectiveness including all net costs such as health and environmental costs, state and federal subsidies, and price stability.

Support of measures ensuring that total electricity sales in Delaware be required to meet the RPS.
- ▶ **Transmission and Distribution** – Support for maximizing the development and delivery of renewable energy to Delaware when designing and developing new transmission plans for the region.

In addition to delivering reliable, adequate electric service to Delaware, the key factors to be considered in making a decision on any transmission plan/transmission enhancements are: Degree of environmental impact; Degree of utilization of the transmission for renewable resource power vs. fossil-fuel generated power; True cost, including all cost-externalities; Safety and security of the grid.
- ▶ **Energy/Climate Change** - Support for an aggressive and comprehensive energy use/climate change plan for Delaware. Some key points that should be included:

Accelerate bringing new green businesses, jobs and industries to Delaware, and investigate emerging energy technologies. Set targets and a timetable for reducing Delaware’s total greenhouse gas emissions. Plan for extensive adaptation measures at all levels of government for climate change impacts that cannot be avoided---especially sea level rise.

Support public education and outreach; expand renewable energy and climate change in Delaware curriculum standards. As Delaware calculates energy costs, full life cycle analyses* with all externalities** must be included. Social and economic justice must be considered in implementing energy and climate change policy.

- ▶ **Coastal Zone** - Support for Coastal Zone planning which considers the best possible outcome for people, the land, and the coastal environment.
- ▶ **Critical Land Areas** - Support for preservation and/or protection of certain critical areas (ecologically fragile estuaries and coastal areas, farmland, flood plain, aquifers, and natural areas); erosion and sedimentation controls; and coordination among all levels of government in decisions involving major facilities.
- ▶ **Farmland** - Support of a farmland preservation program.

LAND USE /TRANSPORTATION

- ▶ Support of the regulation of growth and optimum use of land through comprehensive planning policy. Monitoring of land use policies and procedures and their relationship to human needs, population trends, transportation planning, and ecological and socioeconomic factors. Encouragement of continuing cooperation among governmental agencies.
- ▶ Support of a balanced, intermodal transportation system interconnected with land use and based on interagency and inter-jurisdictional coordination.
- ▶ Support reducing transportation-generated greenhouse gas emissions by wiser land use planning and by enhancing public transit options. Some key points that should be included:
 - Direct development towards growth zones, except for environmentally sensitive areas within those growth zones; assure availability of infrastructure, services and walkability before developing. - Build compact, or dense, development within established development areas in which pedestrians can safely and conveniently access services; reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). - Modify Delaware's paratransit fee schedule to establish separate classifications for ADA* and non-ADA** service. - Reform the system to establish fairer pricing for non-ADA paratransit use. - Tighten eligibility requirements for all paratransit use in situations where the state has discretion. Establish a dedicated funding stream for public transit; explore a variety of funding sources.