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Road maps

A "How-to" Series
to Help the
Community, the
Bench and the Bar
Implement
Change in the
Justice System

**Judicial
Selection**

ABA

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- American Bar Association
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Road maps

A "How-to" Series
to Help the
Community, the
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Implement
Change in the
Justice System

by Patricia A. Garcia
for the American Bar Association

Judicial Selection

The Process of Choosing Judges

Acknowledgments

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No one can reasonably dispute the importance of an independent and qualified judiciary to insure fairness in our justice system and to protect the constitutional rights and liberties of all Americans.

The ABA is firmly committed to improving our system of justice and in particular, to securing qualified judges for all American courts, judges in whom the public can rightly have trust and confidence.

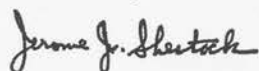
The method by which judges are selected and the judiciary's capacity to maintain the public's trust and confidence are inextricably linked. Today, we see that the integrity of our judiciary is too often demeaned by the necessity to raise campaign funds and engage in the rituals of sound bites and paid advertising necessitated by electoral politics in the 1990's.

Fortunately, there is a solution to this vexing problem—merit selection of judges. Selecting the judiciary through a process based on merit increases the public's confidence in the courts, draws better candidates to the bench, avoids the compromising aspects of election politics, and helps the justice system work more efficiently, more effectively and more fairly.

The *Judicial Selection Roadmap* is the first in a series of "how to" publications aimed at assisting the bar, the bench and the general public to implement meaningful change in the justice system within their jurisdiction. This publication provides insight into the process by which states select judges, and highlights a variety of real-life experiences in reforming the judicial selection process.

I am proud of the efforts by the Coalition for Justice and the Ad Hoc Committee on State Justice Initiatives to develop effective partnerships at the state and local level that can implement meaningful reform in the justice system.

The *Roadmaps* will be a resource for all groups interested in pursuing justice reform. We hope you find it both useful and inspirational in your efforts to make the promise of "justice for all" a reality in our nation.



JEROME J. SHESTACK, PRESIDENT
AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION (1997-1998)

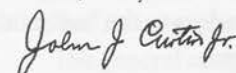
On behalf of the American Bar Association, we would like to thank each of you who uses this *Roadmap* for your interest in improving the justice system in your community and throughout the country. Since 1992, the ABA has conducted a "Justice Initiatives" program to encourage justice reform at the state and local levels by all those affected by the system—judges, lawyers, and citizens. The Coalition for Justice and the Ad Hoc Committee on State Justice Initiatives are parts of this important effort.

Over the past several years, members of communities across the nation have joined with bar associations and courts to identify and prioritize issues which affect the administration of justice. Through this process, several important issues have emerged.

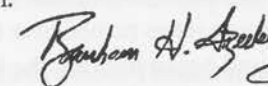
The *Roadmaps* series of informational packages is one of the ways the ABA is addressing these issues. We hope that this resource will provide citizen groups, bar associations, policy makers, courts, and other concerned individuals with tools to initiate reforms in key areas.

The first in this series, *Judicial Selection*, begins with a narrative which traces the history of judicial selection, analyzes various ways in which judges are elevated to the bench, and offers the reasons reform should be considered and the ways in which it is opposed. The general process by which reform can be initiated is outlined, and several reform methods are illustrated. Examples of the roads taken by particular states are provided, along with the names of individual contacts within those states. Specific discussion questions are suggested which will enable interested citizens to begin examining the issues within their jurisdictions. Readers are directed to experts within the ABA, the American Judicature Society, and other groups which can provide a wealth of additional resources to implement change.

Although the vast array of information available on this subject cannot be included here, we believe that the information in this *Roadmap* will lead you in the right direction and provide you with tools to assist you in moving forward. Ultimately, we hope to inspire you to examine the process in your own jurisdiction, and join with those seeking reform.



JOHN J. CURTIN, JR., CHAIR
COALITION FOR JUSTICE



BURNHAM H. GREELEY, CHAIR
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON STATE
JUSTICE INITIATIVES

Why Is Judicial Selection Important?

INTRODUCTION

The quality of justice delivered to all the people of our nation is an integral element of our society which preserves our democratic way of life. Because the quality of the judicial system is inextricably tied to the quality of its judges, the American Bar Association has always considered the judicial selection process to be of critical importance. The ABA first addressed this issue in 1937, when its House of Delegates adopted a policy in favor of the merit selection of judges. That position has been reaffirmed by the ABA in many ways during the succeeding sixty years. A summary of specific ABA policy in this arena may be obtained through the ABA Policy and Governance Group.

Concern regarding the process by which judges are selected should not, however, be the exclusive domain of lawyers and bar associations. Judicial decisions at all levels—from traffic court to the Supreme Court of the United States—affect each and every citizen, every day. Although the ABA feels strongly that bar associations and their leaders should be at the forefront of this effort, progress cannot and should not be made without the thoughtful and considered input of the many different segments of our communities.

Determinations of who will don the responsibility-laden black robes and pronounce judgments affecting one individual or the entire nation are too often made arbitrarily, with little insight and a lack of critical information. We hope that those who utilize this "Roadmap" will learn about the methods of judicial selection currently in use, the reasons why the issue is critical to all citizens, and the various ways in which a jurisdiction can move toward methods which can provide a more qualified and responsive judiciary. Ultimately, we hope that such knowledge will inspire you to seek these reforms within your own community.

HISTORY OF JUDICIAL SELECTION

When the government of the United States was first established, judges were almost universally appointed by chief executives and/or legislatures, to serve lifetime terms. As populist ideals began to emerge in the Jacksonian era, more and more states turned over the duty of selecting judges to the "will of the people," and began limiting the terms judges would serve.

In the late nineteenth century, there was a backlash against political party leaders with growing power, and many states moved to nonpartisan elections of the judiciary. After the turn of the twentieth century, dissatisfaction with the court system and a heightening of partisan politics led to early discussions of more radical "reform."

One of the first proposals which came to be prophetic was made in 1931, when the creation of nominating commissions which included lay (nonlawyer) citizens was advocated. That decade gave birth to discussions within the ABA, resulting in its first policy statement on the subject. The first ABA resolution in favor of the merit selection of judges which was passed in 1937 remains the cornerstone of its policy today. Simultaneously, several of the states began discussions of changes which would "take the politics out" of judicial selection.

The people of Missouri became the first to take direct action. As a result of citizens' opposition to a politically motivated attempt to elect a perceived unqualified judicial candidate, a statewide citizen's committee was formed to study the problem and propose reforms. The committee took the bold position that politics had no place in the judicial branch of government.

These forward-thinking citizens advanced the concepts that judges should be selected from the most talented lawyers available, should not have to engage in political campaigns, and should be secure in their positions as long as they did their jobs well. These innovative ideas reflected the deep belief that judges should devote one hundred percent of their time and energy to providing justice to the people of Missouri. The "Missouri Non-Partisan Court Plan" was placed on the ballot by petition and adopted in parts of Missouri by popular vote in 1940. That plan became the blueprint for those which followed many years later.

The trend emerged slowly, however, with little action from other states until the 1960's. Most of those states which now use a form of merit selection first adopted plans in the 60's, 70's, and early 80's. Today, more than two-thirds of the states and the District of Columbia use *some* form of merit selection to choose at least *some* judges, in at least *some* limited circumstances.

Although recent years have brought renewed discussions in a number of states, few major changes have actually taken place in the past decade. Examples of states that have recently undertaken significant steps seeking reform are provided in a subsequent section of this publication.

CURRENT METHODS OF SELECTION

Methods of selection of state court judges vary widely among the states, but fall generally into five broad categories. Some states use different methods to select judges at different court levels. None of these methods has only one form—each state has its own unique variations.

The general categories are described briefly below. The advantages and disadvantages of each are discussed in greater depth under "Reasons for Reform."

A brief outline of the federal judicial selection process is also set forth in this section. It is included as yet another specific example of how judges may reach the bench.

Legislative Appointment

Only a few states retain this method of judicial selection, in which the legislature has sole appointment power for trial and appellate court judges, with no input from a nominating commission. Once more widely relied upon, the role of state legislatures in most jurisdictions is now either nonexistent, or limited to confirmation of nominees chosen in another manner.

Executive Appointment

There are currently a small number of states in which the Governor has virtually unfettered judicial appointment power. In those states, the initial selection is made with no formal input from any source. In most instances, nominees must be confirmed by the legislature or some other body.

In many more states, Governors are empowered to fill vacancies on the bench. These are appointments only for unexpired terms. Such appointments, although outside the regular selection process, provide opportunity for control by the executive, as appointees attain the advantages of incumbency as described in greater detail below.

Nonpartisan Election

The names of judicial candidates running under a nonpartisan system appear on the ballot without party labels. There may be a primary election, followed by a general election, but in no instance is an individual directly identified with a political party.

Partisan Election

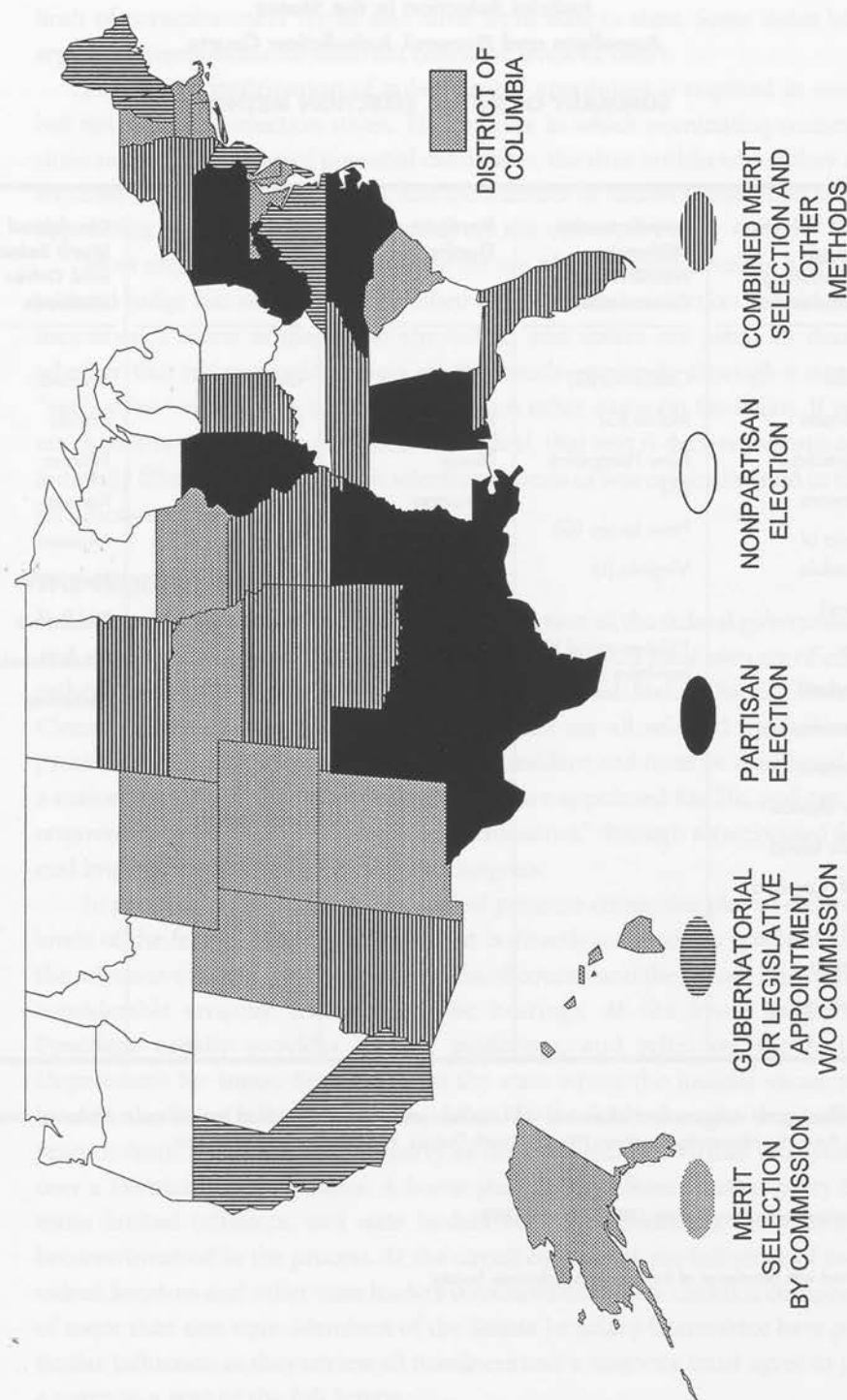
In a partisan election, judicial candidates usually run initially in a party primary to gain nomination. Subsequently, voters participate in a general election, in which a candidate's party affiliation is indicated on the ballot.

Merit Selection

This method is sometimes referred to as the "Missouri Plan," or the "Modified Missouri Plan." Although there are as many variations as states which employ this general means of selection, certain characteristics are fairly standard. A nominating commission selects several candidates to fill a judicial vacancy, and an elected official (usually the governor) appoints one of the names from that list.

There is significant variation regarding the size and composition of nominating commissions. Most include lawyers selected by their peers, and non-lawyers selected by the governor. Judges are part of this body in some instances. In certain states, a specified number of representatives of each political party must be included. Nominating commissions vary in size, and the length and

INITIAL JUDICIAL SELECTION METHODS



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Judicial Selection in the States
Appellate and General Jurisdiction Courts

SUMMARY OF INITIAL SELECTION METHODS

Merit Selection through Nominating Commission*	Appointment Without Nominating Commission**	Partisan Election	Nonpartisan Election	Combined Merit Selection and Other Methods
Alaska	California (G)	Alabama	Georgia	Arizona
Colorado	Maine (G)	Arkansas	Idaho	Florida
Connecticut	New Hampshire (G)	Illinois	Kentucky	Indiana
Delaware	New Jersey (G)	Louisiana	Michigan	Kansas
District of Columbia	Virginia (L)	North Carolina	Minnesota	Missouri
Hawaii		Pennsylvania	Mississippi	New York
Iowa	**Gubernatorial (G); Legislative (L)	Texas	Montana	Oklahoma
Maryland		West Virginia	Nevada	South Dakota
Massachusetts			North Dakota	Tennessee
Nebraska			Ohio	
New Mexico			Oregon	
Rhode Island			Washington	
South Carolina			Wisconsin	
Utah				
Vermont				
Wyoming				

*The following ten states use merit plans only to fill midterm vacancies on some or all levels of court: Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

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limit of commissioners' terms also differ from state to state. Some states have separate commissions for different courts or levels of court.

Legislative confirmation of gubernatorial appointees is required in some, but not all, merit selection states. The manner in which nominating commissions receive the names of potential candidates, the time within which they are required to make their selections, and the number of names transmitted to the appointing entity are also details which are not universal.

Most merit selection plans include the use of a retention election. After the selected judge has served for a specified period, such an election is held. The incumbent's name is placed on the ballot, and voters are asked to decide whether that judge should remain on the bench—generally through a simple “yes” or “no” vote. There is no opponent—no other name on the ballot. If voters choose not to retain a particular individual, that seat is declared vacant and is usually filled by the same merit selection process as was originally used in that jurisdiction.

THE FEDERAL SYSTEM

Federal courts are exclusively within the jurisdiction of the federal government, and are governed by the United States Constitution with their own set of rules rather than those of any state. Judges of the United States District Courts, Circuit Courts of Appeal, and Supreme Court are all selected by the same process. That is, they are nominated by the President and must be confirmed by a majority vote of the Senate. Federal judges are appointed for life, and can be removed only for “high crimes and misdemeanors,” through a rarely used formal impeachment process in the U.S. Congress.

In practice, different levels of political pressure come into play at different levels of the federal bench. The President is directly and actively involved with the selection of Supreme Court nominees, of course, and the Senate undertakes considerable scrutiny, including public hearings. At the lower levels, the President usually provides general guidelines, and relies on the Justice Department for input. Senators from the state where the judicial vacancy is located also have influence at these levels. It is widely thought that such a Senator from the same political party as the President has virtual veto power over a District Court nominee. A home-state Senator from another party has more limited influence, and state leaders from the President's party usually become involved in the process. At the circuit court level, the influence of individual Senators and other state leaders is reduced because a circuit is composed of more than one state. Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee have particular influence, as they review all nominees and a majority must agree to put a name to a vote of the full Senate.

The American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Federal Judiciary has evaluated federal judicial candidates for every administration since 1952. Professional qualifications in the categories of competence, integrity, and judicial temperament are considered and rated. In recent years, the ABA has not had advance notice of Supreme Court nominees, but for the lower courts, individuals are generally evaluated prior to actual nomination.

With the growing recognition that the federal district and appeals court judges can have a significant impact on policy, greater attention has been focused in recent years on nominees to those lower courts. Politics and ideology are often elements of consideration at every level. However, the ABA has adopted policy which encourages presidential selection of federal judges based on merit rather than political or ideological philosophies.

A troubling trend is the stalling of judicial nominees at both the Presidential and Congressional levels, with apparent political motives. When the focus of judicial nominations becomes the philosophical makeup of the judiciary, the process slows and the number of vacancies builds. This and other issues affecting the independence of the judiciary at all levels, federal and state, will be explored in greater depth in a "Roadmap" on that subject.

REASONS FOR REFORM

The election and appointment methods outlined in the previous section each has flaws and generates problems. It is therefore the belief of the ABA and many legal experts and scholars across the nation that some form of the merit selection process should be used in every state.

Appointment by the Governor or state legislature, with no impartial input or screening, has the highest risk of political pressure determining outcome. There is no satisfactory check or balance, and nothing to assure that quality will be paramount to political cronyism. Systems which utilize these methods seem to produce the highest numbers of appointments from the ranks of already active politicians. The desire to influence policy and/or pay back personal or political debts frequently supersedes other factors. Judges who are appointed in this manner usually continue to be reappointed and remain on the bench for life, with no means of being held accountable for the quality of their performance.

The majority of states continue to choose their judicial officers through some type of election process. This stems from a widespread belief that judges should be accountable to the people, as are leaders in other branches of government. Legislators and other elected officials are meant to be representatives of the views of voters. Judges, on the other hand, should be knowledgeable and impartial as they apply the law to the facts in the cases before them.

In most judicial elections, voters are asked to select judges with little or no meaningful data with which to make an informed choice among the candidates. In partisan elections, voters know which party the candidates are associated with, but little else. This encourages choice based directly on politics. In some instances, this practice causes an election for a local judge to turn on a national political issue not at all relevant to the tasks which that judge will face. In nonpartisan elections, this particular element is eliminated, but parties still have a behind-the-scenes role about which voters remain unaware. Most judicial elections generate low voter turnout, probably due in part to this lack of information. The ethical rules which judges must follow also impose constraints upon their public discussion of policy positions. This escalates the problem of lack of knowledge among the electorate.

A major disadvantage to judicial elections is the campaigns themselves, which can be both costly and time consuming, and create enormous ethical dilemmas for a judge. Many of the contributors to these campaigns are lawyers who will later appear in court before the judges they have supported (or failed to support). In several recent elections across the country, battles have been waged by trial lawyers and large corporations, each side spending millions of dollars in support of judicial candidates they believe are sympathetic to their positions. In some jurisdictions, there is an attempt to isolate judges from the direct solicitation and receipt of funds through campaign committees. However, it is questionable as to whether such committees can completely remove a judge from this process. At the very least, there remains an "appearance of impropriety"—a situation which judicial officers are bound by their rules of ethics to avoid. The ABA has established the Task Force on Lawyers Political Contributions to investigate, among other issues, judicial elections.

An election process provides absolutely no means of screening potential candidates. A candidate whose only qualifications are a familiar-sounding name or a photogenic face, may win ascension to the bench. Once elected, the incumbent's chances of later defeat are minimal. Incumbents have tremendous power. Lawyers may be reluctant to challenge a sitting judge. Most judicial elections are rather limited in scope, and thus the incumbent is most likely to have name recognition. As voters have such small bits of information, the fact that an individual is already a judge, whether good or bad, may well be the deciding factor at the polls.

Although accountability should certainly not be overlooked by any process, it must be weighed against the importance of judicial independence. The use of a merit selection process is meant to strike the appropriate balance.

The single most significant advantage to a merit selection system is quality assurance. Most citizens would agree that the goal in selecting judges should be to find those individuals who are the best qualified to serve. The nominat-

ing commission in a merit selection plan has available to it a great deal of data and facts about the candidates, usually has a chance to interview them, and subjects them to considered and thoughtful review. The process provides an opportunity for the commission to receive and take into account input from bar associations, citizen groups, and other experts.

The element of accountability is not absent from a merit selection system. Retention elections allow the people to pass judgment on a judge's performance on the bench. Many jurisdictions have procedures whereby citizen groups and other "court watchers" periodically visit courtrooms to observe judges and report their findings to the commission, the media, and others. This helps to counteract the power of incumbency, by providing some measure of objective evaluation which can be of guidance to the general electorate. As with any other selection method, judges who have gained their seats through merit selection are subject to various disciplinary procedures and removal mechanisms.

While there is no system which can completely eliminate political influence, merit selection significantly diminishes that influence. Even when politics does enter into the mix, quality is elevated because of the initial screening process. The fact that the appointment can be made only from among a carefully selected few reduces political cronyism. The ultimate appointment, usually by the Governor, is tempered by the influence of the broader based commission. In addition, the Governor must maintain a broad political base, subject to voter and media scrutiny, and thus is accountable to the people.

The absence of full-blown contested elections saves both dollars and time. Rather than spending the last year or more of each term on campaigning and fundraising, a judge can concentrate on doing her work, and doing it well. The prospect of facing a costly or hotly contested election campaign may discourage many qualified candidates from throwing their hats into the ring. On the other hand, the more measured and less public merit selection process may attract a greater number of candidates, more qualified candidates, and those seeking judgeships in order to serve their communities rather than to begin their own political careers.

A merit selection system includes all the critical elements needed to provide the public with a qualified judiciary, which will retain its independence, yet remain responsible and accountable for its actions. It minimizes political influence, and eliminates costly election campaigns. In summary, it makes our judges the very best that they can be.

OPPOSITION TO MERIT SELECTION

The merit selection process is certainly not without its critics. As with any reform, those who have operated under the "old" ways are reluctant to move toward the new.

One of the often-stated reasons for opposition to merit selection is the belief by many that the public should have the opportunity to select judicial candidates in open, contested elections, as they do with other government officials. Although there are retention elections, it is argued that voter turnout in those referenda is even lower than with other election processes, and incumbents gain an even greater advantage.

Merit selection opponents further argue that politics is not eliminated from this system, just transferred from popular politics to behind-the-scenes political control. The Governor's political influence, opponents point out, may simply be transferred from direct appointment of the judges themselves, to appointment of members of the nominating commissions.

Traditionally, one of the most vocal segments of the population questioning or even opposing use of a merit selection process have been minority organizations. Representatives of minorities and women have expressed concerns that a merit selection system may exclude those groups from the bench, or diminish their chances of filling those seats.

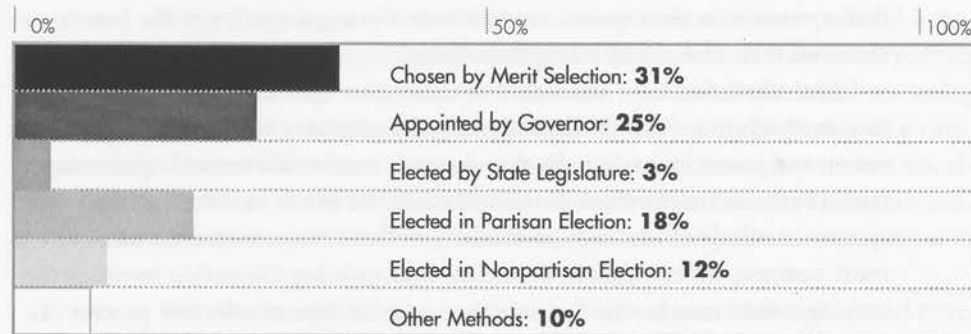
Several studies have attempted to determine how different judicial selection methods may affect judicial diversity. Results have been somewhat inconsistent and inconclusive, usually showing only minor differences in percentages found between the numbers of minorities on the bench in states with different systems. Analysis of results is particularly difficult because analysts most often must compare different states to one another, creating a situation in which the varying results may be due to more than just the type of selection process utilized. Two of the graphs found in this publication includes the results of studies undertaken by the American Judicature Society which indicate how African-Americans and women currently sitting on state supreme courts and courts of appeal were initially chosen for the bench.

The truth about which system provides greater benefits to women and minorities may depend greatly on the jurisdiction involved. In large urban areas with high minority populations, elections may put higher percentages of minorities onto the bench. In statewide elections, however, or in areas with minimal minority voting power, merit selection may provide greater diversity. Similarly, in a gubernatorial appointment system, outcomes may depend to a large extent on the political ideology of the Governor, and the extent to which he is dependent upon minority support to be re-elected.

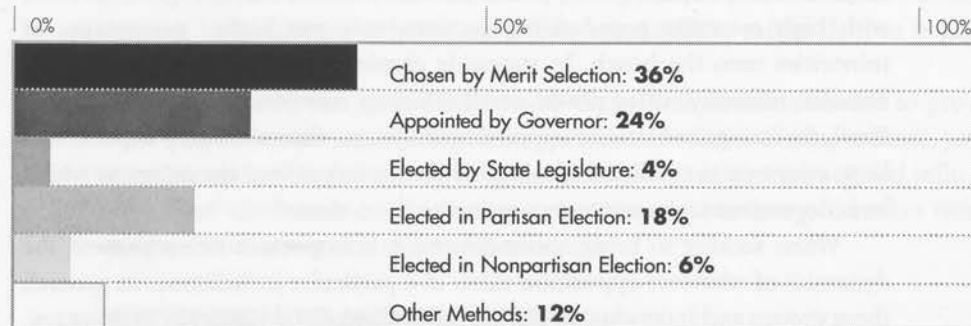
When seeking to bring about reform, it is important to understand the dynamics of whatever opposition exists in a particular jurisdiction. In general, those groups and individuals which have been successful under the existing system will probably be resistant to change of any kind. The current "powerbrokers" are also likely to oppose reforms if they believe their power and influence will be diminished.

One means by which opposition can be minimized is to include skeptics and naysayers in the reform process. It is more likely that support will be widespread if the reform process itself is inclusive of all groups and designed to obtain input from many different sources. If all stakeholders are made to feel that they are participants in reform, they will be better able to support that reform and be advocates for the final result.

Women Judges Currently Serving on State Courts of Last Resort and Intermediate Appellate Courts (January 1997)



African-American Judges Currently Serving on State Courts of Last Resort and Intermediate Appellate Courts (January 1997)



Information for these charts provided by the American Judicature Society.
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Where Should Reform Begin?

THE PROCESS

The process toward judicial selection reform can be a long and uphill battle. In order to accomplish such dramatic change, all those interested in improving the judiciary must band together. Although the ABA and the American Judicature Society, together with state and local bar associations and other groups of lawyers, should be leaders in this effort, it should not and cannot be their fight alone. Non-lawyer citizen involvement is indispensable if a positive outcome is to be attained.

In many states in which reform has taken place, it has been a direct result of a particular scandal or collapse of the selection process previously in place. Such a visible public crisis, usually accompanied by a great deal of media attention, can serve to motivate citizens at every level. When there is not the benefit of a dramatic turning point, change must be instigated in a different manner. Education of the general public about the current system and available alternatives is an important step in such a process. It is not an easy one, however. The media can be an invaluable resource in this endeavor. Efforts should be made to include members of the media as players in the process, in order to gain their perspective as well as utilize their resources.

Well-organized, existing citizen groups are also essential players. The League of Women Voters, Common Cause, Court Watchers, and other similar groups should be brought in at the earliest possible stages. Other local stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce, business leaders, labor leaders, ministers and church-based groups, educators and universities, to name only a few, must also be recruited as allies to help spread the word and encourage reform. Diversity is essential if any reform is to be effective.

The current political climate, which seems to include more and more citizens expressing an interest in campaign reform of all kinds, can also be exploited. In states in which judges are elected, there is a strong argument that the most critical place to begin election reform is with the judicial branch.

Some states have taken the first steps toward judicial selection reform with a town hall meeting or citizens' forum process. In several instances where the people have been given an opportunity to express their feelings about the justice system, concerns about judges' fairness and impartiality are paramount. These concerns should be channeled into concrete positive action toward reform.

PRELIMINARY REFORMS

It is critical that all concerned citizens take action to improve the system in order to be the beneficiaries of better qualified and independent judges. In some jurisdictions, however, adoption of a complete merit selection process may not come easily or quickly. This does not mean that bar associations and others seeking reform should abandon the fight. To the contrary, obstacles should be seen as a challenge to reform that must be met.

Nonetheless, even if ultimate sweeping change seems far in the future, there are incremental reforms that may be instituted more easily which can provide a greater level of quality control, and which should be considered and pursued. Some of those are discussed below.

Combination Systems

Movement toward merit selection may be made most readily by limiting that process at first to only a small percentage of the total judgeships available in a state. In several jurisdictions, merit selection is used only in appellate level courts, rather than for every judicial opening. Tactically, this may be an alternative way to begin to effect change.

In certain states, merit selection is used only to fill unexpired terms in systems where the usual method of choosing judges is some form of partisan or non-partisan election. There is certainly value in providing for the improved quality of judges to whatever degree possible. This approach also establishes a means of "testing" the new method, thereby allowing the players in the process to evaluate both their own roles and the quality of the jurists produced.

Such a limited system should not be viewed as a final goal. Rather, movement in this manner should be seen only as a step toward more sweeping reform.

Judicial Performance Evaluations

The establishment of an evaluation process for the judiciary can be instituted regardless of the selection process which is utilized. It is often an integral part of merit selection systems, but can be used in other systems as well. Such a process serves to improve the quality of judges by encouraging self-examination and responsiveness to criticism. It also can provide voters—whether in a retention election or a contested general election—with valuable information about the individuals seeking to remain on the bench.

The American Bar Association, in the early 1980's, undertook a project to craft guidelines for evaluation of the judiciary. The results were published in 1985. Information regarding that publication can be found in the "Resources" Section of this booklet.

Evaluations are generally conducted by an independent committee or commission, responsible to the state's highest court. Smaller states have only one such committee for all judges, some states have different groups evaluating different courts or court levels, and others have separate commissions for each judicial district or circuit. The composition of the commissions varies, but the ABA recommends a broad-based, independent group of judges, lawyers, and non-lawyers familiar with the judicial system.

The criteria which the ABA recommends be considered by evaluators are:

- integrity,
- knowledge and understanding of the law,
- communication skills,
- preparation, attentiveness and control over proceedings,
- management skills,
- punctuality,
- service to the profession and the public, and
- effectiveness in working with other judges.

The committee's proceedings should be confidential, but in order to have an impact on the selection process, it is critical that final results are made public and widely distributed to the media, the public, and the legal community. Judges should not be ranked or compared, and the process should under no circumstances be used to advocate a particular political or social philosophy.

Once again, the establishment of a formal evaluation process should not be the goal itself. It may be viewed instead as the first step toward greater public awareness about the quality of the judiciary. It can be a starting point for moving public opinion toward support of a system which provides better quality justice and diminished political influence.

Bar Association Polls

In many jurisdictions in which judges are elected, state and/or local bar associations conduct polls of some nature which seek to evaluate or recommend, from their member lawyers' point of view, particular judicial candidates. These take on many different forms, and are met with different levels of success and/or criticism. They differ from formal judicial evaluations in that the participants are limited to members of one organization, which may be a voluntary group and thus not representative, even of all lawyers within the jurisdiction. The percentage of respondents may also be low. Despite those problems, bar polls may be the easiest way to influence and improve judicial effectiveness, as it is within the control of a relatively small, supportive group.

There are several ways of turning a poll of this nature into a useful tool for

the public. The value of such a poll is increased if participating members evaluate judges in specific, relevant areas rather than with simply a "yes" or "no" vote, or a popularity contest. The areas outlined above for use in formal judicial evaluations can be a helpful starting point. Some attempt should be made to ascertain if the respondents have direct knowledge of a judge's qualifications. Additionally, the results of such polls should be widely disseminated, preferably by an objective newspaper or other media outlet.

As with formal judicial evaluations, great care should be taken not to rank candidates or compare them directly, and not to present results as a means to populate the bench with individuals having a particular judicial philosophy.

Voters' Pamphlets

Publications of this nature provide voters with information about judicial candidates and/or incumbents seeking to retain their seats. In some jurisdictions, these are combined with poll or evaluation results. In a few states, these pamphlets are distributed to all registered voters, at the expense of the state or in conjunction with candidate contributions. In many more instances, the pamphlets are prepared and distributed by citizen groups.

This type of unbiased data can reduce dependency on media and interest group preferences and provide all candidates with an equal opportunity to dispense facts to the voters. In states where polls have been conducted asking voters what resources are used and respected when electing judges, voters' pamphlets are ranked among the highest cited.

As with other preliminary reforms, these pamphlets do not produce sufficient levels of reform in and of themselves. They may serve to put the ideas of enhanced quality and judicial selection reform into the minds of the voters, who will then be more receptive to more substantial methods of reform.

