



PROGRAM PLANNING 2023-25

The Program Planning Process

Input from our members helps establish a viable and exciting program that provides the tools to engage in public policy change at local and state levels.

State Program planning is the primary means for shaping the state League's public policy program, culminating with the adoption of the 2023-25 LWVIL program at the State Convention. The planning process reflects the partnership between LWVIL and local Leagues.

Through the program planning process, local Leagues begin working on or planning for potential program changes that could ultimately be enacted at Convention. It is to a League's advantage to promote an idea early in the process to generate enthusiasm and support. If there is enough interest and commitment demonstrated by the local Leagues, the Board may recommend amending the program as suggested by the local Leagues through the [Program Planning Response Form](#).

LWVIL PROGRAM PLANNING CALENDAR

December 2022- February 2023: Local Leagues develop their program planning recommendations and develop and distribute "lobby" materials for locally proposed program items or concurrence proposals (including the restudy/update and new studies and action focus options discussed below). Again, concurrence materials must be distributed to all local Leagues six weeks prior to Convention.

March 1, 2023: Local League [Program Planning Response Form: 2023-25 Biennium](#) is due. This deadline allows the Board to review the recommendations of local Leagues and potentially propose program changes based on those recommendations in April.

Early April 2023: The state board considers local League input, as well as state budget and bylaws, makes program recommendations and then shares these with Local Leagues by April 30.

April 28, 2023: Any local League planning to propose the adoption or amendment of a state League position by concurrence on the floor of Convention shall send background information, including pros and cons on the issue and an explanation of the rationale for using this form of member agreement at least 6 weeks prior to Convention.

June 9-11, 2023 LWVIL Convention delegates vote on the proposed program.

LWVIL PROGRAM PLANNING RESOURCES

The following resources can be found on [LWVIL website](#) under League Resources>For Members:

- Background about Positions
 - Overview of Program Planning & Current Positions: Video
 - LWVIL: Where We Stand, 2021-23
 - LWVUS: Impact on Issues, 2020-22
 - Positions in Brief 2021-23: Summary of LWVIL Positions
- Overview of Program Planning/Studies
 - Dimensions of a Local League Study
 - Program Planning: From Choice Through Action
- Resources for local League meetings
 - Speakers Available for Local League Programs
 - 2022 Suggested Resources for League Meetings & Discussion: Books, Movies, etc.

Local Leagues are encouraged to contact the Chair(s) of Issues & Advocacy at issues@lwvil.org to discuss a program initiative at any time before or during Convention.

LWVIL PROGRAM PLANNING PROCESS

1: REVIEW CURRENT LWVIL POSITIONS

Existing LWVIL positions, outlined in *Positions in Brief* and explained in *Where We Stand*, provide the basis for League advocacy and lobbying. The first step in program planning is to review current LWVIL positions, making sure to consider whether:

- the goals addressed by the position have been met
- there is still member interest, understanding, and agreement on the item
- the position is still relevant

2: MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON CURRENT LWVIL POSITIONS

Possible recommendations for current positions, to be submitted on the Program Planning Response Form:

- **Retain** - continue to act upon the current position as is
- **Restudy/Update** - modify or change all or part of a current position
- **Drop** - eliminate a position from the League's agenda

Regarding the Restudy/Update option, please note: if a local League or Leagues wish to pursue the restudy process on any position, they must plan to inform other local Leagues and to generate statewide support for a proposed change at the State Convention. While the state League can help, the responsibility for restudy/update primarily lies with the local League or Leagues.

Regarding dropping a position, please note: if a position is dropped, no action or lobbying can be undertaken in that area without a new study (as discussed below).

3: MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW STATE-WIDE STUDY AND/OR A NEW ACTION FOCUS ITEM

On the Program Planning Response Form, local Leagues also have an opportunity to recommend new studies or new action focus items.

NEW STUDY: Local Leagues study an issue to educate members on a public policy issue as a prelude to action. A **new study** is **ONLY** necessary if there is no League position on an issue at any level, local, state or national. A **position update study** is necessary if the current position is outdated/inadequate.

NEW ACTION FOCUS: An **action focus** is a high-priority program item adopted by delegates at Convention (for example, increasing school funding). **After adoption, state and local Leagues act as partners over a two-year period to promote the goals of the action focus.** LWVIL provides informational material and training to help local Leagues engage in effective action in their communities, while LWVIL engages in complementary activities at the state level. An action focus recommendation is appropriate if there is an existing state or national position on an issue. It can combine citizen education and advocacy.

PLEASE NOTE: *When deciding to recommend a new study or action focus a local League should carefully consider the resources at both the local and state levels needed to accomplish any item(s), relative to the interest and commitment of its members. A state study or action focus means on-going local League involvement and activity on the item. It is therefore particularly important for a local League to consider new items in the context of its local program and activities and its own willingness or ability to participate.*

When evaluating a new study or proposed action focus, consider the following key questions:

- Does **your League** have a strong and broad member interest in the issue?
- Is **your League** willing and able to work on the issue?
- Is the issue of **statewide** interest?
- Will timing and political realities permit effective League action?
- Is League involvement likely to make an impact?
- Is there an existing state or national position that can be used as a basis for action? If yes, an action focus may be needed. If not, a new study is needed.
- If a position is being developed solely at the local level, does it conflict with any state or national positions? The League speaks with one voice. Positions at different levels do not contradict each other.

4: TAKE NOTE OF OTHER ROUTES TO ACTION

Concurrence

In addition to the program planning process, a local League or Leagues can propose the adoption or amendment of a state League position at Convention via "concurrence." Concurrence is the "act of agreeing with" a position developed by (1) recommendations of a resource committee, (2) decision statements formulated by League boards, or positions reached by another League or Leagues.

Concurrence is an appropriate process when the item recommendation in question is straightforward and non-controversial. Leagues that are considering promoting the adoption or amendment of a state position by concurrence should note the adoption process outlined in the LWVIL by-laws. Studies of Positions conducted by other Leagues can be searched through the [LWVUS Clearinghouse](#).

PLEASE NOTE: Local Leagues pursuing this form of member agreement must send background material, including pros and cons and a rationale, to all Leagues six weeks before Convention.

Will Of Convention

At Convention, a local League may present a motion directing the state League to take legislative action on an issue related to state government or to state League program. The issue must be covered by an existing position at the state or national level. A motion may also direct the state League to request action on the national level. Generally these motions ask the state League to contact state constitutional officers or state legislators concerning a specific advocacy position. A delegate wishing to present a Will of Convention Motion must consult the LWVIL Chair(s) of Issues and Advocacy, issues@lwwil.org, prior to the opening of Convention.

Legislative Priority

While an **action focus** is a program item adopted by delegates at Convention, **Legislative priorities** reflect both the interests of the League and the prevailing political climate. Legislative priorities are approved by the LWVIL Board based on recommendations forwarded by the Issues Committee. Local Leagues are notified of the priorities after the state Board approves them.

PLEASE NOTE: Program changes can be initiated **before** Convention, as explained in steps #1-3, or **during** Convention, as outlined in step #4.

The [Program Planning Response Form: 2023-25 Biennium](#) is due **March 1, 2023**.