

Other Program Ideas

LWV Public Policy Work – Part 2: Forging Ideas into Proposals

February 11, 2017 • 10am – noon

Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church • 728 W Fremont Ave, Room 203*

Draft program proposals to be discussed at this meeting are given in [another document](#).

This document lists other program ideas and summarizes both the status of League work on that issue and what might be done. Most of these ideas came up in the Part 1 meeting on Jan 7, but a couple arose since that meeting. Most of these ideas will be covered briefly in the Feb 11 meeting.

– Ideas that will be briefly overviewed on 2/11/2017 –

Action Issues: Immigration, Choice, ... – Local Leagues are seeing a sudden influx of new members since the November 2016 election, as are other organizations that stand for policy positions likely to be under attack in coming years. Many who showed up at the 1/21 Women’s March were concerned about issues like Choice. Immigration has since taken central stage. There is interest in capturing this energy and directing it toward positive purpose. Exactly what that means would need to be worked out, but one idea is to focus on aiding INDIVIDUAL action in response to concerns in policy areas where action can be supported by League positions and principles. We might also have opportunities for COLLECTIVE action (i.e. in the name of the LWV). More info: [Impact on Issues](#) – See pp 73-74 for LWVUS position on Immigration; see pp 25-27 for LWVUS position on Public Policy on Reproductive Choice.

Election Systems – The LWVC adopted a limited position under this title in 2001. Since then, proposals to do a new elections systems study have come up at many state conventions. The main interest is in reexamining different forms of proportional representation. So far, the LWVC board has never recommended a new study, but that could happen if many local Leagues requested this in their program planning input. In any case, this study is likely to come up at the State Convention on 6/2-4/2017. If this study were adopted, it would provide our members an opportunity to learn about election systems, including proportional representation. In the original 2000 study, our League had good participation in two consensus meetings on this topic. More info: [LWVC position on Election Systems](#).

Sunnyvale Charter Review – The Sunnyvale City Council will likely be looking at a couple of possible Charter amendments in the next year. We could leverage off that effort to form a group of LWVCS members to review the whole charter, perhaps issuing a report about possible amendments. The group might also do some member or citizen education on the basics of Sunnyvale’s city government. This could be a step in our League toward establishing a core of members who are familiar with Sunnyvale government. This work could be done with about 3-5 members, who would likely meet over several months and deliver presentations in one or more meetings to members and/or the public. This would not be a formal League study.

State Legislator Event(s) – The current state legislators for our two cities are as follows: for most of Cupertino – Senator Jim Beall (SD#15) and Assembly Member Evan Low (AD#28); for all of Sunnyvale – Senator Jerry Hill (SD#13) and Assembly Member Marc Berman (AD#24). The idea would be to have one or more events where League members, or possibly even other community members, could meet with legislators and hear them address issues. The exact structure of the “forum” would have to be determined: it might include both legislators for a city or only one at a time; it might be at a League-only event or open to the public; it might involve issues predetermined with the legislator(s) or provide opportunities for attendees to ask questions; etc. In any case, such events would need to be outside of election season.

Prop 13 Reform – A statewide coalition is now reforming with the intention of bringing Prop 13 reform to the ballot. The state League (LWVC) is part of that coalition, and will likely give this effort a relatively high level of support, when appropriate. The main reform intended is to introduce a “split roll”: property tax rules would stay the same as now for residential properties, while rules for commercial properties would be changed to allow more frequent reassessment to market value. LWVC has long supported this policy change. Our local League might choose to be involved with this effort through advocacy work and/or citizen education.

Twin Tunnels – LWVC is a respected advocate on water, with a long history of involvement. LWVC opposed the original peripheral canal and generally opposes the current project. LWVC has written on environmental aspects of this project, as well as matters of process. LWVC has no League citizen education tools on this project.

High Speed Rail – LWVC currently has no League policy people following this project, although it has environmental, transportation, and finance positions that might support action. They have not put a higher priority on this issue, because they do not feel League would have any impact on this project. There are no League citizen education tools on this project.

– Ideas from 1/7/2017 not slated on the 2/11/2017 agenda –

Initiative Reform – We have a strong state League position on Initiative & Referendum. The state League (LWVC) has a long history of involvement in this issue and follows all relevant state bills. LWVC has recently supported legislation on improvements to required hearings the Legislature must hold on all initiatives. Otherwise, there is no action possible now on initiative reform, as there is currently no political will to do anything. If that situation changes and reform becomes possible, LWVC will act.

Marijuana – There is no existing League positions on this issue at any level of government. At the state level, there has been no interest in this topic on the statewide program planning Yahoo group. Our local League does not have the expertise to do a full local League study. We could conceivably do citizen education locally on this topic, but we would not be able to engage in advocacy.

Voter ID at the polling place – The LWVUS staunchly opposes voter ID requirements, because they are an obstacle to voting for some people. A nationwide League update study would be required to revisit the issue of voter ID. Since national conventions occur in even years, this possibility is not under consideration this year. Also, it is highly unlikely that the LWV would seek to reverse its position on this matter at this time, especially given the ongoing voting rights issues in some states.

Member Education on LWV Positions & Advocacy – There has been an awareness for several years that our local League needs to enhance member understanding of League positions and how to use them. This idea will not be explicitly discussed on 2/11/2017, but some of the proposals and ideas that will be discussed could include this sort of member education. The LWVCS board will be bearing this in mind during their deliberations in upcoming months about a set of recommendations on program for 2017-2018.

* The room was changed on 2/9/2017, due to an error at the church. Room 203 is correct.

Last updated by Linda Davis: 2/9/2017