Campaign Fundraising Reform

There are myriad reforms which should be considered which relate to fundraising and campaign expenses. Many possibilities exist which fall into this category, and are too numerous and complex to discuss in depth in this venue. Additional information on this subject can be located through the "Resources" Section of this publication.

Examples of actions that can be taken include voluntary or required caps on contributions; barring contributions from specific groups or categories of individuals; better or more stringent financial reporting requirements; prohibiting personal fundraising and encouraging public funding or group financing; prohibiting fundraising in uncontested elections; requiring return of surplus funds; and restricting the time period during which funds can be raised.

STATE EXPERIENCES

Space does not permit an in-depth analysis of the steps each state has taken to convert to a merit selection system, maintain a long-standing merit selection system, or consider a change to a merit selection system. However, several states with recent activity in this arena have been selected as examples to others undertaking any of those actions. These brief overviews should provide an understanding of some of the ways in which the issue of judicial selection reform may be approached. An individual is named in each state who can provide additional details and resources.

Arizona

Voters in the State of Arizona first adopted merit selection in 1974, for its Supreme Court, Courts of Appeal, and Superior Courts in its largest counties. This was accomplished by constitutional amendment. The system utilized was basically one with gubernatorial appointment from names selected by the nominating commission. Since that time, the system has faced various challenges which include movements to completely abolish merit selection as well as numerous plans for modifying the process used in that state.

In the early 1990's, specific questions began to surface regarding the effect of the state's merit selection system on Hispanic judicial candidates and other minorities. The legislature also supported the abolishment of merit selection, or at a minimum, changes in the process which would give that body greater input. Even some local business leaders took up the cause and sought the return to an electoral process. As these issues gained momentum, the challenges were brought to the attention of the general public. Most citizens felt as though the process of judicial selection was still a closed one, into which they had little input.

These debates were ultimately responsible for the crafting of "Proposition 109" which was approved by the voters in 1992. It addressed some of the concerns of the opponents, while retaining a merit selection system. Revisions were accomplished by constitutional amendments which changed the number of persons serving on commissions; required district-based representation of certain lay members (giving local county supervisors greater input); mandated that "diversity" be considered as to both judicial applicants and commission members; required the Supreme Court to set up a judicial evaluation process; and raised the population threshold for counties in which merit selection would automatically apply.

The groups most responsible for taking action to maintain a merit selection process were the State Bar of Arizona, the League of Women Voters, and various associations of judges. Through the use of the media, such as the editorial boards of local newspapers, the groups successfully brought the message

to the public regarding the value of merit selection. Proponents also called upon citizens involved with and aware of the system to help bring the message to other members of the public.

During the past five years, opponents have continued to challenge the system. All proposed variations have failed in the legislature. Those working to uphold the current system remain vigilant and continue to publicize their message. The State Bar of Arizona has taken an active role in the ongoing process of maintaining and improving their judicial selection system. The bar has also had an important role in the crafting and implementation of the performance review process.

- For further information regarding steps taken in Arizona, contact: Nancy Scheffel, Director of Human Resources, Administrative Offices of the Courts, 1501 W. Washington Street, Suite 227, Phoenix, AZ 85007, phone: (602) 542-9306, fax: (602) 542-9652, e-mail: nscheffel@supreme.sp.state.az.us

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania voters currently elect judges at all court levels, including the Supreme Court. The Pennsylvania Bar Association ("PBA"), along with Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts, has been on record for over 40 years advocating merit selection. Only once has that issue been voted upon by the general public—in the late 1960's, a referendum which would have established such a process was defeated. Since that time, the PBA has fought to revisit the issue, but all attempts have been unsuccessful in the legislature. Recognizing the reality that merit selection was not on the horizon, the PBA recently undertook two specific projects as interim methods to improve the present partisan election system.

The PBA believed the election process would benefit by the creation of a Judicial Evaluation Commission. The PBA had rated judicial candidates in statewide judicial elections for many years, but was unsure about the value of such procedure. Bar members themselves were polled in 1995, when they overwhelmingly favored continuing judicial rating, but expressed skepticism as to whether the general public knew or cared about the results. A subsequent citizens' poll found that less than half of the voters knew about the ratings, and more than three-quarters of those thought they were based on politics. The poll further found that those who did know about the ratings had read about them in the print media.

With assistance from the Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers' Association (PNPA), a Judicial Evaluation Commission was established, independent from the PBA, which is composed of nine lawyers and nine non-lawyers, with designated slots for the PNPA and the League of Women Voters. After review of a candidate-completed questionnaire and writing samples, and an interview by

the Commission, candidates receive ratings of "Highly Recommended," "Recommended," or "Not Recommended." If the latter rating is to be proposed, a candidate is given the opportunity to withdraw from the race before a public announcement is made.

This new process was first utilized in early 1997, in advance of the political primary races. In those contests, both political parties endorsed "Not Recommended" candidates. Parties and candidates receiving "Not Recommended" ratings attacked the integrity of the Commission and alleged political bias. The Governor issued a press release criticizing the Commission and urging voters to ignore the ratings.

After the primaries, two PBA members filed suit seeking the release of confidential documents used by the Commission. After the controversy worked its way through the court system, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled in favor of the PBA in October 1997. Because of the ongoing litigation, the Commission and the PBA did not publicize the ratings to the extent originally planned. Elections held in November 1997 resulted in the selection of four "Recommended" candidates and two "Not Recommended." Supporters hope that the next election cycle will be a better barometer of the success of the process.

In a further step toward election reform, the PBA adopted Judicial Campaign Advertising Guidelines, and a Pledge which each candidate was asked to sign. These were first implemented in the November 1995 elections, after which there were various complaints and concerns from the candidates, the bar, and the public. Subsequently, an Ad Hoc Commission on Judicial Campaign Advertising was established to review the Guidelines and improve enforcement mechanisms. That resulted in the process which remains in effect today.

A brief description of the process is as follows. The Judicial Campaign Advertising Board receives complaints, in writing, which must specifically identify statements in the candidate's advertising which allegedly violate a certain section of the Guidelines. If a candidate amends or pulls the offensive ad, no further action is taken by the Board. If not, the Pennsylvania Evaluation Commission is contacted to reconsider the rating it has given to the candidate, and a public announcement of the rating change and/or the violation is made. Complaints which are ruled frivolous or without merit are announced publicly as such.

The PBA and others seeking reform and improvement of the existing system have demonstrated that they are not willing to abandon their efforts, in spite of controversy and challenge. They continue to believe in the importance of a qualified judiciary, and remain optimistic that they will eventually succeed in moving to merit selection. In the meantime, the efforts undertaken have brought the issue to the attention of the public, and will hopefully result in an improved election process.

- For information regarding steps taken in Pennsylvania, contact: Vicki Hoak, Public Affairs Manager, Pennsylvania Bar Association, 100 South StreetPost Office Box 186, Harrisburg, PA 17110, phone: (800) 932-0311, extension 251, fax: (717) 238-7182, e-mail: pabar@ezonline.com

Rhode Island

A long history of political control of judicial appointments by the Rhode Island legislature led ultimately to recent reform. District and appeals court judges were previously appointed by the Governor, with Senate confirmation. By informal agreement, this had evolved into a system whereby the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House alternated control over the selection of appointees. The Supreme Court had traditionally been the product of action by the "Grand Committee"—both chambers of the state legislature acting together. This process gave the greatest level of control to the Speaker of the House. A well-developed, long-standing patronage operation was the result. Along the way, scandals plagued both the Supreme Court and the Court Administrator's Office.

During the summer of 1993, a local newspaper began to expose the most recent scandals which demonstrated the levels to which the patronage problems had escalated. Impeachment of the court administrator was imminent. *Right Now!*, a coalition of forces which had previously tackled other reforms within the state, sprang back into action to address the issue of judicial selection.

The leading organizations for this effort were Common Cause of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Bar Association, and the Rhode Island League of Women Voters. Other groups which made up the coalition included the Chamber of Commerce, The Rhode Island State Council of Churches, several environmental groups, the Catholic Diocese of Rhode Island, and prominent business leaders. They received a great deal of assistance with factual information and other expertise from the American Judicature Society.

The first task undertaken by this group was a campaign to convince the legislature to withhold appointment of a new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court until systematic changes could be put into place. As a result of this effort, a majority of the Senate agreed to a moratorium, and the foundation for reform had been set.

The road to change was not an easy one. Even though the public was well aware of the problems and scandals caused by the old system, they did not readily embrace the new one. The development of a specific plan came from the three leading coalition members, and the other members of the broad-based coalition, who were staunchly committed to reform, embraced those proposals. Those who were at the forefront of this battle caution that citizens seeking reform in any state should be prepared for a long, hard fight and remain persistent.

Part of the process toward reform was a public relations campaign to

inform and educate the people of the state about the importance of an independent judiciary and the value of merit selection. This was a grass roots effort, which, armed with facts and figures, reached out to citizens in a variety of ways, including through churches and schools.

The efforts paid off. Some compromises needed to be forged, of course, including the relinquishment of any formal role of the bar association on the nominating commission. Once details were agreed to, the state legislature, in June of 1994, approved a merit selection system for Rhode Island's lower courts. A constitutional amendment approved by the voters in November of that year established merit selection as the sole means of choosing judges at all court levels, including the Supreme Court.

The system in place in Rhode Island relies on a nine-member nominating commission, with five seats filled by the legislature and four by the governor. Nominees to the lower courts are confirmed by the senate, while Supreme Court nominees must be confirmed by both chambers of the legislature. The result of the relentless efforts of many is a system which has a considerably lower risk of political control, and thus is imbued with much greater public trust.

- For further information regarding steps taken in Rhode Island, contact: Phil West, Executive Director, Common Cause Rhode Island, 428 Smith St., Providence, RI 02908, phone: (401) 861-2322, fax: (401) 331-9676, e-mail: pwestcc428@aol.com

South Carolina

More than twenty years ago, the South Carolina Bar began attempts to institute an independent commission to make recommendations to the legislature regarding judicial candidates. Until last year, those attempts were unsuccessful.

All judges' seats in the main trial courts, the appeals courts, and the Supreme Court were traditionally appointed by the legislature in joint session. Names would come to the legislature through self-filing, with pre-screening done only through a legislative committee.

In 1992, the South Carolina Bar established a Judicial Candidate Qualification Committee, through which it began a bar-wide survey to evaluate incumbents at the middle and end of their terms. When this survey was initiated, it was opposed by the sitting Chief Justice. The bar committee also began a review process of all judicial candidates, through confidential telephone calls.

The first report of the Committee included an evaluation which appeared to favor a female candidate over a sitting legislator. Subsequently, the Chair of the Bar Committee was subpoenaed by the legislative screening committee to testify regarding the details of the bar's confidential evaluation process. She refused to testify, and no further action was taken against the Bar. Instead, the legislature as a whole decided to take its own action. In the next election cycle,

the legislature began sending its own written survey to members of the bar. Many felt this new screening was pro forma, however, as legislators continued to appoint judges who had received the lowest evaluations.

In 1995, two former legislators were elected in spite of "not qualified" ratings from the Bar. Media coverage and public outrage ensued, creating the climate for reform. The Governor supported a House bill which proposed creation of a judicial selection commission with gubernatorial appointment, and the Senate proposed a legislative commission with appointment by the General Assembly (both houses of the legislature), which also included citizen advisory councils to observe judges on the bench. The latter proposal was ultimately put to the vote of the public.

Constitutional amendments passed in November 1996 and effective July 1997 included the raising of the minimum age for judges from 26 to 32 and the minimum years of law practice from five to eight, the ban on sitting lawmakers running for judge while in office, and the creation of a commission. All members of the South Carolina Judicial Merit Selection Commission are appointed by the legislature, and six of the ten are sitting members of the legislature. The legislature's General Assembly still elects judges, but they must come from the three nominees put forth by the Commission.

The South Carolina Bar continues its two evaluation processes, and screens all those whose names are submitted for consideration before the Commission convenes. Only those lawyers with direct knowledge of a specific judge are asked to respond regarding that individual's performance and qualifications. This process enjoys very high participation from the members of the bar and widespread media coverage.

Although reform in the state is not as complete as some would have hoped, this recent change is a step in the right direction which has been embraced by the public. The Bar, other watchdog groups, and the media all promise to remain diligent and demand quality on the bench.

- For further information regarding steps taken in South Carolina, contact: Bob Wells, Executive Director, South Carolina Bar, 950 Taylor Street, P. O. Box 608, Columbia, SC 29202, phone: (803) 799-6653, fax: (803) 799-4118, e-mail: bobwells@scbar.org.

Discussion Points and Questions

Convening and facilitating meetings in your community which engage the public in meaningful discussions about the justice system are vital steps toward involving the public in the process of reforming the judicial selection system. The questions set forth below are designed to stimulate a frank and open colloquy on the issues, concerns and attitudes in your community that can affect the judicial selection process.

Meetings should be in a small group setting of 25 - 30 participants, with an independent facilitator. For the discussions to be most productive, the group should be a diverse one, which includes lawyers and non-lawyers and a mix of racial backgrounds, gender, and age groups.

Overview

1. What are the most important personal qualities you would like to see in a judge?
[To help propel discussion, participants could be asked to write down their "top five" list, and then share with the group. Suggestions include independence, intelligence, fairness, impartiality, etc.]
2. What specific objective criteria should judicial candidates possess?
[These could include age, years of practice, educational background, type of practice, community involvement and the like.]
3. Do you know how judges are currently selected in this state?
4. Does the current method of selecting judges produce ideal judges?
5. Have you ever had any direct interaction with judges? In what way? Was your overall impression of the judge(s) positive or negative?

Selection Methods

1. What is the best method of selecting judges? Should the method differ at different court levels?
2. Do you feel the current method of selecting judges is fair? If yes, why? If no, why not? How could it be improved?
3. Who should determine how judges are selected and what qualifications they should possess?

Judicial Elections

1. Is the election of judges good or bad for the justice system? What are the pluses and minuses of publicly elected judges?
2. Is the public given enough information about judicial candidates to make informed election decisions?
3. Should a judicial candidate's party affiliation (Democrat, Republican) be known to voters?
4. Should judicial candidates be permitted to solicit campaign funds? What restrictions, if any, should be placed on amounts or sources of contributions? Should lawyers be allowed to contribute?

Merit Selection

1. In most merit selection systems, a nominating commission screens candidates. Who should sit on such a commission?
2. How should commission members be appointed?
3. Should there be mandatory requirements for the composition of the commission? *[Examples would include lawyers and nonlawyers, party affiliation, ethnic or gender diversity, geographical diversity, and the like.]*

Judicial Review

1. What is the best means by which non-elected judges can be held accountable for their performance?
2. If merit selection is utilized, should there be an evaluation process of the judge's performance? What criteria should be used? Who should conduct the evaluations?
3. Do we have sufficient safeguards against bad judges? How could they be improved?

Resources

Contacts

The following organizations and individuals should be contacted for further, more specific information on the implementation of judicial selection reform.

- American Bar Association, 750 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611
 - Judicial Division, 312/988-5693, FAX: 312/988-5709, Luke Bierman, Director;
 - Office of Justice Initiatives, 312/988-6138; FAX: 312/988-6100, John J. Sweeney, Director;
 - Policy and Governance Group, 312/988-5169, FAX: 312/988-5153, Marina B. Jacks, Associate Executive Director
- American Judicature Society, 180 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60601; 312/558-6900; FAX: 312/558-9175. Sandra Ratcliff Daffron, Executive Vice President; Seth Andersen, Director, Hunter Center for Judicial Selection, American Judicature Society.
- Council for Court Excellence, 1800 M St., NW, Suite 750 South, Washington, DC 20036, 202/785-5917. Sam Harahan, Executive Director.
- Louisiana Organization for Judicial Excellence, P.O. Box 3946, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, 504/925-8535. John S. Hightower, Executive Director.
- National Center for State Courts, 300 Newport Ave., P.O. Box 8798, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8798, 757/259-1841; FAX: 757/259-1520. Roger K. Warren, President.
- New York Fund for Modern Courts, 19 W. 44th St., Suite 1200, New York, NY 10036, 212/575-1577 - Gary Brown, Executive Director
- Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts, 1717 Arch St., Suite 3700, Philadelphia, PA 19103-2793, 215/994-5196. Lynn Marks, Executive Director.
- **State Bar Presidents, Presidents-elect and Executive Directors:** Names and addresses available through American Bar Association Division for Bar Services, 312/988-5352, FAX: 312/988-5492. Roseanne Lucianek, Director.
- **State Court Administrators and Chief Justices:** Names and addresses available through National Center for State Courts, P.O. Box 8798, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8798, 757/253-2000, FAX: 757/259-1520. Roger Warren, Executive Director.

Publications from the American Bar Association

American Bar Association publications are available through the ABA, 750 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611. To order by fax or phone with VISA, MasterCard or American Express: Fax 312/988-5850, Phone 800/285-2221 or 312/988-5522 or use the order form on the ABA website at <http://www.abanet.org/>

- "1998 Summary of State and Local Justice Initiatives," American Bar Association, Office of Justice Initiatives, 1998, contact the ABA Office of Justice Initiatives.
- "American Bar Association Standing Committee on Federal Judiciary: What It Is and How It Works," 1991, ISBN: 0-89707-621-4. PC: 373-0001. Free.
- "An Agenda for Justice: ABA Perspectives on Criminal and Civil Justice Issues," American Bar Association, 1966, contact the ABA Office of Justice Initiatives.
- "Guide to Educating the Public About the Courts," American Bar Association, Division for Publication Education, 1994, ISBN: 1-57073-050-4. PC: 235-0025. \$12.95 (bulk discounts available).
- "Guidelines for Evaluation of Judicial Performance," American Bar Association, 1985, 523-0027. \$15.00 (regular), \$12.50 (Division member.); \$10.00 each (10 or more copies).
- "Law and the Courts," American Bar Association, Division for Publication Education, 1995, ISBN: 1-57073-049-0. PC: 235-0027. \$2.50 each (1-9 copies); \$2.00 (10-99 copies); \$1.50 (100 or more copies).
- "Merit Selection Commissions: What Do They Do? How Effective are They?" American Bar Foundation Survey for the American Bar Association Standing Committee on Judicial Selection, Tenure and Compensation, 1993, PC: 397-0001. \$9.95 each (1-9 copies); \$7.00 (10 or more copies).
- "Small Group Design and Implementation Workbook — A Training Guide for Citizen's Conferences," American Bar Association, Office of Justice Initiatives, 1995, contact the ABA Office of Justice Initiatives.

Additional Publications

- "Electing Justice: A Handbook of Judicial Election Reforms," American Judicature Society, 1990, Order #440, \$6.00.
- "Judicial Merit Selection: Current Status," (Charts and Tables) American Judicature Society, 1995, Order #294, \$5.00.
- "Judicial Retention Evaluation Programs in Four States — A Report with Recommendations," American Judicature Society, available Spring, 1998.
- "Judicial Selection in the United States: A Compendium of Provisions," updated 1993, Order #602, no charge except for \$3.50 postage and handling.

- "Model Judicial Selection Provisions," American Judicature Society, 199, Order #292, \$5.00.

American Judicature Publications available from AJS, 180 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 600, Chicago, Illinois 60601 (312) 558-6900 ext. 147. FAX (312) 558-9175 or through the publications order form on the AJS website at <http://www.ajs.org/>.

- "Judicial Reform in the States," Judith Haydel and Anthony Champagne, University Press of America, 1993.

Videotapes

- "Ensuring Judicial Excellence," American Judicature Society, 1995, Order # 718, \$12.00.

Websites

- <http://www.cobar.org/wheredo.htm>
Colorado Bar Association
- <http://www.commoncause.org/>
Common Cause
- <http://www.abanet.org/justice/home.html>
American Bar Association Office of Justice Initiatives
- <http://www.ajs.org/>
American Judicature Society
- <http://www.state.az.us/sp/hrseid.htm>
Judicial Nominating Commissions
- <http://www.ncsc.dni.us>
National Center for State Courts
- <http://www.libertynet.org/~pmcpms/merit.htm>
Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts
- <http://www.commonwealthpa.org/execsum/merit.htm>
The Commonwealth Foundation — Pennsylvania's Premiere Think Tank
- <http://www.scbbar.org>
The South Carolina Bar

Speakers

For further information on qualified speakers in your area, contact the American Bar Association, Office of Justice Initiatives or the American Judicature Society.

- Henry J. Abraham, James Hart Professor Emeritus of Government and Foreign Affairs, University of Virginia, 906 Fendall Terrace, Charlottesville, VA 22903-1617, 804/977-0688; FAX: 804/924-3359.
- Seth Andersen, Director, Hunter Center for Judicial Selection, American Judicature Society, 180 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60601; 312/558-6900; FAX: 312/558-9175.
- Lawrence A. Baum, Professor, Department of Political Science, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210, 614/292-6088.
- Luke Bierman, Director, American Bar Association Judicial Division, 750 N. Lake Shore Dr., Chicago, IL 60611, 312/988-5693; FAX: 312/988-5709.
- Lew Conner, former member of the Tennessee Court of Appeals and member of the Tennessee Futures Commission, Stokes & Bartholomew, P.A., 424 Church St., Suite 2800, Nashville, TN 37219-2323, 615/259-1420.
- N. Lee Cooper, former ABA President, Maynard Cooper & Gale, 1901 6th Ave., North, Suite 2400, Birmingham, AL 35203, 205/254-1028; FAX: 205/328-2077.
- Sandra Ratcliff Daffron, Executive Vice President American Judicature Society (active in many judicial reform areas), 180 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60601, 312/558-6900; FAX: 312/558-9175.
- Sheldon Goldman, Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Massachusetts, P.O. Box 37520, Amherst, MA 01003-7520, 413/545-6179.
- Barry F. McNeil, member, ABA Coalition for Justice, Haynes & Boones, L.L.P., 901 Main St., Dallas, TX 75202, 214/651-5580; FAX: 214/651-5940.
- Abner J. Mikva, Member, ABA Judicial Independence Committee, University of Chicago Law School, 1111 E. 60th St., Chicago, IL 60637, 773/702-9590; FAX: 773/241-7048.
- Barbara A. Perry, Associate Professor and Chair, Sweet Briar College, 1347 LeParc Terrace, Charlottesville, VA 22901, 804/381-6177.
- John Seigenthaler, Chair, Tennessee Futures Commission, 1207 18th Ave., South, Nashville, TN 37212, 615/321-9588.
- Penny White, former Associate Justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court, Washington & Lee School of Law, Lexington, VA 24450; 540/463-8028. (After 8/1/98 contact at West Virginia University College of Law, P.O. Box 6130, Morgantown, WV 26506, 304/293-5304.)
- Frances K. Zemans, former Executive Vice President American Judicature Society, 5757 S. Blackstone Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637, 773/955-5757.

**Office of Justice Initiatives
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www.abanet.org/justice**



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS OF MINNESOTA**

NEW MEMBER HANDBOOK

THE MISSION

**The League of Women Voters,
a nonpartisan political organization,
encourages the informed and active participation
of citizens in government,
and influences public policy through
education and advocacy.**

WELCOME

Welcome to the League of Women Voters.

This is an organization of volunteers who believe that our representative democracy needs citizens involved in public decisions. League offers many ways to be involved. You might observe a local public meeting, help to put on a candidate event, donate money for a project, serve on a study committee, or learn to lobby the state legislature. We are delighted to have your support and your help in whatever way you can give it. Our advice is to take time to observe, to listen, and to try out possibilities and projects that fit your interests and your life. There is as much to learn and to do as you have the time and interest to give.

The League offers an opportunity to get involved in policy issues without taking a partisan position. The League encourages open discussion, respect for the right to disagree, and the use of information that looks at an issue from as many perspectives as possible. As you attend meetings join in with your own questions and comments. Consensus is a process of finding the areas in which we do agree --- it is seldom that we agree on everything.

The material that follows is intended to give you a deeper look at this unique, multi-level organization you have joined. You might want to skim through it now and come back to it as you learn more or have questions. Always feel free to ask --- your local members and board, the state board and office, and even the national board and office. This is a grassroots organization and you are the roots, our most valued resource.

HISTORY

The roots of the League of Women Voters lie in the suffrage movement. When the first national convention for women was held in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848, the focus was on the social, civil, religious conditions of women and their lack of legal and political rights. By 1890 the overriding goal had become the right to vote. That campaign was carried out nationally by the National American Woman Suffrage Association. After the 19th amendment was passed in 1920 this group became the League of Women Voters.

The decision to be political - advocate for change on selected issues - but nonpartisan - not to support or oppose political parties or candidates for office - was made at the very beginning. Those women believed (as Leaguers still do) that without belonging to the same political party thoughtful citizens might unite around legislation in the public interest.

In all the years since 1920 the League has promoted legislation to improve social conditions, protect the environment, promote open and clean government, and has provided information to the public on the political process and how to get involved. Men were admitted to full membership in 1974.

In 1946 the National League took the major step of replacing a federation of state leagues with a unified membership organization. That made members of local leagues members of the state and national levels as well. That is why we can address national and state issues locally and is also why we pay dues to support the work at all three levels.

Those of you who are interested in history might begin by consulting two publications.

- *Gentle Warriors, Clara Ueland and the Minnesota Struggle for Woman Suffrage*, Barbara Stuhler, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1995.
- *The League of Women Voters in Perspective, 1920-1995*, Nancy M. Neuman, The League of Women Voters of the United States, 1994, Publication # 995.

HOW THE LEAGUE IS ORGANIZED

League is a multilevel organization. Most members join a local league and discover that membership includes at least three levels - local, state and national. In the Twin Cities metropolitan area there is a fourth level, the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues (CMAL.) It studies regional issues and monitors the Metropolitan Council. A few members join as national or state members-at-large when no local league is available but they want to support the work of the League.

Boards

At each level League has officers and a board of directors elected by the members at an annual meeting or convention. The boards provide leadership for carrying out member decisions and are ultimately responsible for the finances, activities and projects of their league. How the board is organized varies among leagues. Some assign specific duties to each member and others divide the tasks among committees.

Conventions, Councils and Annual Meetings

League is a grassroots organization, which means that members have a voice in decisions at every level. Members elect the board and officers, decide what to study, approve a budget and bylaws, and give general direction to plans for the coming year (s). Any member may attend state and national conventions and may serve as a voting delegate if given that responsibility by their league. The number of delegates is proportional to the size of the league.

The LWVUS Convention is held in even years. It meets alternately in Washington D.C. and other cities around the country. The LWVMN Convention is held in odd years at various locations around the state. Both state and national leagues also have meetings (councils) in the year between conventions.

Local leagues hold annual meetings in the spring to make the decisions referred to above. Every member is encouraged to attend and entitled to vote.

Meetings

Local leagues often have the following kinds of meetings during the year

- Unit or discussion meetings at which the members discuss issues being studied or local topics of interest. If the league is large enough they may meet in small groups called units.
- General meetings are designed to include all members of the local league and often members of the public interested in the subject of that meeting.
- Board meetings are held on a regular basis. Many local boards meet monthly. The state board meets at least six times a year. The national board meets quarterly.

Focus Meetings/ Workshops/Conferences

Any level of League may hold meetings on a wide range of topics including background information for a study, preparation for legislative action, preparation for voter service projects, or background information for a regional project.

Education Fund

Raising the money to finance projects and services is a common problem in volunteer organizations. The national and state leagues as well as a few large city leagues have established Education Funds with a 501C.3 tax status. That status enables League to raise tax deductible money from individuals and foundations for nonpartisan projects that educate the public without referring to our advocacy positions. The League itself is a 501C.4 non-profit membership organization. Our dues are not tax deductible.

At the state level in Minnesota the same directors serve on both the regular and the education fund boards but there are separate meetings, minutes and books.

WHAT THE LEAGUE DOES

• Study

Leagues at every level vote on suggested topics to study and establish a committee to carry out the research. Members receive the collected information, meet to discuss it and arrive at a consensus of opinion about the topic.

• Advocate

When a position is reached on an issue as the result of study, the League may take action to change or enact laws that reflect our position. This action may involve monitoring compliance with a law, observing public meetings, lobbying at the local, state or national level, writing letters to the editor or to public officials, or working to draft legislation. While this effort is political in the sense that it seeks to affect the outcome of legislation or policy, it is nonpartisan because it is based on our positions not on party affiliation.

• Educate

Leagues hold nonpartisan informational public meetings either to advocate for a position on an issue or to provide balanced information to others with the understanding that they will use that information to make their own decisions. Our purpose for holding a meeting must be clear to ourselves and to the public. The former is action. The latter is citizen education and may be funded with tax deductible donations through the Education Fund.

• Voter service

Leagues at every level provide nonpartisan information on the election process, voter registration and on candidates through forums and voter guides. This is probably the service for which the League is best known.

• Citizen Education

Projects may include informational public meetings as described above, distribution of published League studies on an issue such as the selection of judges, and workshops and information on how to work with the legislature or how to run for office. Such projects may use education fund money as long as they do not give League positions.

• Inform /Newsletter

All levels of the League provide every member with information via periodic newsletters most often called the *Voter*.

WHAT IS PROGRAM?

Every organization has a few words that it uses in a special way. The word *program* is one of those for the League. Program means the issues chosen by the members at any level of League for study and for action. It includes the positions that have been taken on issues over the years. Since some of these positions are many years old, they must be re-examined every two years and changed dropped or accepted by current members.

Program at the state level is adopted through a series of steps that include the local leagues, the State Board, and finally delegates to the biennial state convention.

HOW DOES LEAGUE REACH POSITIONS?

The process of study and consensus to arrive at a League position is fairly unique.

- If a new study is adopted, a research committee gathers information for League members to use as they consider the issue. Material is chosen to reflect as many sides of the issue as possible. It is often presented in a publication that explores both the facts and the possible consequences of acting or not acting to address the issue.
- Consensus is a sense of general and widespread agreement on an issue. Local league members weigh the pros and cons of various positions on that issue with the help of a discussion guide. The State Board receives the consensus reports from the local Leagues, determines areas of agreement, and formulates position statements.
- Only after consensus is reached and a position is written can League take action.

USING POSITIONS FOR ACTION

- The State Board takes official action in the name of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota as the LWWUS Board does on national positions.

- To ensure consistency - that we speak with one voice- individual League members speak only for themselves unless they have been designated to speak for the League by their local, state, or national board.
- The president is the official spokesperson at every level.
- Local leagues may take action if that action is consistent with a local, state or national position; their membership is informed and in general agreement; and if other leagues which may be affected by that action are notified ahead of time.

HOW DOES LOBBYING SQUARE WITH NONPARTISANSHIP?

The mission of the League is both political and nonpartisan. It encourages the informed and active participation of all citizens in government. It studies and takes action on selected government issues without regard to political party.

The League encourages members as individuals to be active in the political party of their choice, but as an organization does not support political parties or candidates for public office at any level including those who are our own members. Highly visible board members such as the president and voter service chair are restricted to low-level partisan political activities and may not run for party-designated public office. Check with your local board for local nonpartisan policy.

WHAT ARE LEAGUE PRINCIPLES?

Basic principles of the League have been developed and adopted over many years. They serve as the guideline for decisions made at every level of League. They are important to consider when choosing studies and planning program and may also be used as the basis for advocacy.

- The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.

- The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.
- The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination.
- The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.
- The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation; promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest; share in the solution of economic and social problems that effect the general welfare; promote a sound economy; and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.
- The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that the development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

LEAGUE'S POSITIONS

A list of the positions on issues reached by the state and national leagues as well as by your local league is available from your local president. If you are interested in advocacy, you will want your own copy.

A GLOSSARY OF LEAGUE TERMS

Action/Advocacy

Steps taken by leagues at every level to win support for positions. This may consist of writing letters, lobbying, giving testimony, holding press conferences, monitoring, observing, working to help draft legislation, or any other measure approved by the board.

Board

The administrative body consisting of officers and elected and appointed directors.

Call to Action

A plea to all members to participate in a concerted effort to implement a League position by writing, calling or e-mailing elected officials to request a specific vote on legislation.

Concurrence

A method of reaching a position by concurring or agreeing with a statement or position of another League or of a study committee.

Consensus

The process used to reach member agreement on an issue that has been studied. It refers to a sense of the group that may be less than unanimity but more than a simple majority.

Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues

An inter-league organization composed of the local leagues in the seven county metropolitan area of the Twin Cities. It follows the Metropolitan Council and deals with issues of regional significance.

Convention

A biennial meeting of state and national leagues to elect officers, directors, a nominating committee and to vote on budgets, program and bylaws. Meetings during the alternate year are called councils.

Education Fund

The tax exempt, tax deductible arm of the League. It was established to enable the League to request and accept tax deductible contributions from organizations and individuals to fund educational projects.

Focus Meeting

Meeting for league members and the public that focuses on a specific issue - often held in connection with a study.

Grassroots

The direct involvement of members at all levels of League makes them the fundamental source of support on issues and program.

Lobbyist

A volunteer League member who promotes league positions at some level of government with the approval of the appropriate board.

Nonpartisan Policy

League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate for public office. All members share responsibility for maintaining league's reputation for fairness and objectivity.

