

Revised Position

adopted at the 60th Convention on June 16, 2007

Voting Rights

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin believes that voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed. Wisconsin election laws should provide citizens with maximum opportunity for registration, voting at the polls, and absentee voting, including convenient hours and accessible places. Election administration should be adequately coordinated and funded to achieve both statewide standards uniformly applied and local municipal effectiveness.

Regarding Voter Registration, we support:

- Provision for well trained special deputy registrars authorized to register voters from any municipality in the state
- No requirements that place undue burden on potential registrars or barriers to training
- An accurate statewide voter registration list that is adequately maintained and protected from undue deletions
- Eligibility requirements applied uniformly to all electors
- Wisconsin's successful Election Day registration to be preserved
- A variety of proofs of identification and of current address to be retained

Regarding Voting, we support:

- Poll workers that are adequately recruited, trained and remunerated
- No photo ID or other requirements that place undue burden on the voter or erect barriers to voter participation
- Restoration of the voting rights of felons upon their release from incarceration
- Provisions for observers at the polls
- Public observation of tabulation of votes
- Provisional ballots and well-defined redress of grievance procedures
- Protection against fraud at the polls

Regarding Absentee Ballots, we support:

- Broad availability of absentee ballots with no explanation needed to obtain a ballot
- Ease of obtaining and executing absentee ballots including adequate timing

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Natural Resources

Energy

Global Warming

Global warming threatens the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems as well as the economic, social, public health, and even the survival of the populations of the Earth. To stop global warming requires stabilizing atmospheric CO₂ before the end of the 21st century at less than double the pre-industrial concentration.

Support of:

Accepting our responsibilities as global citizens to stop global warming

Urging the State of Wisconsin, municipalities, individuals and corporations/businesses to use existing technologies to:

- a. Make power plants, buildings and factories more efficient;**
- b. Make motor vehicles go farther on a gallon of gasoline; and**
- c. Shift to cleaner technologies.**

Urging Federal leadership to adopt nationwide global warming pollutant reductions of at least 20% by 2020 and 80% by 2050, the levels of reductions of CO₂ from the 1990 level that United Nations scientists say are needed.

Providing assistance to those harshly affected by global warming, especially low-income individuals and families.

Electric Energy

Support of:

1. Limiting the demand for electricity

Success depends on all entities (governments, corporations and shareholders, individuals) taking responsibility for their consumption and contributing to energy self-reliance.

- a. Reduce the use of electricity through a wide range of programs that promote conservation (behavioral change), energy efficiencies (using energy with fewer overall resources), co-generation* and distributed generation.**
- b. Use voluntary and regulatory energy demand management strategies.**
- c. Include rate structures and pricing strategies, such as peak demand, that incorporate the true cost of energy, which is not reflected in the current market system.**

2. Financial incentives to advance clean energy technologies

Increase funding and grants for technology transfer, research and development of new fuel sources, and improved methods to reduce polluting effects of energy production.

Government, industry and other private sources should invest in such efforts with safeguards against conflict of interest. We support making tax incentives available on a sustained basis until new technologies are established and competitive.

3. Siting of power plants, transmission lines and natural gas pipelines

The process for evaluating the suitability of new proposed power plants, electric transmission lines and natural gas pipelines should include:

- a. Ample and effective opportunities for informed participation by all affected governments and the public in the formulation and analysis of proposed projects;
- b. Procedures for resolution of intergovernmental conflicts, including between states and the Regional Transmission Operator as well as with Canada in accord with international treaties;
- c. Examination of all short- and long-term economic costs including, but not limited to, construction, delivery, operation, maintenance and impacts on price, supply and demand;
- d. Evaluation of economic, social, environmental and aesthetic impacts in the electricity generation area, the receiving area and any area through which the transmission line or pipeline must pass;
- e. Routing any new transmission lines or pipelines along existing transportation and utility corridors, to the greatest extent possible;
- f. Ensuring all infrastructure is constructed and maintained in an environmentally sensitive and safe manner;
- g. Protection of sensitive on-shore and off-shore public lands and prohibition of drilling in and around the Great Lakes;
- h. Limiting the use of Wisconsin lake and river shoreline for power plant sites;
- i. Standards for thermal effluent limitations that protect background water temperature and overall surface water quality; policies that prohibit once-through cooling systems.

