

League of Women Voters Non Partisan Policy

This policy is to be reviewed and endorsed or revised at the beginning of each League year and subsequently published in the VOTER. This policy was reviewed by the LWVODC Board of Directors in 2008 and approved.

The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any political party or candidate, but it takes positions on selected governmental issues.

The League's purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government.

The League of Women Voters is nonpartisan in that it does not support or oppose any political party or candidate; it is political in that it takes positions on selected governmental issues after member study and agreement.

While the League urges its members to be politically active, certain constraints are necessary in order to maintain the nonpartisanship of the organization. Therefore, the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Orange, Durham and Chatham Counties has established the following guidelines in order to protect the League's nonpartisan reputation:

Board of Directors

The Board has the responsibility to maintain the fact of the nonpartisanship of the organization.

1. Except for the President, First Vice President, and the Voter Service Chairperson, Board members may take an active, visible role in a political campaign or for a non-League Issue, actively participate in fundraising for political purposes, host political functions, or otherwise publicly associate with a candidate's campaign.
2. All Board members may attend political fundraising functions and make contributions.
3. Any Board member, upon resignation from the Board, may run for or hold political office. However, public notices released by the League announcing the resignation of the board member must be carefully worded to avoid the appearance of the League endorsing the resigning board member's candidacy.
4. The political activities of a spouse or relative of a Board member should be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of the Board member.
5. When there is doubt as to whether a conflict of interest exists with a Board member's political activity, the matter shall be resolved by a vote of the Board, excluding the person(s) who may have the possible conflict.

Members

Members are encouraged to participate fully in the political process, serve on public boards and commissions, and participate in political activities as individuals without implying or receiving League endorsement. When acting in the public as League representatives, members must not allow partisanship to be discernable. Therefore, to help ensure the League's nonpartisanship, the following guidelines apply:

1. League members shall not wear candidate buttons to League functions nor wear a LWV button while campaigning for candidate(s) or non-League issues.
2. No candidate materials shall be distributed at League functions.
3. Only the LWV President and/or her/his designee may present League statements to governmental boards, commissioners or the press.
4. Since a general policy cannot cover every situation, the Board is empowered to deal with specific cases as they arise.

League Positions

Once League (local, state or national) takes a position on an issue, members may not identify themselves as League members when publicly expressing an opinion that is in opposition to a League position.

League Roster

The League's roster will not be made available for non-League use.