Observer

A league member who attends meetings of a government body in order to report on the processes used and the issues on the agenda.

Position

A statement of League's stand on an issue based on study, consensus and League principles. The appropriate board writes positions after careful assessment of consensus results.

Per Member Payment (PMP)

Monetary support (dues) for the state and national levels of league in an amount determined by members at the biennial conventions.

Portfolio

A term that refers to the specific responsibility carried by a board member such as voter service, action, public relations, etc. Many leagues no longer use this method, but divide the work among board members as necessary.

Program

Those issues chosen by members for study and action.

Ten Minute Activists

Member volunteers who agree to call or write elected officials on selected issues when notified that action is needed.

USEFUL LEAGUE NUMBERS

LOCAL President: _____

League office: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

STATE OFFICE

Sally Sawyer, Executive Director

League of Women Voters of Minnesota
550 Rice Street
St. Paul Minnesota 55103

Phone Metro Area 651-224-5445

Phone Greater Minnesota 1-800-663-9328

Fax: 651-290-2145

E-mail lwvmn@mtn.org

LWVMN Web site {<http://tcfreenet.org/ip/pol/lwvmn> }

NATIONAL OFFICE

League of Women Voters
1730 M Street NW
Washington D.C. 20036-4508

Phone: 1-202-429-1965

Fax: 1-202-429-0854

PAL: 1-800-424-2937

Web site: { <http://www.lwv.org> }

1. **Project Name:** Statewide Economic Development Program
 2. **Location:** Various locations throughout the state
 3. **Objectives:** To identify and develop economic opportunities across the state, with a focus on rural areas and small businesses.
 4. **Activities:** Conducting site visits, holding public hearings, and developing economic development plans for various regions.
 5. **Timeline:** The project will be completed by the end of the fiscal year.
 6. **Budget:** The total budget for the project is \$1,000,000.
 7. **Staff:** The project is managed by the State Economic Development Office, with staff members assigned to various regions.
 8. **Contacts:** For more information, please contact the State Economic Development Office at (555) 123-4567.
 9. **Notes:** This project is a priority for the state and will receive full support from the Governor's office.

Memorandum

To: Local League Presidents, Action Chairs
From: Carol Frisch, Vice President Action
Date: October 1998
Re: Legislative Interview Packet

Attached is the Legislative Interview Packet including:

- Step by step instructions on how to do the interviews
- Legislative interview assignments
- Legislative interview questions 1998 (with background information for your use)
- Legislative interview questions 1998 (without background information for distribution to legislators)
- Report forms to be returned to LWVMN – enough for every legislative interview assigned to your League.

LEGISLATIVE INTERVIEWS

To: Local League Presidents and Action Chairs

From: Carol Frisch, Action

Date: October 1998

After the general election Leaguers have an opportunity to learn what the 1999-2001 elected legislators believe about issues of importance to our organization. Our interviews are unique because they take place after the election and they are designed to help the local League build a strong working relationship with them. (We do not support or oppose candidates, but we do work with elected officials on selected issues.)

For the Leaguers who lobby in St. Paul these responses provide information helpful in determining the legislators' views on our priority issues and help us to develop action strategies and promote our positions more effectively.

WHAT TO DO:

1. Schedule a face to face meeting with each assigned legislator as soon as possible after the election. These interviews are a good way to involve new members and if possible the president and/or action chair should lead the questioning.
2. Mail the questions to the legislators in advance and if an in person interview cannot be arranged urge the legislator to answer the questionnaire in writing.
3. Keep the meeting friendly. DO NOT LOBBY the legislator on a particular issue. The League is there to listen not to debate.
4. If the legislator agrees, tape record the interview and/or videotape for your local cable channel and plan to print an article about the interview in your VOTER. Be sure to send a copy of the interview to the local League that shares your legislative district if they do not participate in the interview with you. Share your information with other community organizations.
5. Present a recent League publication to each legislator both as a token of appreciation and as an introduction to League work. Also included League membership information.
6. Return to the League office by January 1, 1999.

Thank you!

LEGISLATIVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 1998 FOR 81ST SESSION 1999-2000
FOR LOCAL LEAGUE USE

Education:

1. What are your three priorities for improving the quality of K-12 education in Minnesota?
2. What is your funding strategy?
3. Do you support or oppose tax credits or vouchers for private school tuition?

Background: LWVMN has testified against the voucher proposal based on the responsibility of state government to provide quality public education for all students and the lack of accountability to taxpayers of private schools. The LWV also believes that vouchers would erode financial support of public education.

LWV Position: LWVMN actively opposes school vouchers for K-12 education; the League believes the focus of state resources should be on continuing to improve the system that serves all children. See Program for Action pp 7-8 for complete positions on education.

Housing:

1. How do you propose to address the shortage of affordable housing in Minnesota?
How would you finance it?

Background: With the reduction of public housing programs at the federal level there is an increasing demand for affordable housing and more focus on state and local initiatives. In addition many small Minnesota communities are facing a threat to economic development because of a lack of affordable housing for potential workers.

LWV Position: The League believes that all people have a right to housing. The public and private sectors should work together to ensure that everyone has access to adequate, decent, affordable housing. For more information consult Program for Action p.21.

Transportation:

1. What will you do to help meet the growing transportation needs of the state?
2. Where do LRT and commuter rail fit in your vision for metro transportation?

Background: LWV has long worked to assure an effective mass transit system both locally and at the national level.

LWVMN Position: (CMAL) Support of the Metropolitan Council as the single metropolitan agency to plan and coordinate a diverse transportation system meeting varied needs, and to have approval authority over this system's major capital expenditures. New funding sources should be service related. Program for Action p.27

LWVUS Position: The LWVUS believes that energy-efficient and environmentally sound transportation systems should afford better access to housing and jobs and will continue to examine transportation policies in light of these goals. Impact on Issues p. 58

Met Council:

1. How well is the restructured Met Council functioning?
2. With its broadened powers, do you support an elected or appointed Met Council? Why?

Background: The 1993 legislature restructured the Council into four divisions and broadened its powers. There is a concern that the emphasis will change from overall planning to operating functions. In each session a bill is introduced for an elected Metro Council with increasing support. A bill was passed in the 1997 session but was vetoed by the Governor.

LWVMN Position: (CMAL) Supports the Metropolitan Council as the decision-making body for metropolitan needs in accordance with these criteria: efficiency and economy, equitable financing, flexibility, citizen control and responsiveness to the electorate. CMAL supports retention of an appointed Metropolitan Council with greater use of its existing powers. Positions for Action p. 24

Environment/Natural Resources:

1. What do you see as the three greatest threats to Minnesota's environment?

Background: In the 1998 session LWVMN testified in favor of the moratorium on large feedlot operations.

LWV Position: Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest by recognizing the interrelationships of air quality, energy, land use, waste management and water resources. For complete position statement and history see Positions for Action pp. 17-19 and Impact on Issues pp. 31-42.

Firearms:

1. How do you feel about a change in the present laws concerning obtaining permits to carry a loaded, concealed weapon?

Background: The League testified in the last session against any changes to weaken laws about carrying a concealed weapon. During the last eight years we have supported legislative bills and statewide educational programs which we believe would help prevent gun violence in our Minnesota communities. Gun violence prevention continues to be undermined by attempts to weaken the laws already in place so that more guns might be marketed and sold in Minnesota.

LWVMN Position: Action to support restrictions on the sale, possession and use of firearms by private parties in the state of Minnesota. Program for Action p. 16

LWVUS Position: Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons. Impact on Issues p.16

Health Care:

1. Do you support a Minnesota Universal Health Program to improve access to quality health care?
2. Do you support full funding of the Office of Health Care consumer education, advocacy and information?

Background: The Office of Health Care Consumer Education etc. was established by the legislature. It can only be effective with adequate funding and staffing.

LWV Position: LWV believes that a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all U. S. residents. Other U.S. health care policy goals should include the equitable distribution of services, efficient and economical delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology and a reasonable total national expenditure level for health care. Impact on Issues pp. 53-55

Child Care:

1. How would you address the growing need for affordable child care in Minnesota?
2. Do you support early childhood education initiatives?

Background: Because of federal work requirements available and affordable child care will be critical for parents required to work. League has aggressively worked for sliding fee programs and development grants to increase the supply of quality child care. The LWV has also worked to promote early intervention for children at risk.

LWVMN Position: Support of coordinated public policies and funding to ensure safe, affordable quality child care throughout the state. Positions for Action p. 20.

LWVUS Position: Support policies and programs that promote the well being, development and safety of all children. Impact on Issues p. 45-46.

LEGISLATIVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 1998 FOR 81ST SESSION 1999-2000
FOR LEGISLATORS' USE

Education:

1. What are your three priorities for improving the quality of K-12 education in Minnesota?
2. What is your funding strategy?
3. Do you support or oppose tax credits or vouchers for private school tuition?

Housing:

1. How do you propose to address the shortage of affordable housing in Minnesota?
How would you finance it?
1. What will you do to help meet the growing transportation needs of the state?
2. Where do LRT and commuter rail fit in your vision for metro transportation?

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1. How well is the restructured Met Council functioning?
2. With its broadened powers, do you support an elected or appointed Met Council?
Why?

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2. Do you support full funding of the Office of Health Care consumer education, advocacy and information?

Child Care:

1. How would you address the growing need for affordable child care in Minnesota?
2. Do you support early childhood education initiatives?

LWVMN, 550 Rice St. , St. Paul MN 55103

REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE INTERVIEW

League of Women Voters of _____ Date _____

Please return to state office by January 1, 1999. X

Legislator

Name:

District:

Party:

Kind of Interview: Where held, number of League members involved, general impressions:

Attitude of legislator toward League:

Questions used and views of legislator on each: (if you need more space, record on extra sheets of paper and attach to this page.)

Question

Number & Subject

View of Legislator

Question # and Subject View of Legislator

Signed:
Address:

Fill out a separate report on each legislator. Keep one copy for your League and send one to LWVMN.



CHOOSING MINNESOTA'S JUDGES

An Examination of the Present System and Alternative Proposals



League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Education Fund
550 Rice Street
St. Paul, MN 55103

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Prepared and published by the
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PREFACE

The purpose of this publication is to provide information to Minnesota citizens who want to know more about the present system of choosing judges in Minnesota and how it might be changed. League members will use it with other study material to discuss the issues and to form educated opinions regarding any recommended changes to the present system.

Delegates to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota (LWVMN) convention in April, 1997, approved a study of the election of judges in Minnesota, which would examine the present system as well as alternative proposals for selecting judges. Local Leagues statewide had suggested the study after voters reported that they felt unprepared to decide among the district judge candidates in the 1996 election. Voters said that they had insufficient background on the candidates and issues relevant to the races. Many chose not to vote.

A study committee was formed in July, 1997, and met regularly through April, 1998, to hear the resource speakers and to define the issues. Committee membership was self-selected. The committee included lawyers and non-lawyers, men and women, new and experienced League members from the metropolitan area and from communities in greater Minnesota.

Five workshops for local Leagues were held in the fall of 1997—in Duluth, Brainerd, Roseville, Rochester, and Edina. They included an introduction to the facts and issues of the Minnesota judiciary selection process with time for discussion and feedback to the study committee.

On May 1, 1998, the study committee presented a LWVMN Law Day Forum entitled “Judicial Elections: Can We Make Them Work?” Held at the University of St. Thomas in downtown Minneapolis, the forum featured Chief Justice A. M. (Sandy) Keith and a panel of four additional speakers, chosen for their knowledge of, and widely varying perspectives on, the issues involved. Justice Keith offered an overview of Minnesota’s system of judicial appointments and elections and a brief summary of alternatives. All speakers addressed what voters should consider in deciding how to vote in judicial elections, and how public awareness of candidates and the issues might be raised. Sponsors of the event were the LWVMN Education Fund, Minnesota State Bar Association, Minnesota Women Lawyers, and the University of St. Thomas Political Science Department.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization which promotes political responsibility by encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government.



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INTRODUCTION

The method by which judges are selected in Minnesota has become a matter of considerable concern for the citizens of our state. Although judicial elections may always have presented "the most confounding problem in Minnesota's political system,"¹ the selection process is now coming under particular scrutiny. Some believe that although imperfect, the process in place works well enough to need only minor adjustments; others claim that a major overhaul, even scrapping, of the system is necessary. Certainly attention to the issue is warranted: "[judicial elections] are all threatened by the spread and deepening of problems that, if left unattended, will erode the public's confidence in our judiciary."²

CHOOSING MINNESOTA'S JUDGES

PART I. BACKGROUND

JUDGES AND THE COURT SYSTEM

"Judges are the heart of the court system. The personality and character of a judge have much to do with the quality of justice in a specific court, since judges have considerable discretion in setting bail, in creating a compassionate or punitive atmosphere in a courtroom, and in sentencing."³

The state court system in which judges operate is an elaborate mechanism that is called upon increasingly to provide solutions to problems which other social institutions have failed to solve. The courts employ an **adversary system**, which assumes that two sides arguing different points of view will establish the facts of a case. The judge, who is impartial, interprets the law. The jury, when one is used, decides what the facts of the case are. The court system is a **hierarchy** that is administered from the top level down. If one side or the other wishes to carry a dispute beyond the point of entry and has grounds for doing so, it may appeal to a higher level. Basically, the courts decide two kinds of cases, **civil** and **criminal**. District courts are seeing an increase in the number of criminal cases.

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court serves as the administrative head of the judicial branch. The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals serves as administrative head of that court and assigns judges and cases to panels for decision. Chief

judges of the ten district courts serve as administrative heads to the trial courts in the districts in which they serve. Each assigns judges to serve in locations throughout his or her district. (See Appendix 1.)

QUALITIES OF A GOOD JUDGE

The qualities citizens seek in a judge are essentially competence, fairness, and conscientiousness. Judicial nominating commissions typically pay attention to the following criteria when they evaluate applicants for judicial office: "integrity and moral courage, legal ability and experience, intelligence and wisdom, and a determination whether a candidate would be deliberate and fair-minded in reaching decisions, whether the candidate would be prompt and industrious in performing judicial duties, whether the candidate's personal habits and outside activities are compatible with judicial office, and whether the candidate would be courteous and considerate on the bench."⁴

Minnesota's Commission on Judicial Selection measures "integrity, maturity, health (if job related), judicial temperament, legal knowledge, ability, experience and community service." The aim of the Minnesota Commission is to actively seek and encourage qualified individuals, "including minorities and women." (See Appendix 2.)

¹Editorial, St. Paul Pioneer Press, May 1, 1998.

²Patrick M. McFadden, *Electing Justice: the Law and Ethics of Judicial Election Campaigns*, American Judicature Society: Chicago(1990), p. xiii.

³League of Women Voters of Minnesota, *Minnesota Judiciary: Structures and Procedures*, League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund, St. Paul, MN(1981).

⁴Jona Goldschmidt, "Selection and Retention of Judges: Is Florida's Present System Still the Best Compromise; Merit Selection: Current Status, Procedures, and Issues", *University of Miami Law Review* (Fall 1994), 155.

CHOOSING MINNESOTA'S JUDGES

HOW JUDGES ARE SELECTED

The Minnesota Constitution and state statutes set up Minnesota's system for appointing and electing judges. The state Constitution provides that judges must be "learned in the law," which the state Supreme Court interprets to mean currently licensed to practice law in Minnesota. It also provides that judges "shall be elected by the voters from the area in which they are to serve," but it permits the governor to fill midterm vacancies by appointment. Judicial elections in Minnesota are nonpartisan, and they are held in conjunction with those for other county, state, and federal offices. District court judges are elected for six-year terms by voters within their judicial district; Supreme Court justices and judges of the Court of Appeals are elected statewide for six-year terms. Any major change to the present system would require a constitutional amendment.

Most sitting judges leave the bench before their terms have expired, which gives the governor the opportunity to appoint a successor. Most judges in Minnesota, therefore, reach their position by appointment. The appointee then runs for a full six-year term at the first general election occurring more than one year later. The 1989 Minnesota legislature established the Commission on Judicial Selection to advise the governor on district court judge appointments. The commission recommends three to five names for each vacancy, and the governor may choose from among these names. Vacancies on the other levels of court are filled by gubernatorial appointment without the nominating commission. (See Appendix 2.)

HOW A JUDGE'S PERFORMANCE IS EVALUATED

A formal method for evaluating a judge's job performance (aside from voters' ballots in judicial elections) is a relatively new idea, but it is becoming more popular. There were two failed attempts to adopt an evaluation method by separate groups of lawyers and judges in 1988; the Minnesota Supreme Court established a pilot evaluation program in 1990. Twelve district court judges and two appellate judges were evaluated, and final recommendations were issued in February, 1993. Funding has been a concern, as has confidentiality. In January, 1996, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court issued an order protecting the confidentiality of information about participants in any judicial evaluation program. As of February, 1998, all judicial districts except the Third District have made a commitment to conduct judicial evaluations. All the district programs implemented so far are intended to improve the judges' job performance. Plans vary, but all try to prevent the possibility that an individual evaluation could be identified by the responses. Participation by judges is voluntary. (See Appendix 3.)

Another evaluation method is the bar plebescite or poll. Attorneys may simply vote to approve or disapprove of a judge who is running for office, or they may rate the judge according to various categories such as fairness and lack of bias, judicial demeanor, knowledge of the law and ability to apply it, and courtroom and case management skills. The Hennepin County Bar Association survey poll asks lawyers to give their opinions about judges who are new or who are standing for reelection in the current year. Lawyers are asked to rate only those judges with whom they have had direct case contact within the previous six years.

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The Hennepin County Bar Association has had a formal evaluation procedure since 1990. The Ramsey County Bar Association conducts a plebescite of their membership for contested Second District judicial elections as well as for finalists recommended for appointment to Second District courts. The Minnesota State Bar Association (MSBA) conducts a plebescite of its members whenever there are contested judicial elections for the Minnesota Supreme Court or the Court of Appeals. The MSBA typically issues a press release of the results. (See Appendix 4.)

Endorsements of candidates are also a form of evaluation. Minnesota Women Lawyers and Minnesota Trial Lawyers Association endorse for judicial appointments. Some of the newspapers in the major Minnesota cities print editorial board endorsements. There are also personal endorsements.

HOW JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE IS HANDLED

The Board on Judicial Standards, whose membership is appointed by the Governor, is an independent state agency which receives and acts on complaints about Minnesota judges for judicial misconduct or wrong doing. The Board also handles judicial disability matters. The Board can investigate and take disciplinary action or, in the most serious cases, recommend to the Supreme Court that it impose discipline. In order of increasing severity, the Board may issue letters of warning or public reprimand. In more serious cases, after a public hearing and recommendation from the Board the Supreme Court may impose public censure, removal or involuntary retirement. The Board can recommend discipline for any of the following causes: Conviction of a felony or a crime of moral turpitude, disability that seriously interferes with work performance, persistence, failure or incompetence in performing duties, habitual intemperance, or conduct that brings the

judicial office into judicial disrepute. The Board consists of four judges, two lawyers (with at least ten years' experience) and four citizens.

About 85% of the complaints filed against judges are dismissed by the Board on Judicial Standards, according to the Board's Executive Secretary, who explains that most complaints are filed by people who are disappointed after losing a case or who have no real basis for filing ethics charges.

When the Board does discipline a Judge, it does so with discretion—the degree of which has aroused controversy. Critics point out that citizens should have access to information about judges against whom complaints have been filed or disciplinary action taken.⁵ The issue of the public's role in judicial discipline continues to provoke discussion.

RECALL



The Minnesota statutes provide for the recall of elected state officers. This applies to Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and District Court judges. The grounds for recall of judges have been established by the Supreme Court.

⁵See for example, David Peterson, "Judicial Discipline at Issue," Minneapolis-St. Paul *Star Tribune* (Nov. 11, 1992), p. 1B.

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PART II. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF SELECTING JUDGES IN MINNESOTA

What Voters See

Ballot Judicial Election

(Vote for one (1) candidate in each race)

STATES SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

- ☐ A complete mystery.
- ☐ Read something about her recently.

STATE COURT OF APPEALS JUDGE

- ☐ Never heard of this one either.
- ☐ Frankie met him at a reception...I think he's O.K.

DISTRICT COURT JUDGE

- ☐ His daughter goes to school where my neighbor teaches.
- ☐ I think her father played hockey at the U with Uncle Rick.
- ☐ Never heard of her, but she's got a darn good Minnesota name.

VOTER BEHAVIOR IN JUDICIAL ELECTIONS

We know that one-fourth to one-third of those who vote in Presidential and U.S. Senate races do not vote in judicial elections, but simply leave that part of the ballot blank or don't even bother to pick it up. In 1996 almost 500,000 Minnesotans voted for President but did not vote in the Supreme Court election, which was held at the same time.⁶

The Minnesota State Bar Association surveyed 400 voters after the November, 1996, judicial elections. In a race between an incumbent Supreme Court justice and a challenger, in which the challenger received 46% of the vote,

"significant percentages of survey respondents reported that they either did not

know why they had voted for a particular candidate, or had never heard of the candidate they voted for before entering the voting booth, or had no opinion of the candidate before voting. The results were similar in a Hennepin County race for district judge. Almost half of the responding voters in the Supreme Court race could not remember whom they had voted for barely a week after the election, and almost

20% of those voting for the challenger did so based on the mistaken notion that he was the incumbent. Overall, fully 86% of the respondents said they needed more information about judicial candidates in order to make informed decisions; 77% believed they got less information about judicial elections than about other political races."⁷

⁶Minnesota Legislative Manual 1997-98, Election Division, Secretary of State, St. Paul.

⁷Judicial Elections Task Force Report & Recommendation, Minnesota State Bar Association (June 19, 1997).

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The fact that the electorate remains fundamentally uninformed in judicial races concerned—even alarmed—those whom the committee interviewed. Clearly, part of the problem of voter ignorance arises from the Minnesota system itself: in order to preserve public confidence in the impartiality of courts, the Minnesota Supreme Court prevents candidates

The fact that the electorate remains fundamentally uninformed in judicial races concerned—even alarmed—those whom the committee interviewed.

from discussing disputed issues (see later section "Restrictions on Judicial Campaigning"). Further, because law-abiding citizens by definition have little firsthand acquaintance with the court system—basically they never see a judge—voting in judicial elections is not felt to be compelling or urgent. Educating the voters is not easy. How does a candidate reach, say, the 700,000 voters in Hennepin County? What if the district has seventeen counties? In the absence of issue positions, or party affiliation, those who vote anyway may well choose a candidate based on that candidate's gender, for example, or perceived ethnicity. In Minnesota, as the committee was told by several judges, a challenger's Scandinavian name can be hard to overcome.

Another reason for voters' lack of participation in judicial elections is simply the length of the ballot. Minnesota citizens vote in all judicial races in their district, no matter how large or heavily populated it may be. In November 1996, the ballot in Goodhue County (First Judicial District) featured 14 uncontested district court seats plus ten statewide appellate level positions, in which only the two Supreme Court contests listed challengers. At the same time, there were 26 county seats (seven of them contested) as well as the

⁸Peter D. Webster, "Selection and Retention of Judges: Is There One 'Best' Method?", *Florida State University Law Review* (Summer, 1995), 393.

⁹Patricia A. Garcia, *Judicial Selection: the Process of Choosing Judges*, American Bar Association Roadmaps Series (April 1998), p. 13.

same statewide judicial candidates for Hennepin County voters to consider—this in the middle of Presidential and legislative races. The increase in judicial races is not unique to Minnesota, "...in the last decade, the number of contested elections has increased dramatically around the country. Moreover, those elections are becoming increasingly acrimonious...."⁸

FRINGE CANDIDATES

As we have seen, the Minnesota Constitution requires only that a judge be "learned in the law." In effect this means that candidates for a judgeship need not have ever been in a courtroom, and may run for office as soon as they are out of law school. In a recent election in Minnesota a fresh law school graduate with an arrest record for domestic violence ran for district judge against a highly qualified and respected opponent and yet received 100,000 votes. In another case, an inexperienced candidate of questionable competence came close in a race against an eminently qualified and respected sitting judge. Marginal candidates like these may engage in what appear to be frivolous challenges, but they may well end up getting elected, for "an election process provides absolutely no means of screening potential candidates."⁹

MONEY

Costs for judicial campaigns are rising everywhere. A recent candidate for the Minnesota Supreme Court spent \$250,000—by far the most money in Minnesota's judicial history; a candidate for a district court seat in Hennepin County can expect to spend around \$50,000. A candidate for judge in a geographically large district such as the Ninth may spend as much as \$100,000 on an election campaign. And costs are rising rapidly, all across the nation. Contested elections for judgeships are "be-

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coming more expensive every day.... This is generally true at all court levels, without regard to whether the elections are partisan or nonpartisan."¹⁰ There is no limit to the amount of money an individual or organization may contribute to a judicial campaign.

Judges told the committee how uncomfortable, even intimidated, they feel about having to raise money. In Minnesota, judges running for office are not permitted to solicit campaign funds directly; but they may do so only through a handpicked committee acting on their behalf. They are not supposed to know who contributes, and yet campaign contributions are public information. The situation is clearly awkward; there is a "weird duplicity" afoot here, as one judge said. The potential for conflict of interest is great, and a judge's gratitude toward a particular attorney or law

"unless [the media] had something really bad to say, what is there to report except 'He comes to work and does his job.'"

firm for a monetary contribution tends, as one judge told us, to affect at a minimum all the discretionary rulings of the case. Attorneys are overwhelmingly the most generous contributors in judicial races, often contributing to opposing candidates, or to candidates who are shoo-ins or even who are unopposed.

The simple fact that money is involved in the election of a judge at the very least creates an appearance of impropriety. This was particularly dismaying to the judges whom the committee interviewed, for as voter cynicism increases, so does the danger to democracy. As one commentator has said, the role of money in judicial campaigns creates the impression "that modern justice may be going to the highest bidder."¹¹ An additional risk to the public, said one judge, is the type of candidates who will run for judge if they believe the position can be bought. At the same time qualified judicial hopefuls may find the whole fund-raising process distasteful and choose not to run for that reason.

It is ironic that the large expenditure of money on a campaign—practically all of which goes to buy media exposure through radio, press, television—may have little effect on the outcome of the election. Even media experts are not clear as to why this is so, and say only that the vast majority of people make an uninformed decision when it comes to electing judges. The media, moreover, claim that the restrictions on what judges can say in election campaigns limit their ability to draw reader or listener interest; "resume battles are not newsworthy," as one media expert put it. Or as a judge said, "unless [the media] had something really bad to say, what is there to report except 'He comes to work and does his job.'"

In nonpartisan elections such as we have in Minnesota, campaign funds go towards purchasing name recognition, primarily, since other information about the candidate is limited.

TIME

There is no doubt that the expenditure of time, like that of money, constitutes a drain on candidates' resources. A former Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice notes that "an additional cost to the system is the time spent campaigning by incumbents—time which might be much better spent deliberating on and deciding cases."¹² Others have noted the inefficiency, not to say the wastefulness, of selecting judges this way: "Indeed, much of the time, money, and energy expended under the elective system is minimally related, if related at all, to the selection of qualified judges."¹³ A candidate noted that running for

¹⁰Webster, p.394.

¹¹Webster, p. 397.

¹²Webster, p. 395.

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judge can be a "huge effort" in a large district like Minnesota's Ninth District, where travelling takes so much time. "If you're trying to keep your practice going, it gets pretty hard when you've got a three- or four-hour drive to one end of the district or another to meet with people. It really creates a strain."

LACK OF CIVILITY

Across the nation, judicial campaigns have become less civil in tone. "Judicial elections have entered a new era...noisier, nastier, and costlier than ever before."¹⁴ An article in the Minnesota journal *Law and Politics* speaks of "a shift in the tone and tenor of the races," and cites experts who say it occurred when law firms began to downsize. By the end of 1996 there were 21,000 lawyers in Minnesota. As the market tightened, law schools were turning out unprecedented numbers of future attorneys. Many, casting about for employment opportunities and impressed by prestigious judicial positions, looked to the bench. "But as there is a finite number of seats, particularly open ones, it meant that hopefuls would have to go after incumbents. Once this occurred, the gloves were off and judicial races grew increasingly costly and contentious."¹⁵ An example of such contentiousness occurred at a Hennepin County forum in the fall of 1996, at which judicial candidates called each other "pompous," "abusive," and "lacking in integrity."¹⁶

¹³Webster, p. 394.

¹⁴Mark Hansen, "The High Cost of Judging", *American Bar Association Journal* (September 1991), cited in Webster, p. 390.

¹⁵Mary Ellen Egan, "Should Minnesotans be More Judicious When Selecting Judges?", *Minnesota Law and Politics* (September 1997), p. 33. See also James H. Gilbert, "Thoughts on Judicial Selection", *Bench and Bar* (November-December 1996), pp. 37-8.

¹⁶*Star Tribune*, October 25, 1996.

¹⁷Gerald F. Uelman, "Elected Judiciary", in Leonard W. Levy, et al., *Encyclopedia of the American Constitution*, Supp. I (1992), p. 171.

SINGLE-ISSUE POLITICS

This country is also seeing a marked increase in special interest politics, which brings out highly organized groups who are motivated to defeat or elect a judge according to his or her position (presumed known) on single issues such as abortion, term limits, the death penalty, or guns. These groups, whose interests are clearly focused, increasingly are targeting judicial campaigns as a relatively inexpensive way to influence public policy. Sitting judges find the power of single-issue groups frightening, for they are aware that their own success or failure in the next election may ride on how they ruled in a single case. The irony, of course, is that the judge may or may not personally agree with the decision he or she must render in order to apply the law.

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Evidence suggests that judges' fear of an election challenge or defeat influences their rulings on divisive issue cases. For example, a study of all state supreme courts in a ten-year period ending in 1987 shows that judges whose tenure is more secure are more willing to overturn a death penalty judgement. Those appointed to the bench for life affirmed the death penalty far less frequently than those who were elected (26% versus 63% of the time).¹⁷ In a well-known case, a Tennessee Supreme Court Justice was defeated for reelection after voting—with the majority—to remand a capital punishment conviction. A group in Nebraska targeted and defeated a judge who had ruled against term limits for

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elected officials and had ordered retrials for several convicted criminals.¹⁸ A judge from southern Minnesota spoke of the chilling effect such single-issue campaigns can have: "I see young judges who crumble in front of them; they've...got families and mortgages—and they've got elections. The last thing they need is these people terrorizing them into making decisions."¹⁹

Here in Minnesota the most frequently cited example of single-issue voting is that of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL), a Christian-based, right-to-life organization. (Another single-issue group would be the gun lobby.) Mincing no words, the Minneapolis *Star-Tribune* accuses the MCCL of "meddling" in judicial races by promoting "fourth-rate candidates," conduct which it calls "reckless," and concludes, "All Minnesotans will lose if this court-shaping crusade picks up steam. They should lament and resist MCCL's attempt to sacrifice justice on its single-issue altar."²⁰ The Minnesota State Bar Association notes in the report of their Judicial Elections Task Force that in the 1996 judicial election "literature distributed by MCCL during the campaign made it clear that [MCCL's] endorsements were motivated by a desire to elect judges opposed to abortion."²¹ One commentator refers to the

"The last thing they need is these people terrorizing them into making decisions."

MCCL tactics as "below-the-radar Christian right," and a Supreme Court justice described such single-issue groups as "insidious" for their

refusal to participate in dialogue and their last-minute media attacks which give the targeted judge no time to respond.

Certainly the decrease in the number of citizens claiming adherence to a particular political party (now at roughly 30%, it is believed) is creating a new political world. Instead of parties, many citizens are taking action through coalitions and special-interest groups.

"INCUMBENT PROTECTION"

Because most Minnesota judges first reach the bench through gubernatorial appointment, and most retain their seats when they run in a subsequent election, the system has come under attack for "incumbent protection." Critics speak of "imitation elections," and describe the system as "bogus." One advantage to incumbents is that lawyers may be reluctant to run against a sitting judge before whom they must practice. Further, Minnesota ballots list which judicial candidates are the incumbents. This tradition is criticized by those who believe identification as an incumbent gives a candidate an unfair advantage; it is, however, approved by those who believe that incumbent judges should in fact be given an advantage. They argue that the public has much to gain from having judges with much experience on the bench, and that court stability is a mark of social stability. As a retired judge put it, "Subjecting an incumbent to ouster at the next election he must face risks depriving the public of the benefit of the time in office it has paid for. Only if he is incompetent or has exhibited misconduct should the public be deprived of his service."²² And the

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MSBA Judicial Elections Task Force reinforces this view; "Judges performing well should not be removed from office."²³

RESTRICTIONS ON JUDICIAL CAMPAIGNING

Not only are judicial candidates forbidden by the Minnesota Supreme Court to discuss disputed legal or political issues, they also are prohibited from attending political meetings and seeking, accepting, or using party endorsement. Basing their argument on the right of free speech, the Minnesota Republican Party filed suit in early 1998 challenging such restrictions, thereby throwing Minnesota's long tradition of a nonpartisan judiciary into question. (The suit has not been resolved as of this writing.) The Chair of the Minnesota Republican Party stated: "We, as citizens of Minnesota, have a right to know the political and judicial positions of candidates for judicial office."²⁴ The controversy provoked an irate newspaper reader to write, "The Supreme Court must consider us to be too stupid or too dangerous to be allowed to have the information we want to go to the polls. ...[Judges] cannot be held accountable at the polls. Is there any wonder the citizenry questions the credibility of the courts?"²⁵ (See Appendix 6.)

