

NONPARTISAN POLICY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER TUCSON ADOPTED 1996; MODIFIED AND READOPTED OCTOBER 7, 2016

GENERAL

The League of Women Voters (at the national, state, and local levels) is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation in government. After careful study and member consensus, the League influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The LWV Greater Tucson does not support or oppose any political party or any candidate. It does encourage its members, as individuals, to participate actively in all aspects of the partisan political process.

Every League member must take the responsibility for clearly differentiating between her/his personal opinion and the League position.

Members of the Board of Directors shall be diligently nonpartisan and they shall avoid any appearance to the contrary. Board Members shall take great care that all meetings of the LWV/GT adhere strictly to our nonpartisan policy in every detail, in every detail, in every nuance, and regarding every speaker. They will avoid introducing party positions at League meetings, speaking in a partisan way in any situation publicly identified with the League, circulating petitions at League meetings/events on issues unless they are approved and endorsed by the League Board. The Board has the responsibility of maintaining the fact of nonpartisanship of the organization. Only the President or his/her appointed representative may speak in the name of the League.

Board members shall not run or hold any elected state or county office. Certain Board members may run for and hold a local elective office after disclosure and consultation with the Board.

Board members, except for the President, the Chair of the Observer Corps (and Observers with respect to the governing bodies they observe), and the Voter Service Chair, may sign a nominating petition for a candidate; contribute time and money to a candidate or party; sign petitions approved and endorsed by the

League; circulate petitions for individuals, circulate petitions for issues at League events/meetings if approved and endorsed by a League position. Activities of a spouse, partner or relative of a Board Member shall be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of the Board member.

When representing the League's point of view to any organization, the state legislature, or any other public body, the League's Registered Lobbyists or other spokespersons shall strictly adhere to this nonpartisan policy. We need to be reminded of this when we are making any public statement including any statement made in emails or in social media sites or websites.

Written and Oral reports and emails should be related to a League issue and must be consistent with the mission and goals of the LWV. They should be non-partisan, not derogatory, not inflammatory, and nondiscriminatory. They should be respectful of others and try to understand the other's points of view, and don't engage in personal attacks.

League's nonpartisan reputation is too important to risk. The aim is always to avoid any misunderstanding of League character and purpose.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR CANDIDATE FORUMS

A Forum Planning Committee is organized to contact candidates, make arrangements for a facility, and spell out how the Forum will be conducted. **The Committee is chaired by the Forum Coordinator, the League's Voter Service Chair** and one or more representatives of any co-sponsoring organizations. The President of the League may serve on the Committee ex officio.

When candidates have committed to participating, they are sent a letter describing the format and identifying the topics to be covered in preliminary questions to be asked by the League and the cosponsor. Questions addressing these topics are prepared by the Forum Planning Committee and provided to the Moderator to be asked after candidates give opening statements. This is done to kick off the question period as written questions from the audience are being gathered and screened. No other questions to candidates will be submitted by the League or the forum cosponsor.

Two people are identified to serve as question screeners. At least one of them will be from the League of Women Voters and the other may also be a League member or a representative of the cosponsoring organization. These people will be informed of the questions provided to the Moderator by the Forum Planning Committee. Guidelines for screening are to avoid duplication and to group questions on the same topic into small piles so the Moderator will know that several

people have asked about the subject. Questions off-topic, not relevant or accusatory in nature will be set aside. The screeners will use their best judgment to withhold questions deemed inflammatory or not pertinent.

The Candidate Forum Coordinator will be responsible for oversight of the following activities:

1. Planning for forums needs to be transparent and checklists of activities needs to be provided to the Board.
2. Summaries of actions by the planning group will be provided to the Board.
3. If a cosponsor representative is not present at a meeting, the Coordinator or Voter Service Chair will verify that the cosponsor understands deadlines for such things as questions submitted by the team to the moderator.
4. Materials to be distributed at the forum will be developed and approved by the team well in advance of the event.
5. Recruitment of floor aides and question screeners will be done by the team well in advance of the event.
6. These procedures, which comprise nonpartisan guidance policy, will be made available to all League members working on Voter Education Projects at all coordination meetings.
7. These procedures will be attached to the Board adopted Nonpartisan Policy where it **appears in the Membership Handbook and on the League's website.**