

NOTES ON ONGOING WORK AND OPPORTUNITIES

Background for Program Planning 2017-2019

League of Women Voters of California

This looks like a lot—and it is! That said, it isn't (completely) written in stone, and, if we have enough support from local Leagues, there is room to add or modify the work. We really do want to hear from you, both about your feedback on the agenda as we've outlined it, and on the issues you think we should emphasize.

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK IN CALIFORNIA:

Delegates to the LWVUS convention last June adopted a national “Campaign for Making Democracy Work” program, with a focus on:

- Voter protection and mobilization
- Election reform
- Money in politics, constitutional amendment, and redistricting.

In California, the League will be involved in implementing Making Democracy Work both at the state and at the local level. Here's some of what we know the LWVC will be doing:

- Expanding the electorate: continuing work to make the electorate in California more representative of the population as a whole.
- Election reform: continued improvements to the voting experience and the elections process:
 - Implementation of SB 450 – vote centers and increased vote by mail
 - Increased and stable funding for elections
 - Design improvements and standards for election materials, including ballots and vote by mail envelopes
 - Implementation of same day voter registration
 - Standards and improvements for acceptance of vote by mail and provisional ballots
- Money in politics:
 - increasing transparency of the money spent on elections, including both legislation and the implementation of the new campaign finance reporting system (Cal-Access)
 - Local government reforms such as public financing of local elections and ordinances limiting the size of campaign contributions.
- Redistricting:
 - Supporting local redistricting reform efforts
 - Starting the statewide preparations for the redistricting process following the 2020 census, with attention to measures that count people in prisons appropriately (avoiding “prison gerrymandering”) and an adequate budget for the state Citizens Redistricting Commission.

Some of these items are statewide work, but a number—especially implementation issues—are areas in which we hope local Leagues will be active.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEAGUE IMPACT:

Here are a few more issues where the League has been active and/or League leaders anticipate ongoing work:

- Higher education: We expect to use our newly adopted position on Public Higher Education, for example to support or oppose legislation about funding of the state's higher education systems
- Equity issues in the distribution of school construction bond funds
- Housing: increasing the supply of low and moderate income housing
- Aspects of the criminal justice system, including felon disenfranchisement, privatization of prisons (for-profit prisons), and alternatives to incarceration
- Water: The LWVC will continue to act on issues such as water availability and quality, especially for low-income or disadvantaged users; environmental protection; and sustainable management of groundwater
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): continuing to oppose proposals that limit the public's chance to weigh in on community land-use and environmental decisions; supporting proposals that streamline but do not weaken the CEQA process
- State and local finances (SLF): We have joined in community education and action on proposals to modify Proposition 13 but have not taken action in other areas where our SLF position gives insufficient guidance, such as revenue bonds, sales tax on services, or earmarking/long-term funding for programs established by initiatives. Should we do a limited update study?