The question of what is appropriate for the public to know in a judicial campaign is clearly tied to the issue of judicial accountability. If judges are perceived to be ideological activists who make policy, rather than independent and dispassionate appliers of the law, then it follows that judges should not be insulated from politics, but that they should be publicly accountable for their rulings. As the Executive Director of the Minnesota GOP

told the committee, "We believe that judges should be held as accountable to the public as legislators." The fact "that with respect to some matters, judges have more political power than legislators, because they have the ability to thwart the will of the majority,"²⁶ suggests to some that the courts are somehow out of control and have to be "reined in."

Others warn against such efforts to confuse the legislative and judicial branches of government, the separation of which, they point out, underpins our democracy. Retired Supreme Court Chief Justice Sandy Keith pointed out that, having served as both judge and legislator in his career, there is a "huge" difference between those two roles. A legislator represents and serves a constituency, whereas a judge's constituency is everyone and no one. A judge represents only the law, serves litigants by ruling in accordance with it, and may be called on to protect the minority from the majority. A set of guidelines drafted by the Minnesota Supreme Court Judicial Election/Retention Committee holds that independence of the judiciary is "the most important and fundamental principle in maintaining a strong and effective judiciary, responsive to the needs of our society. Any system of selecting judges must have this principle as its cornerstone."²⁷ As U.S. Supreme Court Justice Frankfurter wrote in 1951, "Courts are not representative bodies. They are not designed to be a good reflex of a democratic society.... Their essential quality is detachment, founded on independence."²⁸

¹⁸Minnesota State Bar Association (MSBA) *Judicial Elections Task Force Report & Recommendations* (1997), p. 6.

¹⁹MSBA *Report*, p. 6.

²⁰Editorial, November 10, 1996.

²¹MSBA *Report*, p. 6.

²²Noah S. Rosenbloom, "Counterpoint", *Star Tribune*, May 8, 1998.

²³MSBA *Report*, p. 3.

²⁴"Ease Judicial Campaign Rules, State GOP Says", *Star Tribune*, Feb. 26, 1998.

²⁵St. Cloud *Times*, March 4, 1998.

²⁶Webster, p. 383.

²⁷*Summary*, January 31, 1997.

²⁸see Webster, p. 383, note 40.

PART III. FINDING A SOLUTION

THE PARADOX: INDEPENDENT, BUT ACCOUNTABLE

Democracy, as the saying goes, is the worst of all forms of government—except for the others. Selecting judges in a democracy is particularly problematic. While the Constitution explicitly states that Supreme Court and federal judges will be chosen by Presidential appointment, with Senate approval, the selection of judges at state and local levels is carried out in remarkably diverse ways across the country.

While we want our judges to apply the law, we also want their judicial decisions to line up more or less with our social values.

Fundamentally, when we select a judge, we are looking for two different, and opposing, behaviors. We want the judge to be independent—free of bias and unafraid of making the fair and correct decision, even if it is unpopular. But we also want judges to be accountable to us. While we want our judges to apply the law, we also want their judicial decisions to line up more or less with our social values. “On the one hand, an independent judiciary, unco-opted by the political aims of the ruling majority and willing to defend individuals’ rights against government abuse, seems crucial to liberal democracy....On the other hand, the ability of an elite corps of judges to wield enormous power that is unchecked by popular opinion and criticism seems to contradict liberal democracy’s fundamental premise.”²⁹

A BRIEF HISTORY OF JUDICIAL SELECTION

The diverse ways which states have chosen to select their judges reflect the different ways in which they deal with the paradox: independent, yet accountable.

The founders of our nation placed the power of selecting judges in the hands of the executive or legislative branches, which as a rule appointed judges for life. In England appointment of judges had been made by the king or by the chancellor acting in his behalf. After the American Revolution, the thirteen original states kept the appointive process; but, unwilling to place control in the hands of a single individual, they put it in the hands of the state legislature or made appointment a joint endeavor of the governor and a council. The majority of those states followed the federal model of appointment for life assuming good behavior.

The shift to partisan judicial elections, with limited terms, began with the 1830s, and reflected Jacksonian Democracy’s move away from what was perceived as the elitism of the prevalent system to greater popular control of public office. “By the Civil War, twenty-two of thirty-four states elected their judges, while the older Atlantic seaboard states retained the appointive method subject to legislative approval.”³⁰

In the mid- to late nineteenth century, states reacted to what they viewed as abuses of the judicial election system by partisan politics—the selection of candidates and control of judges by party machines, with the result that elections seemed a sham.

Many states, including Minnesota, turned to compromise solutions, holding onto elections but making them nonpartisan. “As early as

²⁹Webster, p. 375.

³⁰Goldschmidt, p. 123.

3. Merit Selection System (or Missouri Plan)

With its three principal elements (gubernatorial appointment, selection commission, retention election), this system is preferred by those who claim that it produces quality judges, promotes a stable court and public confidence in the judiciary, and relieves judges from the need to raise funds. The current President of the American Bar Association puts it this way: “Selecting the judiciary through a process based on merit increases the public’s confidence in the courts, draws better candidates to the bench, avoids the compromising aspects of election politics, and helps the justice system work more efficiently, more effectively and more fairly....[It is] the belief of the ABA and many legal experts and scholars across the nation that some form of the merit selection system should be used in every state.”⁴⁰ The American Judicature Society has long advocated the merit retention system.

Proponents of the merit retention system believe that it provides for both judicial independence and accountability. First they claim that this system diminishes (although does not eliminate) the role of politics, since a nominating commission fairly and broadly chosen will be beholden to no group. Secondly, they note that the judicial retention election gives the public the opportunity to demand accountability from judges.

Critics of the merit selection plan point out that in the case of the judge’s initial appointment anyway, it deprives citizens of their vote. Although judicial retention elections do keep the voting franchise, they provoke considerable negative comment. For example, in this kind of election where there

is no real opponent, a judge is running against an abstraction, a kind of “perfect” or “ghost” candidate. Retention elections are seen to provoke negative campaigns and to be easy targets for single-issue, special interest groups; “retention elections, with their simple yes or no choice, more directly but crudely hold judges politically accountable on a single popular issue, usually but not always crime, and therefore are a greater challenge to judicial independence and courage.”⁴¹ A well-known example is the case of California Supreme Court Justice Rose Bird who, along with two other justices, was up for retention and overwhelmingly lost because a coalition of special interest groups, displeased with their votes in death penalty cases, portrayed them as soft on crime. Nor is it surprising that judges standing for retention “seem to face particularly difficult problems whenever a general anti-incumbent mood affects the electorate.”⁴²

³⁹Gender and ethnic diversity on the bench, while a controversial matter in many states, did not arise as a major issue in the many interviews held by the LWVMN committee, nor has the Minnesota press highlighted it. This may be because there is general satisfaction with gubernatorial appointments. Diversity as such lies beyond the scope of this study.

⁴⁰Judicial Selection, p. 12.

⁴¹Webster, p. 414.

⁴²See Webster, pp. 413-416.

⁴³Goldschmidt, p. 218.

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SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE JUDICIAL SELECTION SYSTEM

1. The Present System of Nonpartisan Elections: Moderate Reform

Those who favor retaining Minnesota's present system overwhelmingly turn to **voter education** as the primary means of reform. It is worth pointing out that no concerted efforts at public education concerning judicial elections in Minnesota have thus far been attempted by any public group to help voters participate intelligently in judicial elections. Voters need far more information about the candidates than has typically been available. Even given the limitations on judicial candidates, there are, it was pointed out, a great many questions which the candidates can and should answer—the answers to which would be interesting and helpful to the voters. (See Appendix 5.)

Information which would be useful to voters could include results of performance evaluations. Some states, for example, have an evaluation commission which gathers results of surveys of bar members, law enforcement and probation personnel, litigants, witnesses, jurors, judges or justices and other frequent court users. Also considered are the judge's caseload evaluations and disciplinary records.⁴³

Information which would be useful to voters could include results of performance evaluations.

Many recommended some kind of screening process for all judicial candidates, perhaps similar to that which provides the governor with qualified candidates for appointments. A court watchdog group suggested that candidates be rated for competency and that public testimony should be invited.

It was suggested that incompetent judges be made known to the public. Further, some suggested that the confidentiality rules of the Board on Judicial Standards be changed so that there would be public disclosure of ethics violations.

It was proposed that the Minnesota State Bar Association play a more active role in disseminating information to the voters by offering them more than a simple identification of the good candidates.

Groups such as the MSBA could organize a "good government coalition," setting up a blue-ribbon endorsing committee which would ask tough questions of the candidates and distribute their responses as well as sample ballots. Such groups could also work with candidates on voluntary guidelines for candidate speech and material. Campaign monitoring committees could be established.

More public candidate forums are seen to be needed. Traditional voters guides, which list information supplied by each candidate, could be distributed to every household, the cost of which would be funded by the legislature, for example, as is the case in the state of Washington. (See Appendix 7.) Websites could be developed listing judicial information.

Judges should also be part of this massive effort to educate voters in the judiciary. They should redouble their efforts to get involved in their communities for the mutual educational benefit of the citizenry and themselves (a remedy for what one judge called "black robe disease—arrogance and the misuse of power").

It was felt that **the media** have a responsibility to serve the public by educating voters, and that they should strengthen their efforts to seek out information useful to voters as well as generally to make the judiciary more present in the lives of citizens. The numerous interesting and useful topics about which judicial candidates can speak would offer good information to voters. The media could render a

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major service by educating the public as to the qualities of a good judge and the dangers of single-issue voting.

It was recognized that reporting on the judiciary is not necessarily easy. As one judge pointed out, "Exercise of judgement is not easily explained in the press or even covered," while crime is much easier to talk or write about. As he said, "The crime calendar in this city is covered by the media all you could want and more." The committee noted considerable distaste for the oversimplified and sensational "if it bleeds it leads" kind of reporting. It was also suggested that fair reporting compacts be made with the media.

In order to improve the **quality of candidates** running for judicial office, it was suggested that they be required not just to be "learned in the law," but to have a minimum level of experience in the practice of the law—five years after licensure, for example—including experience in a courtroom.

To simplify the **ballot**, it was suggested that the names of those incumbent judges who are not being challenged not appear on that ballot at all. Another idea, this in the interest of fairness, was to rotate names on the ballots.

Once they are in office, judges need **training** and mentoring. One judge spoke of the need for a kind of judicial "residency."

Finally, because some **districts** are so large, either in population or in geographical area, it might be useful to reduce their size.

2. Fundamental Change

Those who favor more fundamental changes to the current system often speak of making the system more "honest." There are two sharply opposing views as to how to do this.

The first bases itself on the claim that judicial elections in Minnesota are meaningless, that voters don't really choose judges in Minnesota. This would be solved by the creation of a more

purely elective system. Judges would be voted for or against like legislators and, like legislators, would be directly accountable to the voters.

Unfettered by current restrictions on their speech and activities, all judicial candidates would be free to take public positions on issues and, if not actually running on a party label, could accept party endorsement. This position was articulated primarily by leaders of the Minnesota Republican party.

Not all of those calling for reform favor retention elections, but all recognize that some sort of periodic review process has to be built into the system.

The second would move towards a merit selection plan on the basis that it best preserves the independence of the judiciary. Since the current system already relies on gubernatorial appointment and utilizes a nominating commission, and since most incumbent judges are unopposed in subsequent elections, one could argue that Minnesota already has a merit plan of sorts. The primary changes would be, first, to disallow elections as a means of initially filling a judicial seat, and, second, to institute retention elections. This plan was put forward in the recent legislative session, but remained in committee for further study.

Not all of those calling for reform favor retention elections, but all recognize that some sort of periodic review process has to be built into the system. Suggestions included legislative confirmation or rejection (with public hearings). Also favored was review, not by election, but retention commission, as is the practice in Hawaii and the District of Columbia.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Webster, p. 412. See the chart of states in *Electing Justice*, pp. 179-180.

⁴⁵See, for example, *Post-Bulletin* editorial (July 3, 1998).

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It was also proposed (by Governor Carlson) that the law be changed to ensure that future governors be required to appoint judges from the list forwarded by the Commission on Judicial Selection. Clearly, this would represent a power shift away from the governor and toward the Commission.

Finally, some reformers proposed scrapping elections entirely, replacing them with an appointment system modeled on the federal selection process.⁴⁵

IN SUMMARY

Minnesotans' opinions on the current judicial selection process range from "We have to find a better way" to "It's as good as you can get." Given the peculiar ambivalence with which Americans regard judges—they must be independent and they must be accountable—it is clear that the choice of any system is going to require trade-offs. It is also clear that all judicial selection systems involve politics. "The issue is how to balance the need for the articulation of interests by a variety of segments of society, including the general public, and minimize the 'problem politics' that jeopardize the fairness of the process."⁴⁶

It is also clear that all judicial selection systems involve politics.

The entire membership of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, which includes forty-seven local Leagues, will consider the issues involved in the selection of judges for 1998-99.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota believes that the best possible solution to the paradoxical problems of judicial selection will be found if citizens inform themselves and participate as necessary choices are made.

⁴⁶Goldschmidt, p. 190.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Should Minnesota retain its present system for selecting and retaining its district (trial) judges and appellate (Supreme Court and Court of Appeals), without any changes?

2. Should Minnesota make the following modifications to its present system for selecting and retaining its district (trial) and appellate (Supreme Court and Court of Appeals) judges:

- Require that all judicial candidates have at least five years experience as a practicing attorney?
- Eliminate incumbency designation on judicial ballot?
- Require state government to publish voter information on judicial candidates?
- Provide public financing for judicial elections?
- Allow judicial candidates to accept endorsements from political parties?
- Create an agency or commission to conduct evaluations of judges job performance?
- Require the governor to appoint judges from among the nominating commission nominees?
- Increase public access to proceedings of the Board of Judicial Standards?

3. Should Minnesota adopt a new system for selecting and retaining its district (trial) and appellate (Supreme Court and Court of Appeals) judges?. If you think so, choose one of the following:

- Merit commission plan with periodic retention election ("Missouri Plan").
- Partisan elections.

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- Gubernatorial appointment with legislative confirmation.
- Gubernatorial appointment with periodic review by retention commission.
- Gubernatorial appointment to life term with legislative confirmation (federal system).

COMMITTEE INTERVIEWS

- Judge Pamela Alexander, Assistant Chief Judge, Hennepin County District Court
- Scott Cottingham, political consultant for Stringer and Anderson campaigns for Supreme Court, 1996
- Senator Carol Flynn, Minnesota Senate (DFL-Minneapolis) and author of a bill proposing a constitutional amendment to provide an appointment with retention election process for MN judges
- Judge Isabel Gomez, Hennepin County District Court (Fourth District)
- Paul Gustafson, *Star Tribune* staff reporter covering St. Paul courts issues
- Jacquelyn Hauser, WATCH Executive Director
- Bruce Peterson, Minneapolis attorney and unsuccessful candidate for Hennepin County District Court
- David Peterson, *Star Tribune* staff reporter covering Minneapolis courts issues
- Justice Edward Stringer, Minnesota State Supreme Court
- Tony Sutton, Republican Party Executive Director
- Judge Edward Toussaint, Chief Judge, Minnesota State Court of Appeals
- Alan Weinblatt, attorney and DFL, National Judicial Elections Counsel
- DePaul Willette, Executive Secretary, Minnesota Board on Judicial Standards

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE INTERVIEWS

- Judge Kevin Burke, Hennepin County District Court (Fourth District)
- Governor Arne Carlson
- Secretary of State Joan Growe
- Hennepin County Bar Association Bench & Bar Committee (Chairs Judge Marilyn Justman and Tom Johnson)
- John Hultquist, Director, Commission on Judicial Selection
- Vicki Landwehr, Assistant Chief Judge, Seventh District Court
- Judge Dennis James Murphy, Ninth District Court
- Judge Jack Nordby, Hennepin County District Court (Fourth District)
- Judge Gerard W. Ring, Third District Court
- Judge John Stanoch, Hennepin County District Court, President of the Minnesota District Judges Association
- Judge Galen Wilson, Ninth District Court

DECLINED

Judge Janet Nordell Poston - Hennepin County District Court (Fourth District)

CHOOSING JUDGES – APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: COURT STRUCTURE

In general, there are three levels of courts in Minnesota—the district courts, the Minnesota Court of Appeals, and the Minnesota Supreme Court. There also are some specialized courts.

DISTRICT COURT

Most cases start in the district court, where trials are held. Minnesota is divided into 10 judicial districts (*see fig. a*), each served by a district court. The Supreme Court determines where judges have their chambers (offices) and where court is held. There must be a minimum of two district judges per district, and a district judge must live in the district where he or she serves. There must be a district court clerk in every county.

The Minnesota Legislature sets the boundaries for judicial districts and decides the number of judges per district. Counties with large populations usually comprise one district. In less populated areas, there are usually several counties in one district. The Supreme Court provides information to help the legislature in deciding judicial case load, using a formula that involves the number of cases per county or district plus driving time involved. The Supreme Court may change any district boundaries except the Second (Ramsey County) and the Fourth District (Hennepin County) boundaries, with the consent of a majority of judges in the affected area.

A particular judge may hear cases in one or more of the following areas: criminal, civil, probate, juvenile, or family.

Conciliation Court is part of the district court.

WHAT KINDS OF CASES DISTRICT COURT HEARS:

Criminal—Government prosecution of a person for violation of a state law or ordinance.

Civil—Disputes between individuals, businesses, groups or government bodies based on claims that a statute, enforceable private agreement (such as a contract, deed, or will) or common law right (such as a negligence action) was violated. **or** Determination of the legal status of a person or property (such as adoption, real estate action).

Probate—Administration of estates after a person has died. Supervision of guardianship and commitment proceedings.

Juvenile—Determination whether a child needs protective services or is delinquent.

Family—

- Marriage dissolution.
- Paternity.
- Child custody, support, and visitation.

THE MINNESOTA COURT OF APPEALS

The final judgments of the district courts may be appealed to the Court of Appeals. Exceptions are appeals in certain election contests or in convictions of first-degree murder as well as appeals from the tax court and the workers' compensation court of appeals. All of these exceptions go directly to the Supreme Court. The Court of Appeals is intended primarily to correct errors by the district courts.

This court has 16 judges. One seat on the court is designated for each congressional district. The governor designates one of the judges as chief judge. The chief judge, subject to the authority of the chief justice of the state Supreme Court, has administrative authority for the court.

Most appeals are heard by a panel of three Court of Appeals judges.

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THE MINNESOTA SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court is the court of last resort, and it is responsible for change in the case law when needed. The Supreme Court may take appeals from the Court of Appeals as well as hear other kinds of cases (for example, first-degree murder appeals and attorney discipline cases). Once a plaintiff or defendant has exhausted appeals at the state level, he is still entitled to appeal through the federal system. There is no jury trial in the Supreme Court.

The Minnesota Constitution provides for one chief justice and six to eight associate justices. The chief justice is the administrative head of the judicial branch and supervises the work of all courts.

SPECIALIZED COURTS

Each of these courts is an executive branch agency created by statute to deal with only one technical area of law. The judges in these courts are appointed by the governor with Minnesota Senate approval, and they are not subject to election.

Appeals from these courts go directly to the Supreme Court.

Tax Court

The three Tax Court judges, who need not be lawyers but must have knowledge of taxes, are paid the same salary as a district judge and are subject to the code of judicial conduct. This court has statewide jurisdiction, and it hears only noncriminal tax cases. These include appeals from the revenue commissioner's orders, appeals from property tax valuations and assessments, and tax cases transferred from district court.

Worker's Compensation Court of Appeals

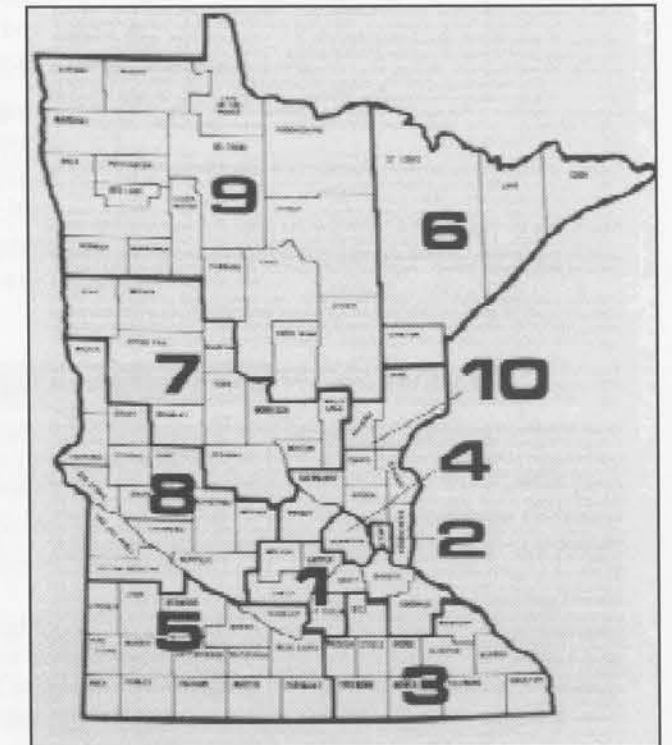
The five judges of this court, who must be lawyers, are paid the same salary as a district judge and are subject to the code of judicial conduct. The court has statewide jurisdiction and hears worker's compensation cases that are appealed from compensation hearings or transferred from district court.

FEDERAL COURTS

In addition to the Minnesota state courts, there are federal courts that handle federal cases as well as some suits between a party from Minnesota and a party from another state. The federal trial court for Minnesota is called the District Court for Minnesota, and trials are held in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Appeals go to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals, based in St. Paul. Appeals from the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals go to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The President, with the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate, fills vacancies on the federal courts. These are lifetime appointments.

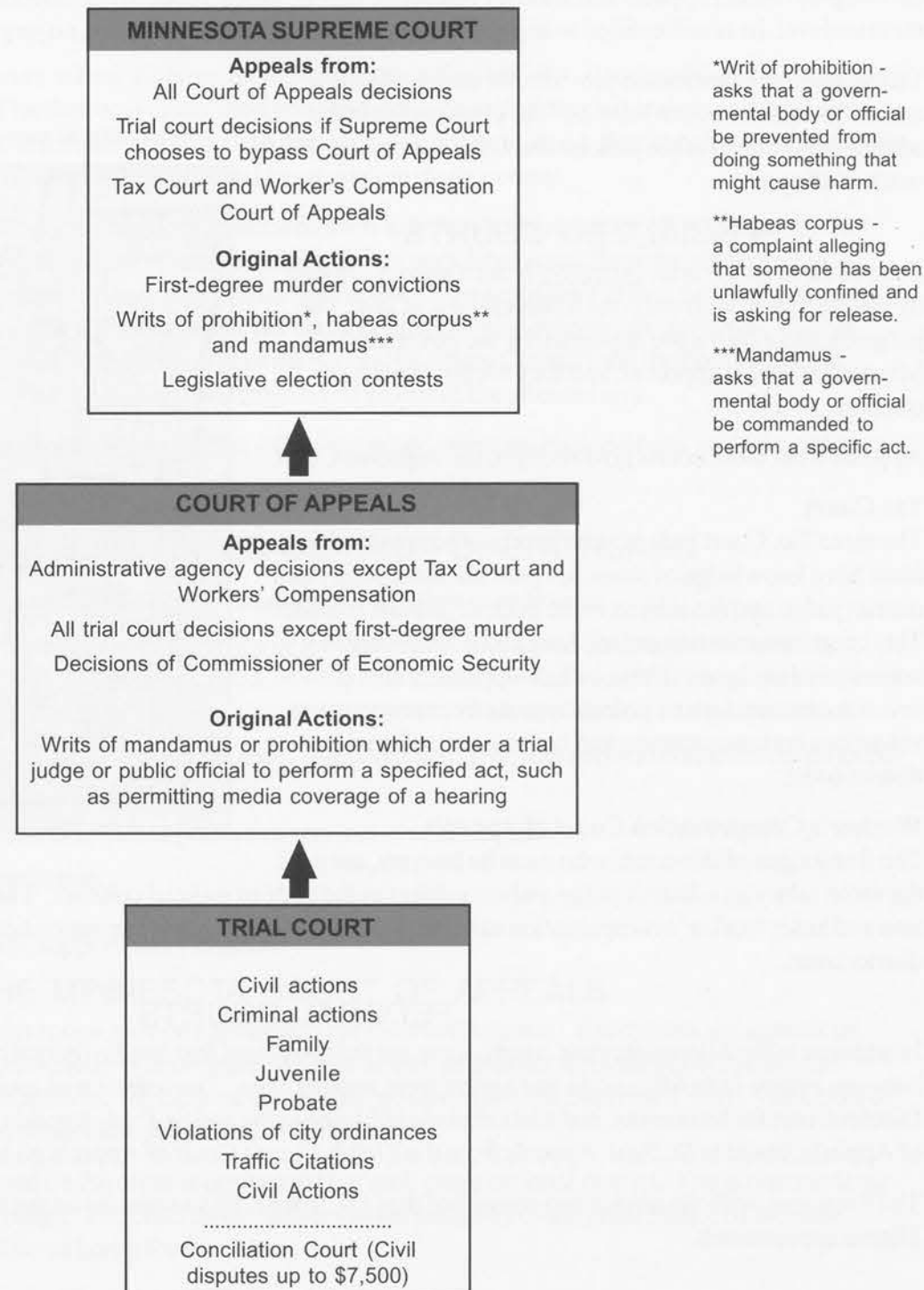
(fig. a) map of state judicial districts



CHOOSING JUDGES – APPENDICES

(fig. b.) State court jurisdiction and appeals routes:

STATE COURT JURISDICTION AND APPEALS ROUTES



Source: Rebecca Fanning, "I'll See you in Court: A Consumer guide to the Minnesota Court System," (January 1997).

CHOOSING JUDGES – APPENDICES

APPENDIX 2: COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL SELECTION

The purpose of this commission is to solicit, evaluate, and make recommendations to the Governor for vacancies which occur in the district courts. There are 49 members, but not all members address each vacancy. Membership of the commission is as follows:

- 9 at-large members who address all judicial vacancies:
 - 7 appointed by the Governor
 - 2 appointed by the Supreme Court
- 4 district members representing each of the 10 judicial districts who address only their district's vacancies:
 - 2 appointed by the Governor (one citizen and one attorney)
 - 2 appointed by the Supreme Court (one citizen and one attorney).

Therefore, total membership of the Commission on Judicial Selection for a particular vacancy is 13 members.

The Commission meets as required, and members receive no compensation. The chair does not have to be an attorney, although it is strongly recommended. The two- to three-month process involves background checks with other legal practitioners as well as letters of recommendation. The judicial appointment process halts sixty days before the end of the governor's term if he is not reelected.

OUTLINE OF PROCEDURES FOR JUDICIAL APPOINTMENT

I. The Commission announces all judicial vacancies as they are certified by the Supreme Court and specifies a deadline for application. The application is eight pages plus a Demographic Data Sheet. Confidential inquiries are made with the Department of Revenue, the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the Lawyer's Professional Responsibility Board and/or the Board on Judicial Standards, and the Clerk of the Supreme Court when applicants become finalists. All judicial applications are confidential.

II. The Minnesota State Statutes charge the Commission to actively seek and encourage qualified individuals, including women and minorities, to apply for judicial offices. The Commission must evaluate the extent to which candidates have the following qualifications for judicial office: integrity, maturity, health (if job related), judicial temperament, legal knowledge, ability, experience and community service.

An applicant must be a resident of the judicial district for which she or he applies.

III. The Commission receives and reviews judicial applications and letters of recommendation written on behalf of those applicants. The Commission, or a designated subcommittee of the Commission, reviews the applications and letters of recommendation and determines from the written materials which applicants shall be semifinalists and given personal interviews.

IV. The applicants who are selected to interview meet with the nine at-large members of the Commission and the four district members who serve when there is a vacancy in their judicial district. Membership includes men, women and minorities who offer a wide variety of life experiences. On the day of the meeting, the Commission personally interviews candidates, discusses the education and experience of each applicant, and prepares a list of three to five finalists for each judicial vacancy. This list is presented to the Governor.

V. The Commission publishes the list of finalists. After the confidential inquiries are completed, the Chair of the Commission on Judicial Selection and the Director of Judicial Appointments present the finalists to the Governor. The governor has the option to personally interview finalists. The governor may fill the vacancy from the nominees presented by the Commission. If the Governor declines to select a nominee to fill the vacancy from the list of nominees, the Governor may select a person to fill the vacancy without regard to the Commission's recommendation.

CHOOSING JUDGES – APPENDICES

APPENDIX 3: JUDICIAL EVALUATION

APPELLATE COURTS

The Minnesota Court of Appeals and the Minnesota Supreme Court have indicated that they are working to develop judicial plans for the appellate courts, but they did not say when such plans would be complete. Part of their plan would include focus groups of lawyers to evaluate how the systems of the appellate courts could be improved.

TRIAL COURTS

The plans at the district court level are as varied as the districts. In some districts, the judge being evaluated receives all completed questionnaires to keep or destroy. In others, staff or outside evaluators compile raw data and summarize it for the judge being evaluated. Some districts share summary data with the chief judge and court administrative staff. Most districts employ a written questionnaire. In the Second Judicial District, data are collected through oral interviews by a trained, outside evaluator. The subject judge in the Sixth, Eighth, and Ninth Districts determines the form of the survey instrument.

The group doing the evaluation varies across districts. Staff, court reporters, and law clerks in the First and Seventh districts complete questionnaires. Practicing attorneys and other “external customers” in these districts do not participate. In many districts, the subject judge selects the persons to be surveyed. Some districts have a feedback panel to share the evaluation results with the subject judges. Others allow a judge to choose a fellow judge from a volunteer evaluator list or provide a mentor.

CHOOSING JUDGES – APPENDICES

APPENDIX 4: BAR PLEBESCITE OR BALLOT

The Minnesota State Bar Association (MSBA) has conducted a plebiscite of its members whenever there are contested judicial elections for the Minnesota Supreme Court or the Court of Appeals. The organization has issued a press release of the results, but there has been no endorsement or voter education.

Since 1990, the Hennepin County Bar Association (HCBA) has had a Judicial Evaluation, now renamed the Judicial Performance and Retention Survey. It is not a true pick-the candidate plebiscite, but it serves as such for them. Ramsey County Bar Association conducts a plebiscite of their membership for contested judicial elections as well as for finalists recommended for appointment in the Second District. Their plebiscite is a straight preference poll. Results of the vote are released to the media and reported to the governor, but there is no endorsement.

In Hennepin County, the survey asks lawyers to give their opinions about judges who are new or standing for reelection in the current year. Lawyers are asked to rate only those judges with whom the lawyers has had direct case contact within the past six years. They are required to certify that they have appeared before any judge they rate. HCBA asks lawyers who have not appeared before any judges to return a blank survey. About 50 % of the forms come back with the lawyers reporting no case contact with the judge at all. On average, lawyers rate six or seven of the 15-27 judges who are up for election in a given year.

Polls depend on the premise that most lawyers will exercise reasonable care in rating judges and that trial lawyers have the training and personal experience to provide an informed opinion of a judge's performance. There is criticism that significant numbers of lawyers are completing surveys for judges about whom they have no direct information. In several documented cases, attorneys have rated judges in areas where the judges have not been working. Judge Jack Nordby, an outspoken critic of the Hennepin County poll, pointed out that he recently received a high approval rating for his decisions in civil cases in spite of the fact that he only hears criminal cases. (Judge Nordby also received high approval ratings for his decisions in criminal cases.) He thinks the present evaluation process is a fraud, purporting to be fair and accurate. He also believes that an e-mail message from one influential member of a large firm to his or her associates would do much to influence a judicial evaluation. In addition, the ratings can be quite subjective.

The HCBA poll has been a source of conflict for the last six years between the bench and bar of Hennepin County. This program is favored by those who support the public disclosure component and not favored by those who object to the “best to worst” ranking in the media that results. There also is a difference of opinion on disclosure of data before or after election filing dates or in proximity to contested judicial elections. A proposal from the Bench and Bar Committee proposed delaying the release of results until after the filings for judicial office close. Many feel that publishing the results amounts to any invitation to challengers for any judges ranking lower, and that this does little to strengthen the judiciary.

Some feel that the public disclosure part of this program is crucial to change. A 1997 poll of lawyers in Hennepin County showed that 92% believe that the HCBA survey of judicial performance is useful and that the results should be made public. The poll results show support for the judiciary. It has demonstrated over the years that most judges are highly regarded, regardless of their political affiliation or decisions they have made as judges. Few politicians can boast a retention and job approval rating above 70 percent.

Although proponents of a bar poll support full information for voters, the results of a poll of lawyers' opinion of judicial performance is only a piece of what the public needs to vote intelligently. A survey conducted sponsored by the Minnesota State Bar Association after the last judicial election showed that 86% of voters said they need more information to make informed decisions about judicial candidates.

