

## **LWVWI Policy Concerning Membership in Coalitions**

Recommended by the Legislative Committee, Approved by LWVWI Board, September 6, 2005

The Legislative Committee should review all affiliations with coalitions every biennium. Because coalitions come in many types and for many reasons, hard and fast rules about joining should be avoided. However, there are a number of issues which should be discussed in determining whether the League should become involved. When the legislative committee makes a recommendation to the LWVWI board to join a coalition, it should consider the following questions to justify its recommendation:

- What is the goal of the coalition and is it clearly defined?
- Why does the goal need to be met?
- Is the goal consistent with LWV positions?
- Does the coalition clearly reflect our mission of education and advocacy?
- What organizations are participating in the coalition? Are they non-partisan?
- Who is taking the leadership of the group?
- Is this a permanent coalition or an ad hoc organization?
- What would be the League's financial obligation and is it clearly stated?
- What kind of participation is expected of the League - e.g. name only, financial assistance, better use of our resources, access to our grass roots, membership on the governing committee, etc.?
- Will we have the option to refuse to participate in a particular action, with the possibility of dissuading taking of the action?
- What will the LWVWI gain from belonging to the coalition – e.g. access to information, making better use of resources, building networks with other groups, etc.?
- Will the coalition increase League's effectiveness in reaching our goal(s)?
- Could we work more effectively by staying outside the coalition but publicly supporting its goal and actions?
- Will the League have a representative to the group and if so, is there someone available to fill the job?

If the decision is to join the coalition, it should be with the understanding that we may withdraw from the organization any time we are dissatisfied with its functioning.

Should the League decide to undertake the forming of a coalition to take some action in support of its position on an issue or cluster of issues (e.g. voting rights), similar questions to those above should be addressed. In addition, the following questions should be considered:

- What organizations would be interested in working for our goal?
- What kind of structure should the coalition have?
- What role would the League play in the organization?
- What would be the financial needs and what would be League's responsibility?

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