



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WISCONSIN

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### **Support Health Care Reform Necessary Components of Viable Health Care Reform in Wisconsin**

There can be no dispute that reform is needed to bring quality health care to every citizen of our nation. The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is hopeful that our state can lead the country in developing health care policy reforms that will bring a new high standard of health care to Wisconsin residents.

We believe that financial resources should not be a barrier to basic health services. No family should have to choose between medical and financial health when faced with injury or illness. Wisconsin needs a plan for health care reform that puts basic health care well within the financial reach of every family, regardless of insurance policy or financial situation.

While our state boasts some of the best health care practitioners and facilities in the world, an enormous gulf stands between our citizens and quality health care. Minor illnesses and routine prescriptions can be a major dilemma for those with high premiums or deductibles and for those who do not have health insurance, while serious illness or injury constantly threatens to place entire families in financial turmoil. For those seeking new or better health insurance, the myriad plans and possibilities are almost incomprehensible, making adequate coverage at an affordable price almost impossible to find.

Wisconsin must find a way to provide coverage for all, both to protect our citizens and to relieve the financial burden on the state. Health coverage that includes prevention and early treatment will mean a healthier population and a reduced health care bill for the state. Preventive health care can lead to fewer hospital visits and a higher life expectancy for adults, while for children it can mean a better education through fewer missed school days and fewer distractions from misery that comes with an untreated cold, flu or toothache. Ultimately, preventive care is cheaper for the state and taxpayers, saving billions of dollars which reimburse hospitals for uninsured patients.

Health coverage in Wisconsin must also include a choice of provider and location to ensure that every individual receives quality care. Wisconsin residents must receive quality treatment, regardless of their mobility or easy access to transportation.

Many proposals to reform Wisconsin's health care system are now before the legislature. As they are considered, the League of Women Voters hopes that top consideration will be given to those plans which:

- Guarantee full health care coverage to every Wisconsin resident.
- Provide coverage for preventive education and care as well as early detection of illness, both of which can lead to cost savings for the state as well as a healthier population
- Include provisions to give patients choice in where and from whom to seek care.
- Provide government funding to ensure the above requirements are met. The state has a responsibility to its citizens to ensure that they receive quality health care at a reasonable cost.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin looks forward to working with all groups dedicated to providing high quality, affordable health care to the citizens of this state. We happily anticipate an age in which all Wisconsin residents have easy access to the full range of medical services that now only the well-insured enjoy.