According to the Tom Tinkham, chair of the HCBA Judicial Survey Committee, the HCBA will spend more than \$30,000 on the latest survey.

CHOOSING JUDGES – APPENDICES

APPENDIX 5: CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT

The Minnesota Supreme Court established a code of conduct as standards for the ethical conduct of judges to reflect the responsibilities of the office as a public trust and to promote confidence in the legal system. The Code (consisting of five individual Canons) spells out rules of behavior to judges and candidates for judicial office. These rules, adopted from the American Bar Association's code of judicial conduct, prescribe standards of judicial and personal conduct for judges and judicial candidates as well as provide a means for the Board on Judicial Standards to impose limited discipline.

The Canons cover the following themes:

- Canon 1 - A judge shall uphold the integrity and independence of the judiciary.
- Canon 2 - A judge shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all of the judge's activities.
- Canon 3 - A judge shall perform the duties of the office impartially and diligently.
- Canon 4 - A judge shall conduct all extrajudicial activities so as to minimize the risk of conflict with judicial obligations.
- Canon 5 - A judge or judicial candidate shall refrain from political activity inappropriate to judicial office.

The text of each Canon (not included here) very specifically states appropriate judicial behavior.

CANON 5 establishes strict rules that limit campaigning by forbidding a judicial candidate to "announce his or her views on disputed legal or political issues." This Canon's purpose is to keep elections from becoming referenda on hot social issues.

The Board of Judicial Standards routinely approves lists of issues that a candidate may address without violating Canon 5 of the Code of Judicial Conduct. During the 1996 elections, for example, candidates could offer their views on:

- "the most critical issue currently facing the Hennepin County Criminal Justice System"
- the "public disclosure of disciplinary actions" against judges
- the use of "cameras in the courtroom"
- "the root cause for the high number of juvenile offenders"
- "the length of time it takes to get...cases to trial"
- the best ways to spend \$50 million "to address the issues of crime and violence"
- the "problem of domestic abuse" and how "to lower the number of domestic assault cases that are being dismissed" before trial
- the "mission" and "role" of the judge and how to accomplish it
- the remedies for racial and gender bias
- the ways to "balance the rights of crime victims and witnesses with the right to confidentiality possessed by juvenile [offenders]"
- the practice of allowing friends and family of criminal defendants to speak at sentencing
- the balance between "free speech rights [and] the need to control [hate crimes]"
- the criteria for deciding whether to depart from sentencing guidelines
- the causes for high rates of minority incarceration
- the offenses that courts should treat as "victimless crimes"
- the remedies for "under representation of women or people of color in the court system"
- "the current system for disciplining lawyers and judges"
- the role of judges "in bringing important legal or judicial issues before the public or the legislature"
- the reasons that voters should "support you rather than your opponent"

CHOOSING JUDGES – APPENDICES

APPENDIX 6: CHALLENGE TO CANON 5

The Republican Party, apparently instigated by an attorney who planned to file for office as a Supreme Court candidate, currently seeks to overturn the Canon 5 rules that prevent judicial candidates from personally soliciting campaign contributions, publicly discussing issues, declaring political affiliation, seeking party endorsement, or attending political meetings (including precinct caucuses).

Bill Cooper, Minnesota Republican Party Chair, said that the suit was based on a belief that activist judges have become "a super legislature with no meaningful check on their power." Republican Governor Arne Carlson disagrees with the decision of his party leadership's suit to overturn the judicial election laws. He said that the changes would make the judiciary "another legislative branch of government" and give litigants "no chance for a fair hearing if the judge is recommitted" on issues. (*Star Tribune*, March 2, 1998, p. 3B)

U.S. District Judge Michael Davis heard the case after four other federal judges declined to do so because of possible conflicts of interest. The Republican party argued that Canon 5 violates First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and association, as well as Equal Protection. Judge Davis held that Canon 5 is not unconstitutional, but he suggested that a provision barring judges from stating views on controversial issues may be invalid. He found that the State had a "compelling interest" in the partisan prohibitions—to maintain the "independence and impartiality of the judiciary."

Judicial elections are designated as nonpartisan by statute. Political parties have always been free to support judicial candidates but have refrained from official participation in campaigns. Most judicial candidates have avoided partisan appeals, although some have been readily identifiable by previous political roles as state legislators or visible staff members for elected officials.

APPENDIX 7: VOTER GUIDES

Four states—Alaska, California, Oregon, and Washington—publish and mail voter guides to registered voters before elections, including judicial elections. These pamphlets typically include a statement prepared by the candidate, providing biographical information and qualifications. They may include a candidate's photograph. Washington State charges a nominal fee for all judicial offices. In addition, the Washington Secretary of State offers a wide array of voter information services: a video voters guide—unedited videotaped statements from statewide candidates, an interactive kiosk system which includes information on judicial offices, an on-line voters guide, and a 24-hour-a-day hot line.

APPENDIX 8: OTHER STUDIES

Minnesota State Bar Association Task Force Study and Recommendations

The Minnesota State Bar Association Judicial Elections Task Force was formed in January 1997 to study the structure of elections, the financing and conduct of judicial campaigns, and the role of the bar. Their charge was to make recommendations to ensure the selection and retention of qualified judges and to preserve the integrity and independence of the judiciary. The ten recommendations made in the report were adopted by the MSBA in June 1997.

American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Separation of Powers and Judicial Independence

This commission, established in August 1996 by the ABA President, was created to study judicial independence and accountability, to evaluate recent events perceived by some as threatening judicial independence, and to make recommendations. The focus of their study was on the federal courts.

Their report makes nineteen recommendations and in conclusion said, "The time has come for judges, legislators, lawyers and the general public to work together actively and aggressively to address the causes of popular dissatisfaction with the courts, to restore public confidence in our judicial system, and thereby to preserve judicial independence as a value for all to cherish." (The American Bar Association, "Report of the Commission on Separation of Powers and Judicial Independence" (July 4, 1997), p. 65) Minneapolis mayor Sharon Sayles Belton was one of the eleven commission members.

ABA Office of Justice Initiatives

The ABA strongly endorses the merit selection of judges and has encouraged bar associations where judges are elected in partisan or nonpartisan elections to work for the adoption of merit selection and retention.

The Office of Justice Initiatives is producing a "how-to" series of publications called *Roadmaps* to help the community, the bench, and the bar implement change in the justice system. The first in the series, *Judicial Selection*, provides background information on judicial selection including reasons for reform, an outline of the reform process with several suggestions for ways citizens may take action to improve the system, and examples of roads to reform in four states. This publication assumes and advocates a common goal of adoption of a complete merit selection process, although its discussion points and questions and its excellent list of resources would be useful for any citizens' group following the issue. (Available through the American Bar Association.)

American Judicature Society (AJS)

The AJS also has a position supporting merit selection (with a system of appointments and retention elections) as a replacement for partisan and nonpartisan election of judges. They also have an interest in assuring integrity, independence, and ability in the judiciary, however they are selected.

The AJS established a Judicial Elections Project to address the problem of how to achieve electoral accountability of judges while preserving the independence, impartiality, and dignity of the winning candidates. The monograph, *Electing Justice: The Law and Ethics of Judicial Election Campaigns* (1990), suggests how the system may be improved, with specific recommendations to improve judicial campaign financing and conduct.

Citizens for Independent Courts

This is a project of the Century Foundation with a goal of preserving the independence of state and federal courts. Cochairs are former Congressman Mickey Edwards (R-OK) and Lloyd N. Cutler, White House Counsel for Presidents Carter and Clinton. The committee is a broad-based, nonpartisan group of 88 members. Among the areas of concern are threats to the tenure of judges in reaction to isolated decisions, the financing of state judicial campaigns, and the politicization of the judiciary through undue influence of other branches of government and political organization.

APPENDIX 9: RESOURCES

WATCH (a nonprofit court monitoring organization that focuses on justice system accountability), Executive Director Jacquelyn Hauser, 608 Second Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55402, 612/ 341-2747.

American Bar Association, 750 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611, 800/285-2221, Office of Justice Initiatives, 312/ 988-5693, John J. Sweeney, Director.

American Judicature Society, 180 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60601, 312/ 558-9175.

Common Cause of Minnesota, Executive Director Todd Paulson, 1010 University Avenue W., Suite 203, St. Paul, MN 55104, 651/ 644-1844.

Hennepin County Bar Association, Executive Director Shelly Carthen-Watson, 514 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55402, 612/ 340-0022.

Minnesota State Bar Association, Executive Director Tim Groshens, 514 Nicollet Mall, Suite 300, Minneapolis, MN 55402, 612/ 333-1183.

Minnesota Supreme Court, Public Information: 651/297-7650.

Minnesota Women Lawyers, Executive Director Stacy Doepner-Hove, 514 Nicollet Mall, Suite 350B, Minneapolis, MN 55402, 612/ 338-3205.

Ramsey County Bar Association, Executive Director Jane Harens, E. 924 First National Bank Building, St. Paul, MN, 55101, 651/ 222-0846.

State Court Administration, Sue K. Dosal, State Court Administrator, 135 Minnesota Judicial Center, 25 Constitution Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55155; 651/296-2474.

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- October**
- 20 - *Board Memo and Presidents' Mailing* sent to local Leagues
 - Campaign Finance Survey packet sent to participating local Leagues
 - 21 - LWVMN Office Management Committee Meeting; 9:30 a.m., MWB
 - 22 - LWVMN Attorney General Debate, WMNN, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
 - 27 - LWVMN/WCCO Gubernatorial Debate at Blake School, 7:00 p.m.
- November**
- 1 - LWVMN/WCCO Election Hotline, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.
 - 2 - LWVMN/WCCO Election Hotline, 6:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.
 - 2 - MN Secretary of State Hotline, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
 - 3 - LWVMN/WCCO Election Hotline, 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 - 3 - MN Secretary of State Hotline, 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 - 3 - General Election Day; polls open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**
 - 9 - LWVMN Action Committee Meeting, 1:00 p.m., MWB
 - 10 - LWVMN Member Resources Committee Meeting, 1:00 p.m., MWB
 - 11 - LWVMN,-EF Board Meetings, 9:00 a.m. – Noon, MWB
 - 12 - Leaders of Today and Tomorrow Steering Committee; 1:30 p.m.
 - 16 - LWVMN Voter Service Committee, 9:30 a.m., LWVMN office
 - 17 - Presidents' Mailing from state office
 - 18 - LWVMN Budget Committee Meeting, Noon, MWB

ENCLOSURES

- (Included in this mailing with the *Board Memo* to LL Presidents and DPM subscribers)
- *Schedule for General Election Hotlines at WCCO-TV and Minnesota Lottery Building (Secretary of State)/Covey
 - *Legislative Interview Packet/Frisch
 - *Legislative Intern Applications/Frisch
 - *First Call to LWVMN Convention/Matlock
 - *New Member Handbook and order form/Borgen, Matlock
 - *New Member Orientation for Leaders/Borgen, Matlock
 - *Insert sheet for Voter Information Packet(VIP)/Kargas

BOUQUETS TO

- *Eydie Kargas and the Voter Service Committee for beautiful *Voter Guides* for the Primary and General Elections; over 600,000 sold and distributed;
- *Kay Erickson, who has stepped into role of Development Director for the interim as a volunteer;
- *LWV of the Brainerd Lakes Area for an outstanding gubernatorial debate; congratulations to Debates project director, Liz Nordling for superb coordination and to Judy Duffy, LWVMN President for skillful moderating;
- *LWV of Duluth for a similarly spectacular gubernatorial debate with special congratulations to Gail Schoenfelder, organizer, and Catherine Severin, moderator.
- *Anne Borgen, Field Service, and Jeanne Matlock, Member Resources, for their work on Member Orientation manual and booklet, enclosed with this mailing.

At its October 14, 1998 Meetings the LWVMN/EF Boards . . .

- *decided to cosponsor with the Center for Women in Government a reception for newly elected women at Hamline University on November 19th;
- *voted to provide information to voters about the three Constitutional Amendments on the ballot, emphasizing the effect of a "yes," "no," and "non-vote";
- *voted to oppose Amendment #2 re Hunting and Fishing Heritage, but voted to not join the "NO on 2" Coalition;
- *voted to recommend with regret to LWVUS the disbanding of the LWV of Alexandria;
- *appointed Judy Covey and Carol Frisch to the LWVMN Nominating Committee;
- *heard a presentation about a seminar for college women planned for January 14-16 by Heidi Anderson-Isaacson, Chair of Leaders of Today and Tomorrow (LOTT).

MEMBER RESOURCES

(Jeanne Matlock, 1128 W. Montana Ave., St. Paul 55108, 651/488-0458)

FIELD SERVICE

(Anne Borgen, 18811 Pennsylvania Ave. N., Golden Valley 55427, 612/454-7076)

Included with this mailing are two pieces designed to help you orient new members. One is intended for your membership chair and is in an 8½" by 11", 3 hole punched format. The second piece is a booklet to give to new members (and maybe to long-time members as a refresher). Both contain background information about the history of the League, an overview of its work over the years, summaries of its structure and positions and a glossary of terms. One copy of the New Member Orientation for Leaders and two copies of the New Member Handbook are enclosed in this mailing with an order form. Extra copies of the Leaders guide are available for \$3.00 apiece. Copies of the handbooks for new members are available for \$2.00 apiece, with bulk discounts for orders of ten or more.

PUBLICATIONS

Voting Information(VIP)

There has been a recent change in voter registration requirements. See enclosed information. Insert sheet in your VIP packet. VIP packets are available from LWVMN for \$8.00 each for members, (\$10 for non-members).

Voter Guides

Voter Guides are available from Eydie Kargas (612/473-8610) at \$.13 each in bundles of 50. Each local League is entitled to 500 free to distribute to High School seniors.

Curriculum

Our curricula meet the Profile of Learning requirements and the graduation standards requirements. This is what teachers want and are looking for right now. Show copies to teachers in your local school district and ask them to use them. Face to face is the best way to interest teachers in the curricula. Ask a leaguer with children in school to help out. Our curriculum project is a great way to bring young women into the League.

Memorandum

To: Local Leagues
CC: Action Chairs and Voter Editors
From: Carol Frisch, V.P. Action
Date: 10/15/98
Re: Legislative Intern Applications

Attached is one copy of the legislative intern application for your use.

Please include it in your November Voter or distribute at your November meetings.

This is a most important function of the LWV and we need more womanpower to assist in our lobbying efforts at the Capitol. Encourage your members to apply. There will be a training series in December and January for applicants.

1999 LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

LWV member? _____ Yes _____ No

Local League (please specify) _____

Member-at-Large? _____

Why do you want to be legislative intern?

What kind of experience do you bring to this job?*

How does a legislative internship fit in with your personal goals?

What kind of time commitment can you make to lobbying? _____ # hours

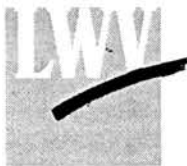
_____ days/weeks _____ flexible?

Please circle your area(s) of interest:

Education	Election Laws	Women's/Children's Issues
Mental Health	Campaign Reform	Violence Prevention
Taxes/Financing Gov't.	Government	Environment/Nat. Res.
Health Care	Choice	Firearms
Criminal Justice	Civil Rights/Equity	Housing

**SUBMIT APPLICATION AT ANY TIME - APPLICATION DEADLINE IS NOV. 30, 1998;
APPLICATIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED AS RECEIVED**

*Disclaimer: In true LWV fashion, we expect no lobbying or legislative experience -- we learn by doing -- and no one is asked to lobby without experience first as an intern with a seasoned LWV lobbyist.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA
550 RICE STREET, ST. PAUL, MN 55103
651/224-5445 FAX 651/290-2145
E-MAIL: lwvmn@mtn.org
<http://tcfreenet.org/ip/pol/lwvmn>

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Martin Grantees
DATE: 10/21/98
FROM: Mary Ann McCoy
RE: Candidate Forums

Calling all Martin Grantees!

Candidate Forums for 1998 Elections...rapidly becoming history!

By the time you receive this mailing most of the Local League candidate forums you have been planning and conducting under the pass-through Martin Foundation grants will have informed voters, encouraged them to vote in the November 3rd General Election, and accomplished the objectives you envisioned!

Congratulations to each of you! And now is the time to hunt up the final report form – complete this form now while your impressions (and suggestions for **next** election time!) are fresh in your mind and in your files. Send the completed form to the State LWV office right away --- no later than **November 20, 1998**. When your report arrives, the Voter Service Committee will send you the second half of your Martin Grant Award. Thank you for all your good work in service to your voters!

Questions? Need a report form? Please call the state office, 251/224-5445, or 1-800-663-9328 from greater Minnesota.

To: Local League Presidents
From: Judy Duffy, LWVMN President
Re: What to do with this Mailing!
Date: 10/19/98

1. **Schedule for Election Hotline Volunteers:** call Linda Loomis at 612/545-4659 if you have volunteers—remember, \$15.00 per shift worked goes to your League.
2. **Legislative Interview Packet:** Pass to your Action Chair or the person in charge of arranging your League's interviews with Legislators.
3. **Legislative Intern Application:** put in your bulletin/give to potential candidate.
4. **First Call to LWVMN Convention:** put dates on your League calendar, share with your Board.
5. **New Member Handbook, New Member Orientation for Leaders and order form:** pass to your membership chair.
6. **Insert Sheet for Voter Information Packet(VIP):** this is new information about voter registration; pass to your Voter Service Chair to add to your League's Voter Information Packet.

FIRST CALL TO CONVENTION

The 58th State Convention

of the

League of Women Voters of Minnesota

will be held

April 16th & 17th, 1999

at the

Best Western Kelly Inn in St. Cloud.

Mark your calendars now.

RECENT VOTING REGISTRATION CHANGE FROM SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE

New election day procedure allows using a current utility bill with a correct address along with an ID that does not have current address (see section 3 below). Other procedures remain the same.

Add these changes to Page 2 of Voter Information Packet (VIP).

Minnesota Voting Information

TO VOTE you must be:

- 18 years old by the date of the next election
- a citizen of the U.S.
- a resident of Minnesota for 20 days immediately preceding the election
- registered to vote

HOW TO REGISTER

By October 13: Request a voter registration card from your city clerk or county auditor. Fill it out and return it to the county auditor by October 13, 1998. You will receive a card in the mail notifying you of your polling place.

On election day: Find the location of your polling place by calling your city clerk or county auditor or by calling the Hot Line. Bring an approved proof of residence to your polling place. Use one of these for proof:

1. A current Minnesota driver's license, learner's permit, Minnesota identification card, or receipt for any of these with your current address
2. A student photo ID card, registration or fee statement with the student's current address in the precinct, or only the student photo ID if you are on a student housing list on file at the polling place
3. A photo ID without current address together with a utility bill that contains your name, current address within the precinct with a payment due date within 30 days of the election. Acceptable photo ID's are: MN driver's license, MN State ID, U.S. passport, military ID or college ID. Acceptable utility bills are: cable TV, electric, gas phone, sewer, solid waste or water.
4. A previous registration in the same precinct but at a different address
5. A "notice of late registration" postcard
6. Someone who is registered in the precinct where you live to vouch for you at the polling place. A voter who registers by this method may not confirm the residency of another voter on the day of the same election.

Registration in Minnesota is permanent. You need to register again only when you change your name or address, or fail to vote in four years.

NEW ELECTION DAY PROCEDURE ALLOWS USING A CURRENT UTILITY BILL WITH A CORRECT ADDRESS ALONG WITH AN ID THAT DOES NOT HAVE CURRENT ADDRESS (SEE SECTION 3 BELOW). OTHER PROCEDURES REMAIN THE SAME.

You can still register on Election Day

Find the location of your polling place by calling your city clerk or county auditor or by calling the Hot Line. Bring an approved proof of residence to your polling place. Use one of these for proof:

1. A current Minnesota driver's license, learner's permit, Minnesota identification card, or receipt for any of these with your current address
2. A student photo ID card, registration or fee statement with the student's current address in the precinct, or only the student photo ID if you are on a student housing list on file at the polling place
3. A photo ID without current address together with a utility bill that contains your name, current address within the precinct with a payment due date within 30 days of the election. Acceptable photo ID's are: MN driver's license, MN State ID, U.S. passport, military ID or college ID. Acceptable utility bills are: cable TV, electric, gas phone, sewer, solid waste or water.
4. A previous registration in the same precinct but at a different address
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Registration in Minnesota is permanent. You need to register again only when you change your name or address, or fail to vote in four years.

RECENT VOTER REGISTRATION CHANGE

WCCO

Secretary of State

Sunday, November 1:

9:00 a.m. to Noon

5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Monday, November 2:

6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Noon to 2:30 p.m.

2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 3:

6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Noon to 2:30 p.m.

2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Monday, November 2:

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Noon to 2:30 p.m.

2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 3:

7:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m. to noon

Noon to 2:30 p.m.

2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

If you can answer a telephone and type a little, you have the qualifications needed to help. This is a fun project and your local league can earn money too. The LWVMN Education fund will pay each volunteer from your league \$15 for each shift that they volunteer. If you are able to volunteer, please call Linda Loomis at 545-4659.

ORIENTATION PUBLICATIONS

New Member Orientation
for Leaders

\$3.00

New Member Handbook
Manual

\$2.00

Item	#	Cost

Add 6.5% sales tax
(7% St. Paul)

Postage & handling

TOTAL

Send to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Postage & Handling	
0 - \$ 4.99	\$ 1.00
\$ 5.00 - \$14.99	\$ 3.00
\$15.00 - \$34.99	\$ 4.00
\$35.00 - \$54.99	\$ 5.00
\$55.00 - \$74.99	\$ 7.00
Over \$75.00 To be billed	

Quantity Discounts

11 - 50 10% discount

51-200 20% discount

over 201 30% discount

All discounts apply to each item
separately and not to the sum of orders.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

THE MISSION

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of the citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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League of Women Voters New Member Orientation Information

League of Women Voters of _____
Contact Person _____
Contact Phone _____

League of Women Voters of Minnesota
550 Rice Street
St. Paul, MN 55103
Executive Director – Sally Sawyer

Office: 651/224-5445
1-800/663-9328
FAX: 651/290-2145
Office e-mail: lwvmn@mtn.org
Home page: <http://tcfreenet.org/ip/pol/lwvmn>
Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., M – F

League of Women Voters of the United States
1730 M Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20036-4508

Office: 202/429-1965
FAX: 202/429-0854
Home page: <http://www.lwv.org>

WELCOME

Welcome to the League of Women Voters.

This is an organization of volunteers who believe that our representative democracy needs citizens involved in public decisions. League offers many ways to be involved. You might observe a local public meeting, help to put on a candidate event, donate money for a project, serve on a study committee, or learn to lobby the state legislature. We are delighted to have your support and your help in whatever way you can give it. Our advice is to take time to observe, to listen, and to try out possibilities and projects that fit your interests and your life. There is as much to learn and to do as you have time and interest to give.

The League offers us an opportunity to get involved in policy issues without taking a partisan position. The League encourages open discussion, respect for the right to disagree, and the use of information that looks at an issue from as many perspectives as possible. As you attend meetings join in with your own questions and comments. Consensus is a process of finding the areas in which we do agree – it is seldom that we agree on everything.

The material that follows is intended to give you a deeper look at this unique, multi-level organization you have joined. You might want to skim through it now and come back to it as you learn more or have questions. Always feel free to ask - your local members and board, the state board and office, and even the national board and office. This is a grassroots organization and you are the roots, our most valued resource.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

This brief review of League history will cover only the state and national levels. Be sure to ask about the history of your own local League - many local histories have been written and make interesting community stories. Those of you who are especially interested in history might begin by consulting three publications :

- *The First Fifty Years, The League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 1919-1969* Mildred Fearrington Hargraves. The League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 1969 (an update is underway)
- *Gentle Warriors, Clara Ueland and the Minnesota Struggle for Woman Suffrage*, Barbara Stuhler, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1995
- *The League of Women Voters in Perspective, 1920-1995* Nancy M. Neuman, The League of Women Voters of the United States, 1994 Pub # 995

League Roots

- **The Suffrage Movement.** In July 1848, the first national convention for women was held in Seneca Falls, New York. The focus of the convention was to deal with the social, civil, religious, conditions of women and their lack of legal and political rights. When the women at this meeting decided to fight for the right to vote, they had no idea that it would take 72 years.
- **The National American Woman Suffrage Movement (NAWSA).** This organization was founded in 1890 to carry out a nationwide campaign for the right of women to vote. By 1916 it had split into two groups that differed on tactics. Both groups contributed to the struggle for suffrage. One was the National Woman's Party headed by Alice Paul who had been working on women's issues in England and had come to prefer more radical tactics and strategies than those used by NAWSA. NAWSA preferred to work in a less militant fashion to change the system from within. This latter group eventually became the League of Women Voters.
- **The 19th Amendment.** On June 4, 1919 Congress sent an amendment giving women the right to vote to the states for ratification. It used the words suggested by Susan B. Anthony in 1875 : "*The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United states or any state on account of sex.*" Minnesota ratified the amendment on September 8, 1919. National ratification came almost a year later on August 26, 1920.
- **The League of Women Voters.** As states ratified the 19th Amendment, the state suffrage associations dissolved and turned their financial assets and leaders over to the new organization reflecting their new status – the League of Women Voters!

Minnesota . On October 29, 1919 the Minnesota Suffrage Association officially became the Minnesota League of Women Voters *"for the purpose of completing the full enfranchisement of women and increasing the effectiveness of women's votes in furthering better government."* The first president was Clara Ueland. See Barbara Stuhler's book noted above for a fascinating look at her life and times.

United States. In February 1920, NAWSA itself officially became the National League of Women Voters with Maud Wood Park serving as the first president. It was organized as a federation of state leagues until 1946 when it became a unified association of members, the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Early League Activities

The decision to be both nonpartisan and political was an early one. Article II of The League's first constitution written in 1920 stated: *"The object shall be to foster education in citizenship and to support improved legislation. The National League urges every woman to become an enrolled voter, but as an organization it shall be allied with and support no party."* Politics was not very popular with either men or women at that time, but the women believed (as Leaguers still do) that without belonging to the same party thoughtful citizens might unite around legislation that obviously enhanced the welfare of the people.

1920's:

The Minnesota League plunged right into activity using political subdivisions as a basis for organizing leagues in the state. Early leaders thought that the work might take five years so they wasted no time getting started. One popular early project was the citizenship school to teach new voters about the political system. Others included the first compilation of state election laws, a study of reorganization of the state government departments for improved economy and efficiency, and arranging for 1926 gubernatorial candidates to speak on WCCO radio. The League worked on and helped to win compulsory school attendance, jury duty for women and a 10-hour workday and 55 hour workweek for women. By 1927 the discussion method for reaching member agreement on an issue was developed. A leader led the group in a discussion of an issue from every point of view, listing the pro and con arguments on a blackboard qualifying and erasing statements until the group could agree.

The National League worked on health, education, child labor, and judicial treatment issues and on training women for their new civic role.

1930's:

The Minnesota League's priority in this decade was the enactment of a civil service law. As Marguerite Wells, a Minnesotan who was then the National League president, said: *" In respect to appointment to office, there are no 'deserving Democrats' nor are there 'deserving Republicans'. There is only the deserving public and it deserves that its affairs be run by men and women chosen for ability and devotion."*

The National League, despite the great challenge to survival presented by the Depression, worked on trade, child welfare and child labor issues. Reform of the civil service to implement the merit system was a priority.

1940's:

Both Minnesota and the National League members were caught up in the World War II effort and after the war were active in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals for establishing a United Nations.

In 1946 the National League also took the major step of replacing the federation of state leagues with a unified membership organization. That reorganization made the members of local leagues members of the state and national leagues as well. Minnesota changed its Bylaws in 1947 and tried to help local leagues which suddenly had to meet minimum standards and assume responsibility for state and national programs as well as their own.

Through the Decades

1950's:

League of Women Voters of Minnesota (the Minnesota League) worked tirelessly on reapportionment and on political designation for state legislators during this decade. Trade was another major issue that involved leaguers both statewide and nationwide.

LWVUS (the National League) was especially active in the issues of trade and water resources and took a visible role in opposing McCarthyism. In 1952 it started the publication, the *National Voter*, to provide information on issues directly to every member. It dropped opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment in 1954. **The Education Fund** was established in 1957 to enable the League to raise tax deductible funds for its education projects.

1960's:

LWV Minnesota's major issues included trade, water resources and financing state government.

LWVUS was involved in reapportionment, air and water pollution, equal access to education and employment, civil rights and the women's movement.

1970's:

LWV Minnesota studied corrections and sentencing, financing, education and state government, land use, water and air quality, energy conservation and solid waste reduction. It also was active in the reform of election laws, open meeting laws, and in establishment of the state Ethical Practices Board.

LWVUS was especially active in campaign finance reform, voting rights, international trade, land use, solid waste and urban policy. It began sponsorship of televised Presidential Debates. Men were admitted to full membership in 1974.

1980's:

LWV Minnesota reached out in new directions as it led our state in a look at our mental health services. The study resulted in both a new position for the League and new legislation for the state. Another major topic of study and advocacy was state campaign finance law. Voter service projects included televised candidate forums for statewide races, a hotline with information on where to vote for the Twin city metro area, and a voter guide for statewide candidates and Congress. They were funded through the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund established in 1983.

LWVUS continued to stress social and environmental issues. It added positions on US fiscal policy, arms control, reproductive choice and agriculture.

1990's:

LWV Minnesota continued involvement in the mental health area by monitoring the changes mandated by the Comprehensive Mental Health Act of 1987. It conducted a two part study – how the state government raises its revenues and how it spends them. It studied affordable housing in the state and the selection of judges in Minnesota and alternatives to that system.

The league also continued to expand in voter service and citizen education activities through the Education Fund. (LWVMNEF)

- televised forums and voter guides for statewide candidates
- obtained financial and planning assistance for local league legislative and congressional projects
- developed citizenship participation curricula for elementary and secondary students
- partnered with the Humphrey Institute and others to foster better political campaigns in a project called The Minnesota Compact.

It also began a self-assessment in order to plan for the future.

LWVUS studied and reached a position on health care; worked successfully on the passage of Motor Voter to increase voter registration around the country; and adopted a broad agenda titled Making Democracy Work for 1996 through 2000. That agenda included an uphill battle for campaign finance reform at the national level, encouragement of participation in the election process, and a concerted effort to diversify our membership.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF LEAGUE STRUCTURE

Over 75 years ago our founders formed an organization that corresponded to the three main levels of our government, thus we have League of Women Voters of the United States, League of Women Voters of Minnesota, and local Leagues. They are guided by the same mission: to promote the active, informed participation of citizens in government and to advocate for public policy changes after member study and agreement(consensus). Our mission is implemented by each League with sensitivity to the unique characteristics of the areas it serves, so that no two Leagues are identical.

At each level League has officers and a board of directors elected by the members at the annual meeting or convention. The board provides direction and leadership for carrying out member decisions and ultimately is responsible for all the League's plans, activities and follow-through in three areas: organization and management; program (study and action); voters service / citizen education.

The national (LWVUS) board consists of officers and directors. There is an executive committee (officers and one director) which meets between board meetings. Other committees are established for specific purposes such as convention planning, budget and program planning.

For state and local Leagues, the bylaws outline the duties of the president and secretary / treasurer, but do not spell out specific tasks of other board members. This gives each board the flexibility to make assignments to best use the talents of every board member. While many League boards assign their members specific responsibilities (e.g. membership, finance, public relations, voter service, etc.), an increasing number have established three or four committees organized around their priorities. However your League decides to structure its board, it should fit the priorities and members' needs.

League characteristics

The League has five basic characteristics which help to define it.

- Nonpartisan Stance
- Grassroots Action
- Citizen Education
- Advocacy
- Consensus

Meetings

League is characterized by several types of meetings, each related to a level of League.

- Unit or Discussion Meeting - Local Leagues have periodic (often monthly) meetings. A resource person or discussion leader may run the meeting.

- General Meeting - All levels of League may hold general meetings to which the public may also be invited. Often League or outside speakers present information on League issues or topics of interest.
- Board Meetings - League boards meet on a regular basis. (Local boards monthly, MN state board at least six times annually, national usually quarterly.)
- Annual Meeting - Local Leagues hold an annual meeting to elect officers, directors and a nominating committee, vote on a budget, on program and on any amendments to the bylaws.
- Convention - At a biennial convention state Leagues and LWVUS elect officers, directors and a nominating committee, vote on a budget, on program and on any amendments to the bylaws. Every League has designated delegates and League member may attend as a visitor.
- Council - State and national Leagues hold biennial council meetings in alternate years to the convention.
- Regional, State and National Workshops / Conferences - All levels of League may hold such meetings, on topics ranging from background on studies, to leadership development, to preparation for legislative action.