Note: Further positions and guidelines affecting the siting process are under Land.

4. Restrictions on fossil fuels

Aggressively reducing CO₂ emissions to stop global warming requires de-carbonizing energy sources and storing carbon biologically or geologically.

- a. Coal. The LWVWI supports prohibition on any new coal-fired plant, or any existing plant being rebuilt, unless it is equipped to:
 - i. Co-fire renewable fuels
 - ii. Capture usable steam for co-generation*
 - iii. Integrate gasification and combined cycle technology
 - iv. Capture carbon using the best available control technology
 - v. Sequester carbon using the best available control technology
- b. Natural Gas. The LWVWI supports:
 - i. Promotion of maximum use of energy efficiencies and renewables to conserve use of natural gas
 - ii. Capture of usable steam for co-generation
 - iii. Advocating that imports of natural gas do not come from environmentally sensitive areas or from countries without adequate environmental safeguards

5. Restrictions on nuclear power

The LWVUS recognizes nuclear power as a part of the nation's energy mix, but it opposes reliance on nuclear fission. More specifically, the LWVWI, within LWVUS guidelines, supports:

- a. Prohibition of further licensing and construction of nuclear fission reactors until scientific questions regarding their effects upon public health and safety can be resolved;
- b. Stringent radioactive effluent release standards throughout the nuclear cycle (production, transport, use, on-site or interim storage, decommissioning, long-term storage and reprocessing) for maximum protection of both the environment and public health and safety.

6. Electric energy planning

The Public Service Commission (PSC), acting under the Legislature and the Governor, is the primary energy planner in the state. The LWVWI supports the following requirements for electric energy planning:

- a. Adherence to the LWVUS Natural Resources positions for resource management decisions and comprehensive long-range planning;
- b. A planning timeframe of not less than 20 years, with review and update of strategy options and specific proposals on a regular basis;
- c. Integration of PSC plans with those of Wisconsin utilities and reflection of these in the plans of the Regional Transmission Operator;
- d. Responsibility of policy makers to take into account global impacts of their decisions;
- e. Sustained and integrated involvement of the public and affected governmental units in all aspects of formulation and analysis of energy policy;
- f. Requirement of the PSC and other statewide energy planners to continually provide the public with information about electric energy, the policies and priorities that govern the use of electricity, the energy industry and the significant energy issues currently under consideration.

7. Regulation of public utilities

The provision of electric power is an essential social and economic need. It is vital to the public interest and common good. As such it has historically been highly regulated by the government. The LWVWI supports:

- a. Continued regulation of public utilities;
- b. Regulation of utilities that is fair, open, transparent and accessible to the public in all of its proceedings. Accurate comprehensive information must be available to consumers for educational and decision making purposes;
- c. A strengthened PSC with adequate funding and staffing to assure good decision-making and the ability to fulfill statutory responsibilities.
- d. An independent regulatory process free from undue political and utility influence;
- e. A minimum of a two-year waiting period before a commissioner or high level staff of the PSC can be hired by a utility.

Note: Further positions and guidelines affecting Energy are under LWVUS Energy.

*Co-generation: simultaneously generating electricity and usable waste heat

New Position

adopted at the 60th Convention on June 16, 2007
in concurrence with the position of LWV Milwaukee County

Lending Industry Practices

Support of:

- **Provisions to provide consumers accurate and complete information on the costs of loans (terms, interest, fees and penalties). Consumers would benefit if provided information about other financial options.**
- **Provisions for all lenders to implement a tracking system to enable shared information on monitoring of loans; preventing overuse of rollovers and concurrent loans. Lenders should be encouraged to assist in providing consumer education.**
- **Efforts of municipalities in Wisconsin to use the avenues available to regulate non-chartered lending businesses. The Milwaukee Task Force on Convenient Lending recommendations are reasonable standards.**
- **Encouraging chartered financial institutions* to maintain a presence in low to moderate income areas.**
- **State and federal regulations for the most important elements of consumer protection in the form of limits on interest, term, rollovers, amount and number of concurrent loans.**

At Convention in 2007, delegates unanimously voted for concurrence and adoption of the convenient lending practices position below as developed and approved by the League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County in May 2007.

*Chartered financial institutions cover banks, savings & loans and credit unions. Convenient lenders are not regulated or chartered.