WHAT THE LEAGUE DOES

- Study - Leagues at each level vote on suggested topics to choose a study. Once a topic is chosen, a committee is formed to research the issue and present the findings to all members of the League, e.g. if it is a LWVUS study, materials are sent to every member; if it is a state study, materials are sent to each state member, etc.. A League position is formed on the input of all members, based on consensus. Consensus is member agreement or the "sense of the group," not necessarily majority or unanimity.
- Advocacy - League advocacy is action to change or enact laws or government action that support League positions. Advocacy may involve such things as monitoring / observing, lobbying, litigating, working with public officials to design / draft legislation.
- Informational Public Meetings / Issue Forums - Any level of League may hold public meetings to advocate for specific positions or present balanced, objective information on a topic. Audiences may be targeted or broad.
- Voter Service - In a non-partisan manner, Leagues provide service, information and motivation for voting and citizen participation in government.
 - Candidate Meetings / Debates - Leagues establish objective criteria for the participation of candidates and present a non-partisan forum for discussion or debates.
 - Voter Guides - Leagues may publish and / or distribute voter guides, based on candidate information obtained in a uniform manner. These may also list ballot issues and pro & con descriptions.
 - Registration - Leagues may promote voter registration by organizing general or specific (new citizens, minorities, young people, disables, etc.) registration campaigns.

WHAT IS LEAGUE PROGRAM?

Every organization has a few words that it uses in a special way. The word *program* is one of those for the League of Women Voters.

Program is used to mean the issues chosen by the members of a league at any level for study and for action. It includes the positions that have been taken on issues over the years. Since some of these positions are many years old, they must be re-examined every two years and changed, dropped or accepted by current members.

Program at the state level is adopted through a series of steps which include local leagues, the State Board and eventually adoption or modification by delegates to the biennial state convention.

HOW DOES LEAGUE REACH POSITIONS?

The process of study and consensus to arrive at a League position is fairly unique.

- If a new study is adopted, a research committee gathers information for League members to use as they consider the issue. Material is chosen to reflect as many sides of the issue as possible. It is often presented in a publication that explores both the facts and the possible consequences of acting or not acting to address the issues.
- Consensus is a sense of general and widespread agreement on an issue. Local league members weigh the pros and cons of various positions on that issue with the help of a discussion guide. The State Board receives the consensus reports from the local Leagues, determines areas of agreement, and formulates position statements.
- Only after consensus is reached and a position is formed can League take action.

USING POSITIONS FOR ACTION

- The State Board takes official action in the name of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.
- To ensure consistency - that we speak with one voice - individual League members speak only for themselves unless they have been designated to speak for the League by their local, state, or national board. The president is the official spokesperson at every level.
- Local Leagues may take action if that action is consistent with national or state positions; their membership is informed and in general agreement; and if other leagues which may be affected by that action are notified ahead of time.

HOW DOES LOBBYING SQUARE WITH BEING NONPARTISAN?

The mission of the League is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. League is both political and nonpartisan. It studies and takes action on selected government issues and encourages members as individuals to be active in the political party of their choice.

But the League itself is nonpartisan and as an organization does not support political parties or candidates for public office at any level. That includes our own members! Highly visible board members such as the president and voter service chair are restricted to low-level partisan political activities and may not run for party-designated public office. Check with your local board for local nonpartisan policy.

WHAT ARE THE LEAGUE'S PRINCIPLES AND POSITIONS ON ISSUES?

On the next few pages you will find the mission statement, basic principles, and summary positions of the League of Women Voters of the United States and of Minnesota.

These are the positions arrived at after study and consensus that Leaguers use to lobby for or against proposed legislation. More detailed information is available from both levels of League if you would like it.

You should also receive a list of positions that your local League has taken on local issues. They form the basis for local action.

THE MISSION

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

THE PRINCIPLES

This list of basic principles has been developed and adopted over many years and serves as a guideline for decisions made at every level of League. They are important to consider when choosing studies and planning program and may also be used as the basis for advocacy.

League Principles are as follows:

- The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.
- The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.
- The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination.
- The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.
- The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation; promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest; share in the solution of economic and social problems that effect the general welfare; promote a sound economy; and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.
- The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that the development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

LWVUS PROGRAM

Positions Adopted by League of Women Voters of the United States

I. GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive; that has a fair and adequate fiscal basis; that protects individual liberties established by the Constitution; that assures opportunities for citizen participation in government decision making; that provides sound agricultural policy; and that preserves public health and safety through gun control measures.

Agricultural Policy

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

Citizen Rights

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation:

Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision making.

Individual Liberties

Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices

Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

Congress and the Presidency

Congress: Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision-making capability and effective performance.

The Presidency: Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

Washington DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation

Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and representation in both houses of Congress.

Election Process

Apportionment: Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

Campaign Finance: Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

Election of the President: Promote the election of the President and Vice-president by direct popular vote and work to abolish the electoral college; support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections.

Fiscal Policy

Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax; promote responsible deficit policies; support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Gun Control

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons.

Voting Rights

Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

II. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Promote peace in an interdependent world by cooperating with other nations, strengthening international organizations, fostering long-term development, negotiating arms control measures and encouraging the successful resolution of conflicts through nonmilitary means.

Arms Control

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

Military Policy and Defense Spending

Work to limit reliance on military force; examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

Trade: Support systematic reduction of tariff and nontariff trade barriers and support broad long-range presidential authority to negotiate trade agreements.

United Nations

Support measures to strengthen the United Nations, in recognition of the need for cooperation among nations in an interdependent world.

U.S. Relations with Developing Countries

Promote US policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

III. NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest by recognizing the interrelationships of air quality, energy, land use, waste management and water resources.

Resource Management

Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with the maximum protection of the public health and environment.

Public Participation

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

IV. SOCIAL POLICY

Promote social and economic justice, secure equal rights for all, achieve universal health care coverage at reasonable cost, promote the well being of children, and combat discrimination, poverty and violence.

Child Care

Support programs, services and policies at all levels of government to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

Early Intervention for Children at Risk

Support policies and programs that promote the well being, development and safety of all children.

Equality of Opportunity

Support equal access to education, employment and housing. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of care for all US residents and controls health care costs.

Meeting Basic Human Needs:

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

Urban Policy:

Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

Violence Prevention

Support violence prevention programs in all communities.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that government policy, programs and performance must meet these criteria:

- competent personnel with clear responsibilities;
- coordination among agencies and levels of government;
- adequate financing;
- effective enforcement;
- well defined channels for citizen input and review.

1996-98 and 1998-2000 ISSUE FOR EMPHASIS

- Making Democracy Work

For more complete information on the Program of LWVUS, see *Impact on Issues, A Leader's Guide to National Program* Publication No. 386, LWVUS, 1730 M St. NW, Washington DC 20036, \$5.00 plus postage and handling. Updated every two years.

LWVMN PROGRAM

Positions Adopted by League of Women Voters of Minnesota

I. CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Judiciary: Support of a judicial system with the capacity to assure a speedy trial and equal justice for all.

Corrections: Support of a correctional system responsive to the needs of the individual offender and of society. Support of sentencing decisions based on circumstances in relation to the crime, the offender and the effect on public safety, made by the judge within legislative guidelines.

II. EDUCATION

Equal Opportunity: Support of increased state responsibility in creating equal public educational opportunities for all Minnesota children through measures to correct racial imbalance and insure adequate financing of public schools.

Financing of Education: Support of equal access to a good public education for all Minnesota children.. State funding for education should be at a level that makes programs of comparable substance and quality available to all. A student's access to a good education should not depend on the wealth of his or her school district.

Collective Bargaining and Tenure: Support of improvements in the collective bargaining and tenure laws of the state as they apply to K-12 teachers only.

Library Funding: Support for increased and restructured funding for public libraries.

III. GOVERNMENT

Citizen Rights: Support of improvements in election laws regulating election procedures, voting, and school district elections. Support of improvements in election laws regulating campaign practices.

Organization of Government: Support of improved structure and procedures for the Minnesota Legislature and Executive Branch; support of an improved process for amending the Minnesota Constitution; support of apportionment based substantially on population of congressional districts and of all elected state and local governmental bodies.

Initiative, Referendum and Recall: Support of the continuation of legislative initiative and compulsory voter referendum on constitutional amendments; opposition to recall by voters of members of the Legislature and state constitutional officers; support of strict procedural limits on any process of initiative, referendum or recall.

Financing State Government: Support of a balanced and diversified revenue system that relies on broad-based taxes and user fees. Support of an evaluation of all individual revenue sources to determine if it is competitive with other states, efficient, equitable, progressive, reliable, responsive and simple. Support of a broad-based sales tax with exemptions for essential items. Support of an equitable property tax as the primary source of financing services provided by local governments and a partial funding for education. Support of a corporation franchise tax competitive with other states. Support of achieving social goals through open and visible expenditures rather than by granting deductions, exclusions and credits. Support of the principle that state legislation mandating local government action should identify sources of revenue. Support of long-term financial management, budget projections and budget reserve.

State Government Spending: Belief that a long-term vision as well as immediate concerns should guide state spending decisions. Support of the following broad goals, in order of priority: provide high-quality K-12 educational opportunities; provide basic level of health and human services; protect natural resources; encourage economic self-sufficiency; provide for public safety; provide high-quality post-secondary educational opportunities; and preserve open spaces.

Support of the use of specific criteria when faced with the need to limit spending, i.e. curtailing subsidies for sports teams and convention centers, maintenance of existing infrastructure over increased infrastructure, tax relief targeted to low-income households and providing services first to the most needy.

Firearms: Action to support restrictions on the sale, possession and use of firearms by private parties in the state of Minnesota. Opposition to an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution granting an individual right to bear arms. Support for the ability of local municipalities to regulate ownership and possession of firearms and ammunition more strictly than state law allows.

IV. NATURAL RESOURCES

Water Resources: Support of a state role in the preservation and management of Minnesota's water resources through protection, allocation, conservation, pricing and interbasin transfer policies protective of Minnesota's current and future needs.

Solid Waste: Support of measures to reduce generation of solid waste.

Land Use: Support of an overall land use plan with maximum cooperation and implementation at the regional and local levels, with state help in developing and exercising land use management, with opportunity for maximum local decision making, and with regional planning and regulation for matters of more than local concern.

V. SOCIAL POLICY

Equal Opportunity: Support of policies to insure equality of opportunity in employment, real property, public accommodations, education and other public services for all persons. Support of administrative enforcement of anti-discrimination laws. Support of state responsibility for and responsiveness to Indian citizens

FAMILY ISSUES

Family Violence: Support for improved procedures for agencies dealing with family violence; support for improved services for the victims.

Child Support: Support of stricter enforcement of court-ordered child support payments.

Child Protection: Support of adequate staffing and resources for child protection services.

Child Health: Support access to comprehensive prenatal and child health care.

Child Care: Support of coordinated public policies and funding to ensure safe, affordable, quality child care throughout the state.

Teen Pregnancy: Support prevention efforts to lower the rate of teenage pregnancy.

Housing: The League believes that all people have a right to housing. The public and private sectors should work together to ensure that everyone has access to adequate, decent, affordable housing. Support an active state role in providing long-term decent and affordable housing for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. Support of incentives to local units of government to promote a mix of housing opportunities. Support of disincentives to local units of government that do not promote a mix of housing opportunities. Support of revision of the tax system to narrow the tax disparity between rental and owner-occupied residential property; reduction of the tax rate on rental property available to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households; encouragement of maintenance of rental property available to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

Mental Health: Support of a comprehensive and coordinated system of programs and services for mentally ill adults and emotionally disturbed children and adolescents (hereafter referred to as "persons with mental illness"). Priority should be given to persons with serious and persistent mental illness and/or acute mental illness. Minnesota public policy and funding should sustain an array of community-based services that are available and accessible to persons with mental illness. Administration of that policy should provide clients with appropriate and adequate services.

Violence Prevention: Support for violence prevention programs in Minnesota.

For more information in depth on these positions and action taken on them, please call the state office to order *Program for Action, 1997-99*. The number to call toll free from outside the Twin Cities metro area is 1-800/663-9328. The metro area number is 651/224-5445.

GLOSSARY OF LEAGUE TERMS

ACTION - What League does, at every level of government, to implement its Program. This action may consist of writing letters, lobbying of members of the legislature or executive agencies, testimony at legislative hearings, holding press conferences or any other measure decided on by the board.

ADVOCACY - Action to change or enact laws or government action that support League positions. Advocacy may involve such things as monitoring / observing, lobbying, litigating, working with public officials to design / draft legislation.

CALL TO ACTION - a plea to all members to participate in a concerted effort to implement a League position. Members are asked to call, e-mail or write their elected officials requesting a specific vote on legislation. This may come from any level of League.

CONCURRENCE - the act of agreeing - or concurring - with a statement or position. Groups of League members or League boards can concur with 1) recommendations of a resource committee or a unit group; 2) decision statements formulated by League boards; or 3) positions reached by another League(s).

CONSENSUS - agreement among a substantial number of members (not necessarily a majority or unanimity). Expressed in terms of broad objectives, it is not tied to specific legislation, but is general enough to serve as a standard for evaluating and monitoring legislation.

COUNCIL - the biennial annual meeting of state or national Leagues held to vote on budgets and emergency changes to program.

COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN AREA LEAGUES (CMAL) - an inter-League organization composed of the local Leagues in the seven county Twin Cities Metropolitan area. Its program deals with governmental problems of metropolitan significance, such as land use, transportation, and fiscal disparities.

CONVENTION - a biennial meeting of state or national League to elect officers, directors, nominating committee; vote on budgets, program and any amendments to bylaws.

EDUCATION FUND - the tax exempt, tax deductible arm of the League established to accept contributions from industry, unions, foundation, and private parties to fund educational and citizen information projects. Local Leagues seek such contributions for their own projects. (Regular contributions to the League are not tax deductible because we are an action organization and ask our members to influence legislation.)

FOCUS MEETING - a meeting of League members or open to the public and focusing on a specific issue.

GRASSROOTS - the basic or fundamental source or support of issues, made possible by the direct involvement of all League members.

LOBBYIST - a volunteer League member who promotes League positions in local, state or national legislature or executive departments. Because League tries to reflect member agreement, League spokespersons work with the continuing supervision of the appropriate League board.

NONPARTISAN POLICY - League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. All members bear responsibility for maintaining League's reputation for fairness and objectivity.

OBSERVER - a League member who regularly attends meetings of local government bodies and reports on how they function and what issues concern them.

POSITION - a statement of what League supports based on a particular consensus. The appropriate League board formulates the Position statement after careful compilation of the consensus results.

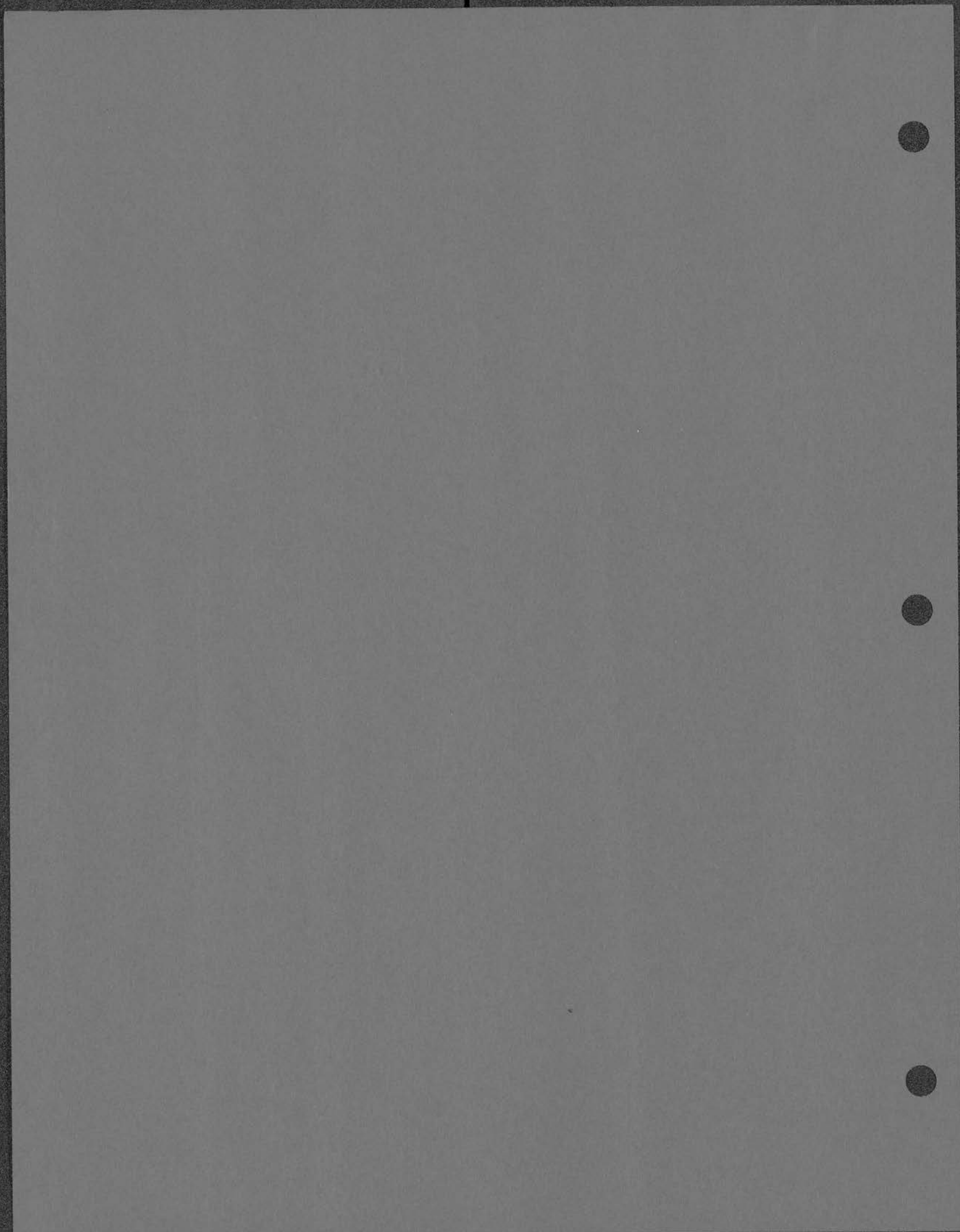
PROGRAM - those issues chosen by the members for study and action. At each level of League - national, state, local - Program includes items adopted for current study, and carefully worded, study-based consensus positions which lead to action.

PUBLICATIONS - written materials from every level of League which are the basic tools used to study, discuss and take action. They are available to help all citizens become informed voters. Publications that present factual material and do not indicate a League position are financed through Education Fund monies.

TEN MINUTE ACTIVIST - member volunteers who make phone calls or send postcards or e-mail to elected officials on issues of their choosing. Members are notified when issues need lobbying action.

UNITS - small groups in each local League that meet regularly to participate in League Program by study, discussion and action. Discussion units are the heart of League where your opinion on League issues and actions is recorded.

VOTERS (NEWSLETTERS) - the monthly local, tri-monthly state and quarterly national bulletins which help keep members informed about League activities. They are automatically mailed to members upon payment of dues.



Proposed Constitutional Amendments

I. ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND REVENUE

The question will be: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to extend to the year 2025 the dedication of lottery proceeds to the environment and natural resources trust fund and to maximize the long-term total return to the fund?"

The purpose and effect of the amendment proposed in Minnesota Laws 1998, chapter 342 is:

1. The amendment would extend the dedication of lottery proceeds to the environmental and natural resources trust fund from the year 2001 to the year 2025.

2. The amendment would (a) remove obsolete language governing appropriations from the fund through fiscal year 1997 and (b) replace the requirement that "net earnings" of the fund be appropriated for environment, natural resources and wildlife purposes with a provision that fund "assets" be appropriated for those purposes, subject to yearly maximum. This change is intended to recognize market gain in addition to realized income when computing amounts available for appropriation, reduce the need to generate short-term income and make it possible to maximize the fund's long-term total return.

If the amendment is adopted:

1. A permanent environment and natural resources trust fund will be established in the state treasury.

2. Loans may be made of up to 5% of the principal of the fund for water system improvements provided by law.

3. The assets of the fund shall be appropriated by law for the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources.

4. The amount appropriated each year of a biennium may be up to 5-1/2% of the market value of the fund determined on June 30 one year before the start of the biennium.

5. Not less than 40% of the net proceeds from any state-operated lottery must be credited to the fund until the year 2025.

Proponents argue that the protection of the environment warrants a permanent source of funding that is not subjected to budgetary debates by the legislature.

Opponents argue that "dedicated" funding is not a sound budgeting practice for the state.

If the amendment fails:

The current Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund will expire in 2001.

A NON-VOTE COUNTS AS A 'NO' VOTE IN MINNESOTA LAW.

II. HUNTING AND FISHING

The question will be: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to affirm that hunting and fishing and the taking of game and fish are a valued part of our heritage that shall be forever preserved for the people and shall be managed by law and regulation for the public good?"

The purpose and effect of the amendment as proposed is that it would affirm the value of hunting and fishing and the taking of game and fish as part of our heritage to be preserved for the people and managed for the public good.

Proponents argue that the right to hunt and fish is in jeopardy and must be protected.

Opponents argue that this amendment would raise a number of legal questions regarding fundamental rights and the legislature's ability to exercise its regulatory powers or to delegate powers to an administrative agency; and that the right to hunt and fish already exists.

If the amendment fails:

The current laws regulating hunting and fishing will remain in effect with no change.

A NON VOTE COUNTS AS A 'NO' VOTE IN MINNESOTA LAW.

III. The question will be: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to abolish the office of state treasurer?"

The purpose and effect of the amendment would remove the office of state treasurer from the Constitution in January 2003.

Proponents argue that the treasurer's office has become obsolete and duplicative; that the necessary checks and balances on collection, investment, and disbursements of state funds can be maintained at a lesser cost in existing executive branch agencies without having an elected state treasurer. They also argue that most of the treasurer's duties are ministerial, not policymaking and do not require an elected official. Finally, the accountability and efficiency would be strengthened by centralizing responsibility in an executive office that reports directly to the Governor.

Opponents argue that it is important to retain checks and balances in an office outside of the other executive agencies that are involved in collection, investment, and disbursement of state funds and that an elected office provides the most independent system of checks and balances and provides the highest degree of accountability to the people. Also they say the treasurer can be one more source of innovative ideas.

If the amendment fails:

The office of treasurer remains as an elected position in Minnesota government.

A NON VOTE COUNTS AS A 'NO' VOTE IN MINNESOTA LAW

Material for this explanation of the proposed amendments to the Minnesota Constitution was drawn from the Minnesota House of Representatives House Research. Further questions can be directed to House Research at (651)296-5039 or check the website at:
www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hrd/hrd.htm.

LWVMN STUDIES AND ACTION
(Source: *Program for Action 1997-99*)

CRIMINAL JUSTICE: JUDICIARY

LWVMN Position: Support of a judicial system with the capacity to assure a speedy trial and equal justice for all.

Support of:

- administrative reforms that expedite justice: establishment of a unified court system, an intermediate appellate court, and procedures to strengthen and streamline judicial administration; additional staff for prosecution, public defenders and legal services when such needs are established; statewide guidelines on bail-fixing process; standardization of forms and procedures; use of technology in administration; use of juries in civil cases only by request.
- methods to improve judicial quality: a nonpartisan selection with a commission to propose names for all appointments to the bench; mandatory training for all judges; adequate salary increases for judges and related revision of retirement benefits.
- procedural reforms that ensure individual rights and access to due process of law: reform of bail process to recognize methods other than monetary to ensure appearance of accused at trial; strict guarantees to ensure protection of the defendant and society in the use of plea bargaining; sentencing alternatives; methods to reduce disparity in sentencing; no-fault divorce procedure using irretrievable differences as grounds for dissolution; guarantees to witnesses in grand jury proceedings regard to counsel in proceedings, availability of information to defense counsel and restrictions on waiving immunity in later trials; retention of age 18 for persons under jurisdiction of juvenile court; mandatory first appearance in juvenile court for all persons under jurisdiction of such court; requirement for formal transcript of commitment hearings with a rule or regulation protecting privacy of such records.
- the development of community alternatives as an adjunct to the judicial system: alternatives for sentencing; alternatives for handling behavior now defined as "status offenses" and "social (or victimless) crimes". (1973)

HISTORY OF STATE ACTION

Judiciary: In 1971-72 Local Leagues observed the various levels of the Minnesota court system and studied their constitutional and statutory requirements. Consensus was reached in March 1973. In 1982 the Legislature passed a proposed constitutional amendment for a new state court of appeals. League lobbied successfully for the

passage of this amendment, and enabling legislation was passed in 1983. League action continues to emphasize court unification, alternatives for handling behavior now defined as "status offenses" and "social (or victimless) crimes", guarantees of protection to witnesses in grand jury proceedings, and support of community alternatives as an adjunct to the judiciary system.

The League adopted at the 1997 convention a study of the election of judges in Minnesota. The goal of the study is to examine the present system and look at alternative proposals for choosing judges. The study will educate League members in how the system now functions and how it might be improved.

Corrections: In 1973-74 League examined correctional institutions, programs and personnel on the local, county and state levels. The adult corrections consensus and concurrence with the consensus of the LWV of Minneapolis on juvenile corrections were reached in 1975. LWVMN lobbied during the 1983 legislative session in support of a new Minnesota Correctional Institution for Women, and a bonding bill was passed providing for funding of a new facility.

LWVMN members have lobbied in favor of uniform standards and equal treatment of prisoners in all county jails. They have also lobbied for support of the mutual agreement program, a greater use of community corrections, frequent and regular evaluations, drug education programs, consideration of physical or psychological disorders when specifying treatment or work expectations, the concept of inmate rights, preventive programs for juveniles and corrective training.

Sentencing: In 1976, LWVMN members supported presumptive sentencing, under which the Legislature would set minimum and maximum outer limits and a "presumed" sentence somewhere in between. The judge could vary the sentence within the limits, based on mitigating or aggravating circumstances defined by the Legislature. The 1978 Legislature passed a "guideline" determinate sentencing law which calls for a specified sentence based on the crime, allowing a 15% variance. The law created a ten-member commission appointed by the Governor to set the guidelines which became effective in July 1980. The League testified in favor of those portions of this law consistent with our position and did not support or oppose the rest of the provisions.

LWVMN ELECTION OF JUDGES STUDY
1997-99
RESOURCES

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR JUDICIAL CANDIDATES' FORUM

WATCH and LWVMpls wrote the following questions for judicial candidates' forums held in 1996. The Board on Judicial Standards approved the wording as acceptable under the state Code of Judicial Conduct.

WATCH is a nonprofit court monitoring organization that focuses on justice system accountability. For more information, call WATCH Executive Director Jacquelyn Hauser, 612/ 341-2747.

1. What do you believe to be the most critical issue currently facing the Hennepin County Criminal Justice System and what do you recommend be done to address it?
2. The Minnesota Supreme Court recently adopted changes to the Rules and Cannons that govern judicial behavior and discipline. One of the changes requires public disclosure of disciplinary actions when the judge's inappropriate actions or behavior is part of a pattern of such behavior. Give us your thoughts about this change to the Rules.
3. Minnesota is one of a handful of states that does not routinely allow cameras in the courtroom. Where do you stand on this issue and why?
4. How do you feel about judicial evaluation being undertaken by outside organizations? Should the results be disclosed publicly or should they be given privately and used only for the judge's personal improvement?
5. The caseload in Hennepin County Juvenile Court has skyrocketed over the past few years. What do you believe to be the root cause for the high numbers of juvenile offenders? What can the court system do to reduce these numbers?
6. As a judge, who is your public and what does it mean to provide good service to them?
7. Without giving his or her name, please describe the character of the judges you most admire.
8. Attorneys in civil litigation practice express great frustration at the length of time it takes to get their cases to trial in Hennepin County. They also express frustration about the fact that instead of getting a specific date for trial, they are often given a period of

six to eight weeks in which their case could be called. This makes it very difficult to prepare for trial. What can be done to address their concerns?

9. If you were given \$50 million and were told that it must be used to address the issues of crime and violence, what would you spend it on?

10. A variety of articles and reports on the problem of domestic abuse point to the very high percentage of cases (around 70%) that are dismissed at the pretrial stage, reportedly because the victim cannot be found or is unwilling to cooperate. What can be done to lower the number of domestic assault cases that are being dismissed?

11. What kinds of things would you do outside the courtroom to improve the justice system in Hennepin County?

12. Many feel that voluntary professional and community service is a necessary commitment for persons holding public office. What types of voluntary service have you been involved in?

13. What is, or will be, your personal mission in your role as judge and how will you go about accomplishing it?

14. Recent polls show that public trust in the justice system is at an all time low. Why do you think the public is so distrustful and what would you do to gain their trust?

15. If you observed a party in your courtroom being poorly represented by an unprepared or ineffective lawyer, what would you do?

16. The Racial Bias and Gender Bias Task Force Reports identify a multitude of ways in which women and minorities are not treated fairly by our court system. What would you do to remedy the situation described in these reports?

17. Many victim's advocates have concerns about victim's rights in juvenile court. How would you balance the rights of crime victims and witnesses with the right to confidentiality possessed by juvenile respondents?

18. An article in the November 1995 issue of Bench and Bar of Minnesota entitled "Victims' Rights: Trial by Tribulation" makes the argument that victim rights have gone too far. It states among other things that victims are playing too great a role at the negotiation stage of a case and that victim impact statements shift the "atmospheric balance" toward punishment. Give us your thoughts about this issue.

19. Why should voters support you rather than your opponent(s)?

20. A recent report showed that Minnesota has one of the lowest per capita rates of incarceration in the United States. Is that good or bad?

21. Critics of Minnesota's drunk driving laws say that they do not deal effectively with the repeat drunk driver and that stiffer penalties are needed. Supporters of Minnesota's statutes say that our state has some of the best drunk driving legislation in the country but that police, prosecutors and judges are not always using it effectively. Who is right?

22. The recent outburst by Polly Klaus' murderer at his sentencing brought to national attention the potentially explosive dynamics that exist at such appearances. While defendants always have the right to speak at their sentencing, local victim's organizations have expressed concern about the fact that many judges are now allowing defendants' friends and family to speak on their behalf at sentencing. In some instances this has resulted in name calling, blaming the victim, and fights breaking out between the two families outside the courtroom. Give us your thoughts about this issue.

23. It has been said that we learn best from our mistakes. Tell us about a mistake that you made that taught you something about law and justice. How did this or will this experience influence your work on the bench?

24. Several sitting judges have been critical of the Hennepin County Bar Association's judicial evaluation. One of the reasons they cite is that it gives the voting public only one side of the equation in a judicial election. In other words, it gives them critical information about a sitting judge and does not provide them with the same information about the judge's challenger. Judges feel this does not provide them with a level playing field in the election process. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? If you agree, what can be done to improve the process? If you disagree, state why the existing process is fair to both judge and challenger.

**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
THE UNITED STATES**

ACTION ALERT

August 14, 1998

TO: State and Local League Presidents and DPM Subscribers

FROM: Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, President, and Eleanor Revelle, Program Chair

Urgent Grassroots Action Needed!

Ask Your Senators to Support Campaign Finance Reform and Vote for Cloture!

Members of the House of Representatives took an historic step on August 6 by voting 252 - 179 for the Shays-Meehan campaign finance reform legislation and sending it to the Senate. This was a tremendous victory for the League and our allies. Thank you for all the work that you and your League members did to achieve this milestone!

Now we must redouble our efforts to press the Senate to act. **Please contact your Senators and urge them to vote for campaign finance reform and to support cloture on the legislation. Tell them that the Senate must pass campaign finance reform before they adjourn.**

The Senate is scheduled to return from its summer recess on August 31. From that time until adjournment, expected around October 9, we will have a window for action. Enactment of the campaign finance bill will be a vital step in restoring the American people's faith in the integrity of the electoral process.

Opponents of reform will obstruct and delay. As you know, a majority comprising 52 Senators supported the McCain-Feingold legislation, the Senate companion to Shays-Meehan, when it was considered last year, but reformers did not have the 60 votes that were needed to invoke cloture to overcome the filibuster that blocked the bill.

With House passage of legislation, we will have another opportunity. Supporters of reform will employ a variety of parliamentary moves to force action in the Senate, despite statements by Majority Leader Trent Lott (R MS) that the legislation will not be considered again. We will seek the additional eight votes needed for cloture, as our leaders in the Senate look to other techniques under the rules to overcome the obstructionist tactics of those opposed to reform.

We need to ensure that there is very strong grassroots support for campaign finance reform. Please write and call your Senators. Ask the members of your League to write and call as well. Activate your phone trees. Enlist the support of others in your community through letters to your local paper and to other like-minded civic organization in your community.

Tell your Senators that campaign finance reform is **MUST PASS** legislation. Ask them not to yield to the obstructionist tactics of those who oppose reform. There must be an up-or-down vote on campaign finance.



1730 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20036 • 202-429-1965 • FAX 202-429-0854
World Wide Web: www.lwv.org

The Shays-Meehan bill, as it passed the House, would effectively ban "soft money," require that funding for "sham" issue ads be covered by the same rules that apply to other election activities, strengthen FEC enforcement, and create a commission to study additional ways that the campaign finance system can be improved. The McCain-Feingold bill considered earlier by the Senate was basically the same, except for the provisions related to the study commission. Just as we are working with our Hill leaders on parliamentary tactics, so we are working with them to ensure that substantive details are ironed out so that the bill has the best chance of passage. Now, the key issue really is grassroots pressure in favor of meaningful reform legislation.

Your Senators can be contacted through the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 or through offices in your state (number in your phone book). We must generate a high volume of pro-reform calls and letters.

All Democratic Senators need to hear from their constituents, even though they did vote for cloture before. In addition, the Republican Senators listed below need especially to hear that campaign finance reform must be enacted. Tell them especially that they must vote for cloture. (Those who previously voted for cloture should be thanked, and asked to do so again.)

The successful vote on the Shays-Meehan bill in the House gives us tremendous momentum! We have a real chance to pass campaign finance reform in the Senate and see it signed into law by the President. It is vitally important that we keep up our efforts!

Key Points

- Ask your Senators to support campaign finance reform and to vote for cloture.
- Campaign finance reform must be passed before the Senate adjourns. Senators should not yield to the obstructionist tactics of those who oppose reform.
- Soft money must be banned, funding for sham issue ads must be governed by the same rules as other campaign activities, and enforcement and disclosure must be improved.
- Enactment of the campaign finance bill will be a vital step in restoring the American people's faith in the integrity of the electoral process.
- A majority of the Senate and the American people support campaign finance reform legislation. There must be a fair, up-or-down vote.

For additional background information, see the League's website at <http://www.lwv.org>.

Key Targets (alphabetically by state) (* indicates previously voted for cloture)

John McCain * (AZ), Tim Hutchinson (AR), Ben Nighthorse Campbell (CO), Wayne Allard (CO), Bill Roth (DE), Richard Lugar (IN), Dan Coats (IN), Chuck Grassley (IA), Sam Brownback (KS), Pat Roberts (KS), Olympia Snowe * (ME), Susan Collins * (ME), Kit Bond (MO), John Ashcroft (MO), Spencer Abraham (MI), Chuck Hagel (NB), Judd Gregg (NH), Al D'Amato (NY), Lauch Faircloth (NC), Mike DeWine (OH), Gordon Smith (OR), Arlen Specter * (PA), John Chafee * (RI), Bill Frist (TN), Fred Thompson * (TN), Jim Jeffords * (VT).

(You might also wish to thank those Representatives who voted for Shays-Meehan in the House. Check vote # 405, either under House Roll Call Votes, 105th Congress, at <http://thomas.loc.gov> or through <http://clerkweb.house.gov/evs/1998/index.asp>.)

BOARD MEMO



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
MINNESOTA

550 Rice Street • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103
Phone 612-224-5445 • Fax 612-290-2145
lwvmn@mtn.org
<http://freenet.msp.mn.us/ip/pol/lwvmn>

December 1998 Mini-Mailing

- December** 30 - Mini-mailing sent from LWVMN office to local League Presidents
31 - LWVMN Office closes at 12:30 p.m.
- January** 1 - **Happy 1999!**
4 - LWVMN office resumes regular office hours
12 - LWVMN Action Committee Meeting; 7:00 p.m. at state office
13 - LWVMN/EF Board meetings; 9:00 a.m. - Noon
14-16 - **Leaders of Today and Tomorrow (LOTT) Seminar;**
14 - "Governor Ventura: Minnesota's Gubernatorial Election and Its Implications for THE BODY Politic"; 12:30-5:30 p.m.; Humphrey Institute; co-sponsored by LWVMN; see enclosed brochure
15 - **Entire membership roster/summary sheet due to LWVUS, LWVMN - Choosing Minnesota's Judges Consensus due to LWVMN office**
18 - Martin Luther King Day; LWVMN office closed
20 - Mailing to local League Presidents/subscribers
23 - deadline for registrations for St. Paul Citizens in Action conference
30 - Citizens in Action Workshops at State Capitol; 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

ENCLOSURES

- *Memo and flyer re workshop and teleconference entitled "Women's Retirement and Gender Equity in Social Security" with Americans Discuss Social Security/Duffy
- *Flyer re Humphrey Institute Policy Forum/LWVMN Conference "Governor Ventura: Minnesota's Gubernatorial Election and its Implications for THE BODY Politic"/Duffy
- *Hope Washburn and Peggy Thompson Award for 1999 Nomination forms/Cooper
- *"Citizens in Action: How to Make a Difference" flyer/Frisch

LEAGUE-KEEPING

Membership Rosters: Your entire membership roster and summary sheet is due to LWVUS by January 15, 1999 with a copy to LWVMN.

Other deadlines: Your League's consensus report for the Judges Study is due in the LWVMN office **January 15, 1999**. Program Planning recommendations are due to LWVMN by **February 1st**.

Citizens in Action Workshop: the deadline for registrations for the January 30, 1999 event at the Capitol in Saint Paul is January 23rd. Every League member will receive a brochure and registration form the first week in January. A second workshop will be held in Duluth on February 20th; information about this workshop is also included in the brochure.

Hope Washburn and Peggy Thompson Awards for 1999: Letters from the Nominating Committee Chair, Sandy Cooper, and nomination forms are included in this mailing with deadlines for nomination submission of March 1, 1999. Please give careful consideration to nominating someone who has served your local League or the state League well. These awards are now given only every other year at Convention. The Nominating Committee has simplified the form considerably, so put your thinking caps on and honor that special person or persons with a nomination.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

MINNESOTA

550 RICE STREET ST. PAUL, MN 55103 PHONE (612) 224-5445

To: Local League Presidents
From: Sandy Cooper, Nominating Committee Chair
Date: December, 1998

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE 1999 HOPE WASHBURN AWARD

Members of your League are invited to submit nominations for the 1999 Hope Washburn Award for outstanding service to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. This award will be presented at the LWVMN Convention in St. Cloud, Minnesota on April 16-17, 1999.

The award was established in 1956 to honor the service Hope Washburn gave to both her local League, St. Paul, as well as all Minnesota Leagues. It is presented each year at Convention or Council to a Leaguer who has performed outstanding service to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. In other words, the nominee could be someone who has been active on the local level as well as the state and/or national levels.

Any member may nominate another member (except those serving on the current LWVMN Nominating Committee). The nominee does not need to be a member of the nominator's League. A member who has been nominated in previous years, can be renominated by resubmitting the name with just an update of their League activities. You may write or phone me at 612/443-2743 if you have any questions about the material on file from a previous nomination. In 1974, it became a policy to keep the nominating material for four years or return it to a person making a request.

- * The deadline for nominations is March 1, 1999.
- * Please read this Call for Nominations to your Board. You will be seeking suggestions for a nominee plus someone to write up the nomination and submit it by the deadline date.
- * Publish it in your Bulletin. Explain to your membership how both the Hope Washburn Award and the Peggy Thompson Award bring great honor to the person as well as their League.

The criteria for the Hope Washburn Award are:

- Outstanding Service to LWVMN;
- Community Service;
- Enthusiasm and Innovative Ideas;
- Staying Power;
- Use of League principles and/or positions as motivation to serve/enhance the League as a statewide organization.

Your Nominating Committee members greatly appreciate your attention to these awards. They are: Sandy Cooper, Chair, LWV Eastern Carver County; Carolyn Cushing, LWV Roseville/Maplewood/Falcon Heights; Linda Satorius, LWV Minneapolis; These members were elected by 1997 Convention delegates: two more members from the LWVMN Board were appointed: Judy Covey, LWV Northfield and Carol Frisch, LWV Edina.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 1999 HOPE WASHBURN AWARD

Name:

Address:

League:

Please give reasons why this person is nominated. Relate the reason to one or more of the criteria, if possible.

List nominee's League activities and positions held.

List other community activities and awards.

Other comments you would like to make:

Your Name:

League:

Phone:

Please return by March 1, 1999 to:

Sandra Cooper
9730 Co. Rd. 43
Chaska, MN 55318



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

MINNESOTA

550 RICE STREET ST. PAUL, MN 55103 PHONE (612) 224-5445

To: Local League Presidents
From: Sandy Cooper, Nominating Committee Chair
Date: December, 1998

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE 1999 PEGGY THOMPSON AWARD

At LWVMN Convention, April 16-17, 1999, the League of Women Voters of Minnesota will present the Peggy Thompson Award which recognizes League members who have been nominated for "outstanding service to their local League." Peggy Thompson has a record of commitment to strengthening local Leagues. Therefore, this award focuses special recognition on Leaguers who have been instrumental in strengthening and/or stabilizing their local Leagues through varied actions which might include sustained enthusiasm, motivation of others or innovative ideas which have brought strength to both your League and perhaps your community and its citizens.

Attached is a form for your convenience. It is meant to give you an idea of the kind of information the Nominating Committee believes is essential. You may create your own format or send additional information. You may nominate more than one person. Please phone me at 612/443-2743 if you have any questions about material on file from a previous nomination.

- * Please read this Call for Nominations to your Board.
- * Publish it in your Bulletin. Explain to your membership how both the Hope Washburn Award and the Peggy Thompson Award bring great honor to the person as well as their League.
- * You will be seeking suggestions for nominees plus someone to write up the nomination and submit it by the deadline date. Your Board may want to decide how many to nominate, who to nominate for which award; who is to write the nominations but it does not need to approve the final written application to be submitted.
- * The deadline for nominations is March 1, 1999.

In summary, the criteria are as follows:

- Outstanding service to local League;
- Instrumental in strengthening or stabilizing local League;
- Initiated ideas, activities that have kept/made local League strong;
- Used League principles or positions as motivation to serve/enhance local community/citizens.

Your Nominating Committee members greatly appreciate your attention to these awards. They are: Sandy Cooper, Chair, LWV Eastern Carver County; Carolyn Cushing, LWV Roseville/Maplewood/Falcon Heights; Linda Satorius, LWV Minneapolis; These members were elected by 1997 Convention delegates: two more members from the LWVMN Board were appointed: Judy Covey, LWV Northfield and Carol Frisch, LWV Edina.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 1999 PEGGY THOMPSON AWARD

Name:

Address:

League:

Please give reasons why this person is nominated. Relate the reason to one or more of the criteria, if possible.

List nominee's League activities and positions held:

List other community activities and awards:

Other comments you would like to make:

Your Name:

League:

Phone:

Please return by March 1, 1999 to:

Sandra Cooper
9730 Co. Rd. 43
Chaska, MN 55318



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF THE UNITED STATES

Memo

President
Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, Ph.D.
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Vice Presidents
Kay J. Maxwell
Greenwich, Connecticut

Barbara A. Foston
Atlanta, Georgia

Secretary-Treasurer
Mona Steele
Madison, Wisconsin

Directors
Margaret Brown
Laramie, Wyoming

Marie Brown
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Mary Ann Burr
Walterboro, South Carolina

Faye Justice Cox
White Plains, New York

Melissa Durr
Muncie, Indiana

Nancy Mahr
Rancho Palos Verdes,
California

Beverly K. McKinnell
St. Paul, Minnesota

Judy Poulson
Knoxville, Tennessee

Eleanor Revelle
Evanston, Illinois

Faye Harned Sinnott
Barrington, Illinois

Alison P. Smith
Portland, Maine

Executive Director
Jane Gruenebaum

Date: December 10, 1998

To: State League Presidents and League Presidents in Washington, DC; Portland, OR; Sacramento, CA; New Orleans, LA; Oklahoma City, OK; Milwaukee, WI; Albuquerque, NM; San Antonio, TX; Atlanta, GA; Portland, ME; and Cleveland, OH

From: Ann Profozich, Director of Member Services *Ap*

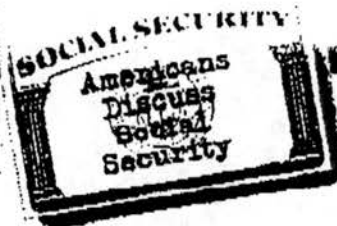
Re: Americans Discuss Social Security

The LWVUS has agreed to cosponsor a four hour national workshop and teleconference on "Women's Retirement and Gender Equity in Social Security" with Americans Discuss Social Security (ADDS). The discussion will focus on key issues being considered as the nation addresses changes to the Social Security system.

Members of your Leagues may wish to participate. Please let them know about the televised workshops and that if any League wishes it may set up its own community viewing sites. The workshops are offered free of charge and anyone may register or obtain additional information by calling toll free, 1(800) 697-6063.

Please read the attachments for more information on these discussions. Do not feel obligated to attend or participate but please do let your members know about this opportunity. ADDS is a nonprofit group that is encouraging citizen participation on the issue of Social Security through discussions on the future of the system. ADDS is funded by a grant from the PEW Charitable Trust.

cc: Jane Gruenebaum, LWVUS Executive Director



A project funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts

AMERICANS DISCUSS SOCIAL SECURITY

Invites you to attend the 1999
National Conference

On:

**SOCIAL SECURITY AND RETIREMENT:
WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW!**

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1999

12:00 PM EASTERN TIME

11:00 AM CENTRAL TIME

10:00 AM MOUNTAIN TIME

9:00 AM PACIFIC TIME

**Join Social Security and retirement experts in a
unique forum to discuss issues that directly impact
your future!**

**Originating in Washington, D.C. with the participating
cities of: Portland, OR; Sacramento, CA; New
Orleans, LA; Oklahoma City, OK; Milwaukee, WI;
Albuquerque, NM; San Antonio, TX; Atlanta, GA;
Portland, ME; Cleveland OH**

**For further information contact us at either the phone or website
listed below.**

BOARD MEMO



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
MINNESOTA

550 Rice Street • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103
Phone 612-224-5445 • Fax 612-290-2145
lwvmn@mtn.org
<http://freenet.msp.mn.us/ip/pol/lwvmn>

NOVEMBER 1998

79 Years – A Voice for Citizens, A Force for Change

1-800-663-9328

Fax #: 1-651-290-2145

e-mail: lwvmn@mtn.org

- November**
- 11 – LWVMN, EF Board Meetings, 9:00 a.m. – Noon, MWB
 - 12 – Leaders of Today and Tomorrow Steering Committee; 1:30 p.m.
 - 16 – LWVMN Voter Service Committee, 9:30 a.m., LWVMN office
 - “Citizens in Action” planning in Duluth; 5:30 p.m.
 - 18 – Presidents’ Mailing from state office
 - 18 – LWVMN Budget Committee Meeting, Noon, MWB
 - (cancelled, will be rescheduled)
 - 19 – Member Resources/*Future Trek*
 - 20 – MN Council on Non Profits Legislative preview; Kelly Inn; 9:00 a.m.
 - **Deadline for campaign finance surveys to participating LLs**
 - 26-27 – Thanksgiving holiday; LWVMN office closed
 - 30-2 – Alliance for Better Campaigns Wrap-up; Washington, D.C.;
Judy Duffy and Janna Haug will represent LWVMNEF’s
Minnesota Compact
- December**
- 4 – Technology Committee; 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.; MWB
 - Luncheon for Minnesota Women’s Political Caucus featuring
Kathleen Hall Jamieson
 - Campaign Finance Survey Steering Committee; 2:30 p.m.
 - 7 – LWVMN Action Committee/Intern Training; 1:00 p.m., MWB
 - 8 – Minnesota Compact; 9:00 a.m.-noon; Humphrey Institute
 - 9 – LWVMN Executive Committee, if needed
 - 14 – Legislative Intern training continued; 1:00 p.m.; at the Capitol
 - 15 – Legislative Interview deadline
 - 16 – Membership rosters to LWVUS and LWVMN
 - 17 – Leaders of Today and Tomorrow Board; 2:30 p.m., MWB
 - 18 – **Deadline for campaign finance surveys to LWVMN from LLs**
 - 21-25 – LWVMN Office closed for holidays
 - 30 – LWVMN Office closes at 1:00 p.m. for New Year holiday
Voter mailed this month
- January**
- 1 – **New Year’s Day—Happy 1999!**
 - 4 – LWVMN Action Committee, 1:00 p.m., MWB
 - 11 – Member Resources Meeting, 9:00 a.m., MWB
 - 12 – LWVMN Action Com. with LL Action Chairs, 7:00 p.m., MWB
 - 13 – LWVMN/EF Board Meetings, 9:00 a.m. – Noon; MWB
 - 15 – Election of Judges Consensus due to LWVMN office
 - 14-16 – Leaders of Today and Tomorrow Seminar in St. Paul

ENCLOSURES

(Included in this mailing with the *Board Memo* to LL Presidents and DPM subscribers)

- *League of Women Voters Board of Directors for 1998-99 as of 11/16/98/Duffy
- *Local League Presidents for 1998-99 as of 11/18/98/Borgen
- *Leaders of Today and Tomorrow(LOTT) Seminar for College Women/Erickson
- *LWVMN Program Planning for 1999-2001/Dinneen, Hondl
- *LWVMN Bylaws, revised 1997 & Proposed Bylaw Amendment form/LWVMN Bylaws Committee: Berquist, Dinneen, Matlock

BOUQUETS TO

- *Anne Borgen, LWVMN Board, for her fine work for the October Media Accountability Conference held at the Humphrey Institute and for representing LWVMN on the Minnesota Compact Steering Committee;
- *Judy Covey, LWVMN Voter Service Chair, for coordinating all of our outstanding Election projects;
- *all of our project directors: Janna Haug(Minnesota Compact); Eydie Kargas(*Voter Guides*); Linda Loomis, with assistance from Millie Johnson, Mary Hepokoski and Virginia Sweeny,(Election Hotlines); Mary Ann McCoy(Martin Grant for Congressional, Legislative and other local candidate forums); Liz Nordling for Gubernatorial debates;
- *Judy Duffy, LWVMN President, for myriad appearances and long hours in conjunction with all of the above;
- *LWVMN Office Staff and volunteers: Kay Erickson, Karen Gochberg, Georgeann Hall, Connie Hondl, Kerri Kleven, Susan McKinnell, Jackie Parsinen, Sally Sawyer, Peggy Thompson, Susan Weisbrod, Nancy Witta for handling thousands of phone calls and other election related tasks;
- *THE HUNDREDS OF YOU WHO PARTICIPATED IN SOME OR ALL OF OUR ELECTION PROJECTS--You made the Difference!**

At its November 11, 1998 Meeting, the LWVMN/EF Boards:

- *recommended with regret that LWVUS disband LWV of the Detroit Lakes Area;
- *heard an inspiring final report by Project Director Erica Buffington concerning LWVMN's Mental Health projects, undertaken through two contracts, over seven years, with the Department of Human Services;
- *appointed Cindy Berquist, Mary Dinneen and Jeanne Matlock to the LWVMN Bylaws Committee;
- *heard reports about and discussed our Voter Service projects.

ACTION

(Carol Frisch, 7025 Commanche Court, Edina, 55439 651/772-4255)

There will be a special meeting of the LWVMN Action Committee—especially for local League Action Chairs and/or Presidents on **Tuesday, January 12, 1999 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.** at the LWVMN office, 550 Rice Street, St. Paul.

This meeting is scheduled in response to the needs of those who cannot attend the regularly scheduled Action Committee Meeting on the first Monday of the month at 1:00 p.m. It will provide an overview of state action and issues that are expected in the 1999 legislative session, which begins January 5th. Please call Carol Frisch at either 651/224-5445 or 651/772-4255 to RSVP.

CONVENTION

(Jeanne Matlock, 1128 W. Montana Ave., St. Paul, 55108 651/488-0458)

You've received the First Call to Convention. We hope you have it on your calendars for April 16th & 17th, 1999, in St. Cloud. Enclosed with this mailing are items asking for your local League's participation, the Program Planning Packet (see the next article) and the LWVMN Bylaws with a form for your suggestions for amendments to the Bylaws. Please discuss the latter with your Board and return proposed amendments to LWVMN by February 1, 1999.

Look for the Hope Washburn and Peggy Thompson Award Nominating forms in the December "mini-mailing" to Presidents. We now give these awards at State Convention only. Look for them and consider nominating one of those tireless and invaluable volunteers in your League!

If you know of anyone who would be a good candidate for the LWVMN Board—including yourself—please contact Nominating Committee Chair Sandy Cooper at 612/443-2743.

PROGRAM

(Mary Dinneen, 7611 Gleason Rd., Edina, 55439 612/941-0583;
Connie Hondl, 5209 Tifton Dr., Edina, 55439 612/944-1229)

Enclosed with this mailing is the LWVMN Program Planning Packet for your December or January program planning meetings. The deadline for your program recommendations is **February 1, 1999**. (We know this is a tight "turn-around" for some of you.) The LWVMN Board will review your recommendations at its February 10th meeting as the basis for the Proposed Program for LWVMN for 1999-2001! LWVMN Convention delegates will debate and adopt the program at the April 16th & 17th Convention in St. Cloud.

Note that an article on "Lively Issues" will appear in the next issue (December) of the *Voter*, mailed to every member. This piece will serve as an excellent basis for your discussions.

LEADERS OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

(Kay Erickson, 6000 Wyngate Ln., Minnetonka, 55345 612/934-2991)

Leaders of Today and Tomorrow (LOTT) will hold its annual seminar January 14, 15, and 16, 1999, at the Embassy Suites in St. Paul. As you know, this program is for college women and is designed to encourage them to pursue careers in public policy and government.

An informational brochure and registration form is enclosed with this mailing. Please print it in your local bulletins and pass on to college women.

LOCAL LEAGUE PRESIDENTS

11/11/98

ANOKA/BLAINE/COON RAPIDS

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RAMSEY, 55303
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JEORGETTE KNOLL
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612/421-4678

ARDEN HILLS SHOREVIEW

MARY TRISKO
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ST. PAUL, 55112
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MARGARET OLSON
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SHOREVIEW, 55126
651/483-6122

AUSTIN

CAROL RICKHEIM
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AUSTIN, 55912
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BEMIDJI AREA

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BEMIDJI, 56601
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BLOOMINGTON, 55437
612/835-3447 (H) 612/854-1711 (W)

BRAINERD LAKES AREA STATE UNIT

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218/963-2328

BROOKLYN CENTER

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BROOKLYN CENTER, 55429
612/537-2118

BROOKLYN PARK/OSSEO/MAPLE GROVE

CAROL VOSBERG
8816 INVERNESS TER.
BROOKLYN PARK, 55443
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BUFFALO/MONTICELLO AREA

SUE JOHNSON
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BUFFALO, 55313
612/878-2051

CANNON FALLS

ALICE FIELD
43104 - 145TH AVE. WAY
ZUMBROTA, MN 55992
507/732-7400

CASS LAKE/WALKER AREA

BARBARA SMITH
PO BOX 594
CASS LAKE, 56633
218/335-6832

CRYSTAL/NEW HOPE/E PLY.

MARY JANE LEE
5920 WISCONSIN CIRCLE
NEW HOPE, 55428
612/533-7254

DULUTH

LWV DULUTH
32 E. 1ST ST.
DULUTH, MN 55802
218/724-0132

JANE GILLEY
311 E WADENA ST.
DULUTH, 55803
218/724-7240

EASTERN CARVER COUNTY

SUZY MILLER
112334 CHATFIELD CT.
CHASKA, 55318
612/448-1820

CLAUDINE SOLSENG
6330 CARVER HIGHLANDS DR.
CARVER, 55315
612/448-5790

EDINA

HELEN ROLAND
6617 DAKOTA TR
EDINA 55439
612/942-1938

FREEBORN COUNTY

GRACE SKAAR
RT 3 BOX 95
HAYWARD, 56043
507/373-5080

FRIDLEY

CONNIE METCALF
860 W MOORE LAKE DR
FRIDLEY, 55432
612/571-3596

LWV GOLDEN VALLEY

BARB JULIAR, CONTACT
3037 KYLE N.
GOLDEN VALLEY, 55422
612/588-5183

JACKSON AREA

JUDY JOHNSON
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WINDOM, 56101
507/831-2379

MAHTOMEDI AREA

MARGARET WESTIN
200 WILDWOOD AVE.
BIRCHWOOD, 55110
651/429-9229

MANKATO AREA

JO CATTRYSE
806 CENTER ST.
MANKATO, 56001
507/388-652

MINNEAPOLIS

LWV MINNEAPOLIS
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81 S. 9TH ST.
MINNEAPOLIS 55402
612/333-6319

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3947 ALDRICH AVE. N.
MINNEAPOLIS 55412

GAIL HANSON, CO-PRES.
110 1ST AVE. NE #1603
MINNEAPOLIS 55413-2263

MEPH

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KATHLEEN PICKERING
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NEW BRIGHTON, 55112
651/633-1500

NEW ULM

RUTH ANN WEBSTER
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NEW ULM, 56073
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NORTHERN DAKOTA COUNTY

BETTY FEDDE
1662 NORWOOD DR.
EAGAN, 55122
612/452-2966

NORTHFIELD

JUDY COVEY
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NORTHFIELD, 55057
507/645-8920

OWATONNA

ADRIENNE BREINER, CONTACT
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OWATONNA, MN 55060
507/451-3933

RED WING

GABI BROCKELSBY
3593 KOSEC DR
RED WING, 55066
651/388-7971

RICHFIELD

GERTRUDE ULRICH
7601 ALDRICH
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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA
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MEMORANDUM

TO: LOCAL LEAGUE PRESIDENTS AND/OR BYLAWS COMMITTEES
DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 1998
FROM: STATE LEAGUE BYLAWS COMMITTEE
CINDY BERQUIST, MARY DINNEEN, JEANNE MATLOCK
RE: STATE AND LOCAL LEAGUE BYLAWS

DUE DATE - FEBRUARY 1, 1999

This is a reminder that it is time to review your local Bylaws and the State League Bylaws (copy enclosed) to determine whether any revisions are needed. Please refer to pages 3-1 and 3-2 of "In League" (LWVUS) to review the procedures.

Make sure the first three articles of your local bylaws conform exactly to the first three bylaws of LWVUS. This is required by LWVUS.

Any proposed changes to local bylaws must be approved by your local League Board. Should you propose such changes, please forward them to the state League office.

Forward all proposed changes to Vera Dougher, Bylaws Committee Chair, in care of the state office by February 1, 1999.

Please use the standard format in submitting your proposed changes:

- a) Quote the entire section that is being revised.
- b) Use parentheses () to indicate deletions.
- c) Underline the new wording/new publication/new numbering.
- d) Give the rationale (explanation) for the change(s).

As you review our/your bylaws, keep in mind that they deal with fundamentals; they shouldn't deal with details more appropriately spelled out in policies and procedures, such as the dollar amount of M.A.L. dues. Bylaws provide the framework within which an organization operates.

League bylaws reflect the League purpose and how it operates to further that purpose. Your time and assistance are essential and appreciated.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA
550 RICE STREET, ST. PAUL, MN 55103
651/224-5445 FAX 651/290-2145
E-MAIL: lwvmn@mtn.org
<http://tcfreenet.org/ip/pol/lwvmn>

To: Local League Presidents
From: LWVMN Bylaws Committee:
Cindy Berquist, Mary Dinneen,
Jeanne Matlock
Date: November 18, 1998
Re: Proposed State Bylaws Changes

Due in State Office February 1, 1999

If your Board or your members have suggestions for bylaw changes to be enacted at the May Convention, please submit your specific ideas and precise wording for consideration by the State Board. Recommended and non-recommended bylaws will be returned to local Leagues at least six weeks before the State Convention.

Current Wording:

Article:

Section:

Proposed wording or new bylaw:

Article:

Section:

Reasons: (Use other side if necessary)

League of Women Voters of _____

Contact: _____
Name Phone

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA BYLAWS

As adopted by the 1947 Convention and as amended by the
1951, 1953, 1955, 1957, 1959, 1961, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1971, 1973, 1975,
1977, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997 Conventions.

ARTICLE I

Section 1. The name of this corporation shall be the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. This state League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

ARTICLE II

Purpose and Policy

Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to act on selected governmental issues.

Section 2. Policy. The League may take action on state governmental measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the Principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States. It shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Section 1. Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2. How composed. The League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall be composed of members of the League of Women Voters of the United States who are,

- a) enrolled in recognized local Leagues within the state, or
- b) enrolled as members at large of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

Section 3. Types of Membership

- a) Voting members shall be those citizens at least 18 years of age who are enrolled in recognized local Leagues or are members-at-large in the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.
- b) Associate members shall be all other members who are enrolled in recognized local Leagues or the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

- c) Members-at-large shall be members who reside outside the area of and are not enrolled in any local League. Dues shall be determined by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.
- d) Life membership may be granted to any voting member of the League of Women Voters who attains 50 years as a member of the League of Women Voters of the United States. No further dues will be collected, and all privileges will be retained as a voting member.

ARTICLE IV *Officers*

Section 1. Enumeration and Election of Officers

- a) The officers of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall be a president, a first vice-president, a second vice-president, a third vice-president, a secretary and a treasurer. They shall be elected by the Convention and shall hold office until the conclusion of the next regular biennial Convention or until their successors have been elected and qualified. Two individuals may be elected to share one position, or two positions may be held by one individual elected to the dual-position office.
- b) The officers of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall constitute the executive committee. In addition, the President may appoint up to two members of the Board to serve on the executive committee. The executive committee shall confer when immediate action is necessary and a meeting of the Board of Directors is not feasible, and shall in those instances have the powers and duties of the Board of Directors for planning and directing the Program and carrying out organizational responsibilities.

Section 2. The President. The president shall preside at all meetings of the corporation and of the Board of Directors unless the president shall designate another person to preside. The president may, in the absence or disability of the treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts or notes. The president shall be, ex officio, a member of all committees except the Nominating Committee and shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the president and perform such other duties as may be designated by the Board.

Section 3. The Vice-Presidents. The three vice-presidents, in the order of their rank, shall, in the event of absence, disability, resignation or death of the president, possess all the powers and perform all the duties of that office. In the event that no vice-president is able to serve in this capacity, the Board of Directors shall elect one of its members to fill the vacancy. The vice-presidents shall perform such other duties as the president and Board may designate.

Section 4. The Secretary. The secretary shall keep minutes of Convention, Council and of meetings of the Board of Directors. The secretary shall notify all officers and directors of their election and shall sign with the president all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the Board and shall perform such other functions as may be incident to the office.

Section 5. The Treasurer. The treasurer or a duly appointed representative, shall receive all money due, shall be the custodian of such funds, deposit them in a bank designated by the Board of Directors, and shall disburse them only upon order of the Board of Directors. The treasurer shall present periodic statements to the Board at its regular meetings. The treasurer shall present an annual report, including a report of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Reserve Fund, to the Convention or Council. The books of the treasurer shall be audited annually and the report made available to the membership.

ARTICLE V *Board of Directors*

Section 1. Number, Manner of Selection and Term of Office. The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, eight elected directors and not more than eight appointed directors. The elected directors shall be elected by the Convention and shall serve until the conclusion of the next regular biennial Convention or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The elected members shall appoint such additional directors, not exceeding eight, as they deem necessary to carry on the work of the League. The term of office of the appointed directors shall expire concurrently with the term of office of the elected directors.

Section 2. Qualifications. Any voting member of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota can be elected or appointed to serve as an officer or director of this corporation.

Section 3. Vacancies. Any vacancy other than in the office of the president may be filled, until the next Convention, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Powers and Duties. The Board of Directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the corporation with full power and authority to manage and conduct the same, subject to the instructions of the Convention. The Board shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the Program on selected governmental issues as adopted by the Convention. It shall accept responsibility delegated to it by the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of the United States for the organization and development of local Leagues, guidance of inter-League organizations, for the carrying out of Program and for promotion of finance programs in the local Leagues. Such local finance programs are requisite to further the work of the League as a whole, including transmission of funds toward the support of adequate state and national budgets. The Board shall create and designate such special committees as it may deem necessary.

Section 5. Regular Meetings. There shall be at least six regular meetings of the Board of Directors annually. The President shall notify each of the directors of all meetings at least one week before any such meeting. No action taken at any regular Board meeting attended by three-fourths of the members of the Board shall be invalidated because of the failure of any member or members of the Board to receive any notice properly sent or because of an irregularity in any notice actually received.

Section 6. Special Meetings. The president may call special meetings of the Board of Directors and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of five members of the Board. Members of the Board shall be notified of the time and place of special meetings by

personal telephone contact, telegram or letter sent at least six days prior to such meeting. At the time of a Convention the president may, and upon the request of five members of the Board shall, call a special meeting of the Board by handing the members of the Board a written notice of the time and place of said meeting.

Section 7. Quorum. A majority of the members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum, and a majority of the members in attendance at any Board meeting shall, in the presence of a quorum, decide its action.

ARTICLE VI

Recognition of Local and Provisional Leagues and State Units

Section 1. Local Leagues.

- a) Local Leagues are those Leagues which have been so recognized by the League of Women Voters of the United States.
- b) The Board of Directors shall recommend to the national Board of the League of Women Voters of the United States that it recognize as a local League any group of members of the League of Women Voters of the United States in any community within the state, provided the group meets qualifying standards for local Leagues as adopted by the national Convention.
- c) In the event of recurring failure of a local League to meet these qualifying standards, the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota may recommend to the national Board that it withdraw recognition from the local League. All funds held by a local League from which recognition has been withdrawn shall be paid to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. In the event the non-qualifying League is merging with another local League, its funds would go to the merged League minus a reorganization fee paid to and determined by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

Section 2. State Units

- a) State units are those which have been so recognized by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.
- b) The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota has responsibility for the establishment of new Leagues. For this purpose the Board may organize a group in a community in which no local League exists and shall recommend the group for recognition as a state unit when it meets the qualifying guidelines as set forth by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Board of Directors.
- c) In the event of recurring failure of a state unit to meet these qualifying guidelines, the Board of Directors of the LWVMN may recommend that recognition be withdrawn. All funds held by state units from which recognition has been withdrawn shall be paid to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

ARTICLE VII *Finance*

Section 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall commence on the first of April each year.

Section 2. Budget. The Board shall submit to the Convention for adoption budgets for the ensuing two fiscal years. These budgets shall provide for the support of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. The Per Member Payment amount shall be determined for the ensuing two fiscal years only by the delegates at the state convention. A copy of the proposed budgets shall be sent to each local League president at least six weeks in advance of the Convention. The budget shall be adopted by a majority vote of the delegates at the state convention.

Section 3. Budget Committee. The budgets shall be prepared by the elected chair and a committee which shall be appointed by the Board for that purpose at least six months in advance of the Convention. The treasurer shall be ex officio a member of the Budget committee but shall not be eligible to serve as chairperson.

Section 4. Distribution of Funds on Dissolution. In the event of a dissolution for any cause of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, all monies and securities which may at the time be owned by or under the absolute control of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall be paid to the League of Women Voters of the United States, after the Board of Directors has paid or made provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. All other property of whatsoever nature, whether real, personal or mixed, which may at the time be owned by or under the control of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, shall be disposed of by any officer or employee of the corporation for such public, charitable or educational uses and purposes as may be designated by the then League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

Section 5. League of Women Voters of Minnesota Reserve Fund. The fund shall contain the \$1,000 restricted principal of the Jane Grey Swisshelm Fund and all other monies, securities and property of whatever nature, which the League of Women Voters of Minnesota may receive by gift, bequest or otherwise, which the Board of Directors may designate as reserve funds. Expenditures of monies from the fund and of interest earned on monies in the fund shall be for League purposes as may from time to time be determined by the Board of Directors subject only to restrictions which may have been imposed by the donor at the time the funds were received.

ARTICLE VIII *Convention*

Section 1. Place, Date and Call. A Convention of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall be held biennially at a time and place to be determined by the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. The president shall send a first call for the Convention to the presidents of the local Leagues not less than four months prior to the opening date of the Convention fixed in said call. Thereafter the Board of Directors may advance or postpone the opening date of the Convention by not more than two weeks. A

final call for the Convention shall be sent to the presidents of the local Leagues and the delegates at least six weeks before the opening date of the Convention.

Section 2. Composition. The Convention shall consist of the delegates chosen by the members enrolled in the local Leagues, and delegates chosen by members-at-large of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, as provided in Section 4 of this article; the presidents of local Leagues or an alternate in the event the president is unable to attend; and the members of the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

Section 3. Qualification of Delegates and Voting. Each delegate shall be a voting member enrolled in a recognized local Minnesota League whose State Per Member Payment is paid or be an at large member of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. The State Board may make an exception in the case of proven hardship. Each delegate shall be entitled to one vote only at the Convention even though the delegate may be attending in two or more capacities. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted. The Convention shall be the sole judge of whether a delegate is qualified to vote.

Section 4. Representation.

- a) The members of the League of Women Voters of the United States who are organized into recognized local Leagues in the State of Minnesota shall be entitled to voting representation in the Convention as follows: Each local League shall be entitled to two delegates, in addition to the president of the local League or an alternate in the event the president is unable to attend; these additional delegates shall be chosen by the local League. The members in each local League having more than twenty-five voting members shall also be entitled to one additional delegate for each additional twenty-five members or major fraction thereof belonging to said local League on January 1st of said year. The record in the state office of paid voting members as of January 1st of said year shall determine the official membership count for this purpose.
- b) Members-at-large of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall be entitled to one delegate for each 25 members, chosen by a procedure determined by the Board of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

Section 5. Powers. The Convention shall consider and authorize for action a Program, shall elect officers and directors, the Budget Chairperson, Nominating Committee Chairperson and two Nominating Committee members, shall adopt budgets for the ensuing two fiscal years, and shall transact such other business as may be properly presented.

Section 6. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the delegates registered at the Convention provided that not less than ten local Leagues are represented.

ARTICLE IX

Council

Section 1. Place, Date and Call. A meeting of the Council shall be held in the interim year between Conventions, approximately twelve months after the preceding Convention at a time and place to be determined by the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. A formal call shall be sent by the president of the League of Women Voters

of Minnesota to the presidents of the local Leagues in Minnesota at least thirty days before the opening date of a Council meeting. Special meetings may be called in the event of extreme emergency.

Section 2. Composition. The Council shall be composed of the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, the presidents of local Leagues or an alternate in the event the president is unable to attend, and one delegate chosen by each local League.

Section 3. Powers. The Council shall consider Program, and methods of work and review the budget as submitted to the Board of Directors. The Council is authorized to change the Program only in the event of an emergency, provided that notice of proposed modification of the Program shall have been sent to the presidents of the local Leagues at least two months in advance of the meeting of the Council, and provided also that a two-thirds majority of the members of the Council present and voting shall be required to adopt the modification. The Council shall review the budget for the ensuing year and may modify it to meet current needs and shall transact such other business as shall be presented by the Board.

Section 4. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of not less than twenty members other than the Board of Directors for the transaction of business at a Council meeting.

ARTICLE X *Nominations and Elections*

Section 1. Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members, two of whom shall be members of the Board of Directors. The chairperson and two members, who shall not be members of the Board of Directors, shall be elected by the Convention. Nominations for these offices shall be made by the current Nominating Committee. Further nominations may be made from the floor of the Convention. The other members of the committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors immediately after the Convention. Vacancies occurring in the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the Board of Directors. The president of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall send the name and address of the chairperson of the Nominating Committee to the president of each recognized local League.

Section 2. Suggestions for Nominations. The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall request through the president of each local League suggestions for nominations for offices to be filled. Any member may send suggestions to the chairperson of the Nominating Committee.

Section 3. Report of the Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor. The report of the Nominating Committee of its nominations for officers, directors, chairperson of the Budget Committee, and the chairperson and two members of the succeeding Nominating Committee shall be sent to local Leagues at least six weeks before the date of the Convention. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the Convention on the first day of the Convention. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by any member of the Convention, provided that the consent of the nominee shall have been secured.

Section 4. Election. The election shall be under the direction of an Election Committee appointed by the president on the first day of the Convention. The election shall be by ballot, except that when there is but one nominee for each office, it shall be in order to move that the secretary cast the ballot for every candidate. A majority vote of those present and voting shall constitute an election.

ARTICLE XI *Program*

Section 1. Principles. The governmental principles adopted by the national Convention and supported by the League as a whole constitute the authorization for the adoption of Program.

Section 2. Program. The Program of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall consist of:

- a) action to implement principles, and
- b) those state governmental issues chosen for concentrated study and action.

Section 3. Convention Action. The Convention shall act upon the Program using the following procedures:

- a) Local Leagues shall make recommendations for a Program to the Board of Directors at least three months prior to the Convention.
- b) The Board of Directors shall consider the recommendations and shall formulate a proposed Program which shall be submitted to the local League Boards at least six weeks prior to the Convention.
- c) A majority vote shall be required for the adoption of the Program proposed by the Board of Directors.
- d) Any recommendation for the Program submitted to the Board of Directors at least three months before the Convention, but not proposed by the Board, may be adopted by the Convention provided consideration is ordered by majority vote and on a following day the proposal for adoption receives a three-fifths vote.

Section 4. Council Action. The Council may change the Program as provided in Article IX.

Section 5. Member Action. Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota only when authorized to do so by the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

Section 6. Local League Action. Local Leagues and inter-League organizations may take action on state governmental issues only when authorized to do so by the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. Local Leagues may act only in conformity with, and not contrary to, a position taken by the League of women Voters of Minnesota and/or the League of Women Voters of the United States.

ARTICLE XII *National Convention and Council*

Section 1. National Convention. The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the national office, shall elect delegates to that Convention in the number allotted to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota under the provisions of the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Section 2. National Council. The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall elect delegates to the meeting of the Council of the League of Women Voters of the United States at its meeting preceding such Council meeting in the number allowed the League of Women Voters of Minnesota under the provisions of the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

ARTICLE XIII *Parliamentary Authority*

Section 1. Parliamentary Authority. The rules contained in Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the corporation in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIV *Amendments*

Section 1. Amendments. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any Convention of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, using the following procedures:

- a) Proposals for changes shall be submitted by any local League Board in Minnesota to the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota at least three months prior to the opening date of the Convention.
- b) All such proposed amendments together with the recommendations of the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall be sent to the presidents of local Leagues at least six weeks prior to the opening date of the Convention.
- c) The presidents of the local Leagues shall notify the members of their respective Leagues of the proposed amendments. Failure of a local League president to give such notice or failure of any member to receive such notice shall not invalidate amendments to the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

MINNESOTA

550 RICE STREET ST. PAUL, MN 55103 PHONE (612) 224-5445

November 18, 1998

Dear Local League Presidents:

April seems a long way off, but before you know it convention 1999 will be upon us. So, it's time to start thinking about Program Planning.

Local League Program recommendations for the next state study are due on February 1, 1999. Most Leagues hold their Program Planning meeting in January.

Your suggested study should be thoroughly thought out, and should have an understandable focus and scope. You can propose a new study, an update, re-study, or drop of a position or certain parts of a position. It should contain education and advocacy.

TIPS FOR WELL-ATTENDED PROGRAM PLANNING MEETINGS

1. Offer food! All Leaguers like to eat and "surveys" have shown that meetings with food are better-attended than regular meetings. Try a holiday potluck or a breakfast at a reasonably-priced restaurant.
2. Emphasize education. Emphasize that members can learn about all the state positions at one time.
3. Point out that this is a once every two years opportunity. It is the one time during the biennium that members have to suggest changes, re-emphasis or new studies for state programs.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

1. Appoint a chair for Program Planning.
2. Schedule the meeting.
3. Use your Voter or other mailings to inform your members about current state program and lively issues. The *Program for Action* booklet with all of LWVMN's positions was mailed to local League presidents in November of 1997.
4. Local recommendations go to the state board which recommends or does not recommend the suggested program.
5. Convention delegates vote on all program items.
6. Because non-recommended items must pass by a 2/3s vote in order to be considered, it is important that all Leagues know about your proposal and have time before Convention to discuss it.
7. Plan a campaign for your program recommendations so that Leagues statewide understand the need for the changes or new study you propose.

Have a good planning session!

Connie Hondl
Program Co-chair

Mary Dinneen
Program Co-chair

(with thanks to the League of Women Voters of Illinois)



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

MINNESOTA

550 RICE STREET ST. PAUL, MN 55103
PHONE (612) 224-5445

**PROGRAM PLANNING
DISCUSSION GUIDE**
DEADLINE: February 1, 1999

To: Presidents, Program Planning Chairs
From: Connie Hondl, Program Co-chair, 612/944-1229
Mary Dinneen, Program Co-chair, 612/941-0583
Re: State Program Planning
Date: November 18, 1998

Included in this packet:

1. Program Planning Discussion Guide
2. Lively Issues
3. Current Program, short version
4. Program Planning Form
5. Local Program Planning Guide

The Winter issue of LWVMN *VOTER* will include Lively Issues for discussion purposes.

TIMELINE

November	Program planning packet sent to local Leagues; Lively Issues article in LWVMN <i>VOTER</i> (December)
December-January	Leagues have state program planning meeting
February 1, 1999	Deadline for receipt of program planning report form at state office
February 10, 1999	State Board Meeting – approve proposed program; Proposed program for 1999-2001 mailed with convention materials
April 16-17, 1999	State Convention – adopt 1999-2001 program

Program planning is an annual event for local Leagues. Before the annual meeting, members need to provide suggestions regarding local program so your Board can select one it thinks best fits the guidelines for selecting an appropriate topic to study, reach consensus and take action. Since local Leagues have such busy schedules, the meeting at which you discuss local program ideas is usually the best one at which to discuss state program ideas.

Each local League should have someone in charge of setting up the program planning meeting. It is one of the most important meetings of the year – the chance to have input into the local and state program which will be adopted at the annual meeting or Convention. Plans should be made to attract as many members as possible.

Prior to the meeting you will want to have articles in your local bulletin. If your group is large, you may wish to break into smaller groups and brainstorm program ideas, then get back together and list them all, giving background when necessary, then come to a sense of the entire group as to which item most members feel is an appropriate topic to study.

For the local program planning, you may wish to have your program chairs or local government officials talk about local issues. You may also suggest some programs other Leagues have adopted.

For the state program planning, the ideas suggested in the Lively Issues are a starting point. The ideas that have been suggested are "food for thought." The hope is that these ideas will be a springboard - the state Board is not in any way recommending any of them.

Which column you mark beside each position statement should be determined by a consensus of members participating. If you use a telephone survey or questionnaire, it should be the majority of those participating. If there is no consensus or majority, you may wish to comment on the line provided. If there is a change or update suggested by one or more, you may report that under comments, indicating how many suggested the change or update.

There are four choices for each item currently on the State Program. If you wish to drop a position, only that box can be checked. It is possible to keep a position and request an update - additional information through a public or League meeting, an article in the *VOTER*, publication, etc.

DEFINITIONS:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| <u>Keep</u> | to retain the position and/or details, so we can take appropriate action, but have no further study at this time. |
| <u>Drop</u> | the position would be dropped and no further action can be taken in this area without a new study. |
| <u>Update</u> | obtain additional information on position but take no consensus (meeting, publication, etc.) |
| <u>Action</u> | to assist the State Board and Action Committee to determine action priorities. It is advisory only. |
| <u>Study</u> | to undertake a new study, with consensus, for the purpose of establishing a new position or expanding a current one. |

NEW STUDY

Take care not to confuse national issues with state issues. The State League can do many things, but it cannot decide on its own to influence national policy. Our concern is with state issues, those within the province of state government.

The League has well-established criteria to help members decide on new studies:

- **League Policy** - Can the problem be solved by governmental action? Does the proposal fall within the League's Principles [enclosed]?

- **Timeliness** - Is this a hot issue? Is the political timing right? Will it lead to effective action for the League? Will League involvement make a difference?
- **Appropriateness** - Is the League the organization best qualified to study the issue? Will it duplicate the work of some other organization?
- **Membership** - Will the issue attract new members? Will it increase the interest and participation of current members?
- **Resources** - Does the League have the people and the money to address this issue effectively?

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call Connie Hondl 612/944-1229 or Mary Dinneen, 612/941-0583.

LIVELY ISSUES 1998-99

Now is the time for all good Leaguers to think **LIVELY ISSUES**. Unit meetings in December and/or January will be devoted to program planning for the next two years for State, Local and CMAL issues, so have fun debating your most challenging ideas for League study and action, 1999-2001.

Several suggestions for state lively issues have already surfaced and may help inspire you to offer your own proposals for a LWVMN study. The following is a short list of these early ideas:

Immigration - how do the recent waves of immigrants to Minnesota affect its economy, society, educational system? should Minnesota support more restrictive immigration policies? how do recent immigrants adapt to Minnesota? is assimilation the most desirable goal for immigrants?

The Metropolitan Airport Commission - what are the duties and powers of MAC? what process does MAC use to reach its decisions? is MAC open and democratic in its deliberations? how do citizens make their voices heard?

Commuter High Speed Train - which communities would benefit from such a train? what is the expected ridership? what are the advantages, disadvantages of this train for the whole state?

Women in Prison - does mandatory sentencing put more women in prison? do women in prison have opportunities for education, job training, counseling, health care? are there other options for dealing with women who commit serious crimes?

Profile of Learning - how will this improve Minnesota student performance? how does it work? is there a process for evaluation of the program and needs for changes in its structure? are the remedial programs (summer schools, tutors) sufficient to help failing students pass the Profile requirements?

Public Post-Secondary Education - how well does Minnesota provide public post-secondary education? what is the relationship of the University of Minnesota to the new system, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) in matters of funding, objectives and roles of the two systems? does Minnesota offer the best possible education for the modern technological world?

K-12 quotas for desegregation - have quotas achieved desegregation? are neighborhood schools better for K-12 children?

K-12 Remedial programs - have tutorial programs and summer schools been effective in bringing failing students back into schools?

Health Care Trends - should the state prevent HMO's leaving rural areas? how can state regulations force HMO's to remain in areas where they cannot make a profit? should the state encourage the formation of an umbrella organization to coordinate the various systems of health care planning?

Welfare - is it too soon to judge if reform is working? will different economic conditions make reform more difficult and costly to implement?

Proportional Representation - does this system work and how might it be an improvement over the present voting system? where has it already been used in the U.S., in Europe?

Legalization of industrial hemp/marijuana - what are the advantages and disadvantages of legalizing industrial hemp and marijuana?

LEAGUE PRINCIPLES

In addition to the items adopted for LWVUS and LWVMN Programs, League Principles may be the basis for state and local League actions. The Principles have served two functions according to LWVUS Bylaws: 1) as authorization for adoption of national, state and local Program, and 2) as a basis for taking action at the national, state and local levels. Action to implement the Principles is authorized by the appropriate League board once it determines that member understanding and agreement exist and that the action is appropriate.

League Principles are as follows:

- The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.
- The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.
- The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination.
- The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.
- The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation; promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest; share in the solution of economic and social problems that effect the general welfare; promote a sound economy; and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.
- The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that the development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Program Adopted by League of Women Voters of Minnesota

I. CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Judiciary: Support of a judicial system with the capacity to assure a speedy trial and equal justice for all.

Corrections: Support of a correctional system responsive to the needs of the individual offender and of society. Support of sentencing decisions based on circumstances in relation to the crime, the offender and the effect on public safety, made by the judge within legislative guidelines.

II. EDUCATION

Equal Opportunity: Support of increased state responsibility in creating equal public educational opportunities for all Minnesota children through measures to correct racial imbalance and insure adequate financing of public schools.

Financing of Education: Support of equal access to a good public education for all Minnesota children.. State funding for education should be at a level that makes programs of comparable substance and quality available to all. A student's access to a good education should not depend on the wealth of his or her school district.

Collective Bargaining and Tenure: Support of improvements in the collective bargaining and tenure laws of the state as they apply to K-12 teachers only.

Library Funding: Support for increased and restructured funding for public libraries.

III. GOVERNMENT

Citizen Rights: Support of improvements in election laws regulating election procedures, voting and school district elections. Support of improvements in election laws regulating campaign practices.

Organization of Government: Support of improved structure and procedures for the Minnesota Legislature and Executive Branch; support of an improved process for amending the Minnesota Constitution; support of apportionment based substantially on population of congressional districts and of all elected state and local governmental bodies.

Initiative, Referendum and Recall: Support of the continuation of legislative initiative and compulsory voter referendum on constitutional amendments; opposition to recall by voters of members of the Legislature and state constitutional officers; support of strict procedural limits on any process of initiative, referendum or recall.

Financing State Government: Support of a balanced and diversified revenue system which relies on broad-based taxes and user fees. Support of an evaluation of all individual revenue sources to determine if it is competitive with other states, efficient, equitable, progressive, reliable, responsive and simple. Support of a broad-based sales tax with exemptions for essential items. Support of an equitable property tax as the primary source of financing services provided by local governments and a partial funding for education. Support of a corporation franchise tax competitive with other states. Support of achieving social goals through open and visible expenditures rather than by granting deductions, exclusions and credits. Support of the principle that state legislation mandating local government action should identify sources of revenue. Support of long-term financial management, budget projections and budget reserve.

State Government Spending: Belief that a long-term vision as well as immediate concerns should guide state spending decisions. Support of the following broad goals, in order of priority: provide high-quality K-12 educational opportunities; provide basic level of health and human services; protect natural resources; encourage economic self-sufficiency; provide for public safety; provide high-quality post-secondary educational opportunities; and preserve open spaces. Support of the use of specific criteria when faced with the need to limit spending, i.e. curtailing subsidies for sports teams and convention centers, maintenance of existing infrastructure over increased infrastructure, tax relief targeted to low-income households and providing services first to the most needy.

Firearms: Action to support restrictions on the sale, possession and use of firearms by private parties in the state of Minnesota. Opposition to an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution granting an individual right to bear arms. Support for the ability of local municipalities to regulate ownership and possession of firearms and ammunition more strictly than state law allows.

IV. NATURAL RESOURCES

Water Resources: Support of a state role in the preservation and management of Minnesota's water resources through protection, allocation, conservation, pricing and interbasin transfer policies protective of Minnesota's current and future needs.

Solid Waste: Support of measures to reduce generation of solid waste.

Land Use: Support of an overall land use plan with maximum cooperation and implementation at the regional and local levels, with state help in developing and exercising land use management, with opportunity for maximum local decision making, and with regional planning and regulation for matters of more than local concern.

V. SOCIAL POLICY

Equal Opportunity: Support of policies to insure equality of opportunity in employment, real property, public accommodations, education and other public services for all persons. Support of administrative enforcement of antidiscrimination laws. Support of state responsibility for and responsiveness to Indian citizens

FAMILY ISSUES

Family Violence: Support for improved procedures for agencies dealing with family violence; support for improved services for the victims.

Child Support: Support of stricter enforcement of court-ordered child support payments.

Child Protection: Support of adequate staffing and resources for child protection services.

Child Health: Support access to comprehensive pre-natal and child health care.

Child Care: Support of coordinated public policies and funding to ensure safe, affordable, quality child care throughout the state.

Teen Pregnancy: Support prevention efforts to lower the rate of teenage pregnancy.

Housing: The League believes that all people have a right to housing. The public and private sectors should work together to ensure that everyone has access to adequate, decent, affordable housing. Support an active state role in providing long-term decent and affordable housing for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. Support of incentives to local units of government to promote a mix of housing opportunities. Support of disincentives to local units of government that do not promote a mix of housing opportunities. Support of revision of the tax system to narrow the tax disparity between rental and owner-occupied residential property; reduction of the tax rate on rental property available to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households; encouragement of maintenance of rental property available to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

Mental Health: Support of a comprehensive and coordinated system of programs and services for mentally ill adults and emotionally disturbed children and adolescents (hereafter referred to as "persons with mental illness"). Priority should be given to persons with serious and persistent mental illness and/or acute mental illness. Minnesota public policy and funding should sustain an array of community-based services which are available and accessible to persons with mental illness. Administration of that policy should provide clients with appropriate and adequate services.

Violence Prevention: Support for violence prevention programs in Minnesota.

LWVMN PROGRAM PLANNING FORM
(based on LWVMN *Program for Action 1997-99*)

Deadline: February 1, 1999

Local League _____ Date _____

of members participating _____

Authorized Signature Title

Use this form for your League's official recommendation for the State Program. Your recommendations must be received by LWVMN, 550 Rice Street, St. Paul, MN 55103, no later than February 1, 1999.

	Keep	Drop	Update	Action
I. <u>Criminal Justice</u>				
A. Judiciary				
B. Corrections				
C. Judges Study *				
II. <u>Education</u>				
A. Equal Opportunity				
B. Financing Education				
C. Collective Bargaining & Tenure				
D. Library Funding				
III. <u>Government</u>				
A. Citizen Rights				
1. Election Laws				
2. Campaign Practices				
B. Organization of Government				
C. Initiative, Referendum, Recall				
D. Financing State Government				
E. State Government Spending				
F. Firearms				
IV. <u>Natural Resources</u>				
A. Water Resources				
B. Solid Waste				
C. Land Use				

*New Consensus scheduled in 1999.

	Keep	Drop	Update	Action
V. <u>Social Policy</u>				
A. Equality of Opportunity				
B. Family Violence				
C. Child Support				
D. Child Protection				
E. Child Health				
F. Child Care				
G. Teen Pregnancy				
H. Housing				
I. Mental Health				
J. Violence Prevention				

We recommend the adoption of a new study as follows:

Title: (i.e., Government)_____

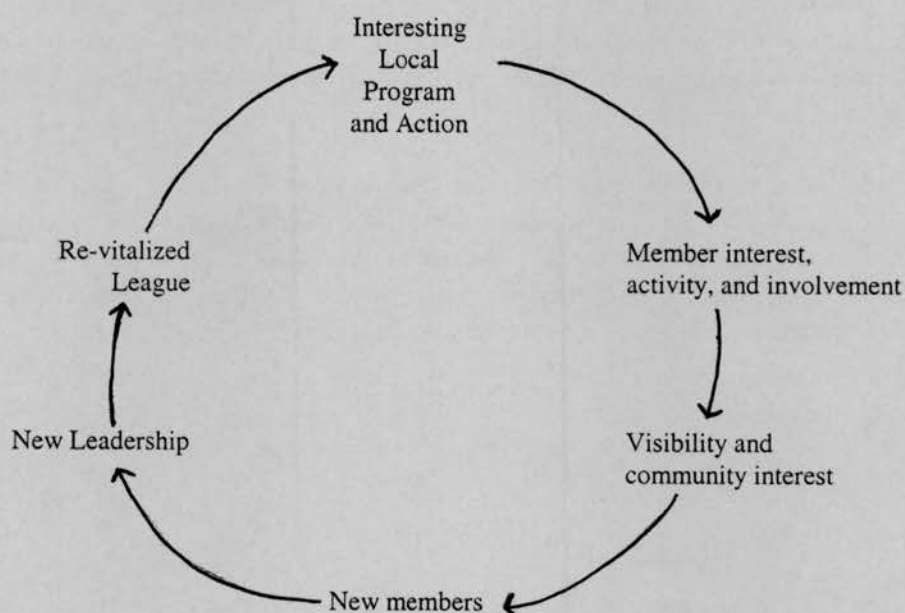
Wording:

Scope:

Comments:

To: Local Leagues
From: Connie Hondl and Mary Dineen
Re: Local Program Planning

This is the time of year for your local board and all members to begin thinking about the adoption of local program at your annual meeting. Exciting local program and action is crucial to the vitality of your local League. The following diagram illustrates the relationship between local program and the strength of your League.



COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT LOCAL PROGRAM

1. WE ARE HAVING TROUBLE FINDING MEMBERS TO DO THE PROGRAM AREAS WE ALREADY HAVE, WHY SHOULD WE LOOK FOR MORE TO DO? Burn-out most often occurs when people are going through the motions of doing a task because it has to be done, rather than because they are truly interested in it. Therefore a successful League tries to make sure their program offers options for members to get involved in issues they are truly interested in. In addition, exciting program involvement can help to recruit new people to share responsibilities.
2. SHOULD WE ADOPT A PROGRAM ITEM AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IF IT ALREADY APPEARS ON STATE OR NATIONAL PROGRAM? Leagues are encouraged to carry out action on pertinent local issues based on state or national program positions. Issues which become very specific within the community or which are quite controversial are best handled by adopting a local study which applies the position to the local level. For instance, the state League supported the new legislation requiring a study of school reorganization in all areas of the state. This position was based on the principle of citizen participation and equitable school financing. It is necessary for local Leagues to study the proposal for reorganization within their own community before they take a position on it. The state League position only supports the concept in general and does not address the pros or cons of a particular proposal.

3. MUST WE ADOPT NEW PROGRAM ITEMS? This is not necessary if current items are active and stimulate member interest. It is important to evaluate the status and interest level of all items and if things seem "blah" to consider if a new item might attract new members and the interest of current members.
4. HOW DO WE FIND NEW ITEMS? Consult with your observers and committees actively working in the community for upcoming issues. Talk to other groups in the community and ask what issues will be developing. Try to be leaders and not followers on community issues. Plan ahead so the League can be ready when controversy arrives. For instance, if there is discussion about future waste disposal for your community, do a study NOW of what is appropriate for your community, and be in a position to make responsible proposals, rather than waiting to react to the ideas of others.
5. SHOULD WE KEEP OLD PROGRAM ITEMS? If you anticipate action on the issue, then it is important to re-adopt the item, or you will lose the position. On the other hand, if nothing is happening, if the study is old, or if members have lost interest, it is better to drop it or re-study the issue to make it current, rather than carrying "dead-wood."
6. HOW DO WE HANDLE A PROPOSED PROGRAM ITEM THAT IS VERY CONTROVERSIAL? Controversy is not always bad, it can make the League visible in the community and attract members who are impressed with the League's responsible approach. Controversy is most often a problem when it involves personalities and individuals. Sometimes an issue-oriented approach to the matter can be a constructive approach. Consider the wording of the item to handle it in a positive direction.

Thanks to LWV-Illinois for this information.

LOTT SEMINAR FOR COLLEGE WOMEN-- HOW TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

"My advisor pushed me into coming.... I didn't want to have anything to do with politics. But now I realize that I have no choice but to get involved.... It's something we all have to do." --Leaders of Today and Tomorrow (LOTT) participant.

Not all the participants in the LOTT seminar are "pushed" into coming—but they all come away energized and excited about the opportunities available to them.

By bringing together college women and women leaders in the public arena, LOTT seminars train students in leadership skills and introduce them to the opportunities for public service in a very real way. This year's seminar, January 14-16 at the St. Paul Embassy Suites, promises to again empower a new and diverse group of college women.

LOTT, which became a program of the League of Women Voters Education Fund this summer, attracts women from colleges around the state. Reservations are now being accepted and some scholarships are available for the three-day conference.

By sharing their experiences, women leaders convey the message that you can make a difference by getting involved. This year's keynote speaker is Anne Beers, the first woman chief of the Minnesota State Patrol. Confirmed speakers include State Senator Ember Reichgott Junge, Fourth District Court Judge Pamela Alexander, MN Supreme Court Justice Esther Tomljanovich, and former Supreme Court Justice Rosalie Wahl. Highlights include a practical skills workshop on how to get involved and an interactive session entitled "Why Not You?" Also featured are two panels of women legislators and women in the media and site visits to the state Capitol and the MN Judicial Center. The seminar will end with a mentorship lunch with women leaders.

Registration Information:

Students may earn college credit. Check with your college registrar to determine eligibility. The program fee of \$260 includes all meals, activities and hotel for two nights. (Rooms are triples with two beds and one sleeper sofa.) Applications will be processed as received. All fees must be included with registration. Deadline is December 4, 1998. Scholarships are offered by several schools. Please fill out the application and send it with your check made out to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund (with LOTT in the memo line) to Leaders of Today and Tomorrow, 550 Rice Street, St. Paul, MN 55103. Call 651/602-0363 with questions.

Name: _____

College: _____

Major: _____

Mailing Address (until Dec. 18): _____

Phone: _____

Mailing Address (Dec. 19-Jan. 13): _____

Phone: _____

Anticipated date of graduation: _____

Registration and Refunds: All program fees are due at time of registration. Early registration is encouraged due to limited spaces. Requests for refunds must be in writing. Cancelled registrations before December 20, 1998 will receive a full refund less a \$25 fee. No refunds will be made after this date, but a substitution will be allowed.

☐ I understand the above application and refund policy. My program fees are enclosed.

☐ I am applying for a LOTT scholarship and have enclosed \$25.00

Signature _____ Date _____

BOARD MEMO



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
MINNESOTA

550 Rice Street • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103
Phone 612-224-5445 • Fax 612-290-2145
lwvmn@mtn.org
<http://freenet.msp.mn.us/ip/pol/lwvmn>

AUGUST 1998

79 Years – a Voice for Citizens, a Force for Change

1 800-663-9328

Fax #: 1-651-290-2145

e-mail: lwvmn@mtn.org

Note: the Judicial Study packet materials will be mailed to local Leagues the week of August 31st; the publication *Choosing Minnesota's Judges* will be mailed to every member at about the same time

- August**
- 12 – LWVMN/EF Board Meetings; approval of *FutureTrek*
 - 19 – *Presidents' Mailing*
Voter Service Committee Meeting; 9:30 a.m.
Debates Meeting re Oct. 1st Debate in Brainerd
 - 20 – Martin Grant Candidate Forum Award letters and checks to recipients
 - 26 – Women's Equality Day; Groundbreaking for Minnesota Woman Suffrage Memorial, noon, State Capitol Mall, corner of Constitution and Cedar
Luncheon, at MWB, immediately following; see flyer
 - 29 – DFL Gubernatorial Debate at State Fair; WCCO-TV booth; 2:00 p.m.; broadcast at 7:00 p.m., WCCO-TV
 - 31 – Judges Study packets mailed to local Leagues
Study mailed to all members
- September**
- 31 – Primary *Voter Guide* ready for distribution; mailed to members
 - 1 – Member Resources Committee; 1:00 p.m., MWB
 - 2 – *FutureTrek*; 11:30 a.m., MWB
 - 3 – 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. – reception for Development Director, Jean Tews
 - 7 – Labor Day, LWVMN Office closed
 - 8 – Stans Lecture, "Not Privilege but Justice," Minnesota Historical Society; 7:00 p.m.; see flyer
 - 9 – LWVMN visits Jane Addams School, Neighborhood House, St. Paul; discussion re potential Study Circle project on Immigration
- Election Hotline--HELP!**
- 11 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
 - 12 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; Noon – 6 p.m.
 - 13 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; Noon – 6 p.m.
 - 13 – Election Hotline, WCCO-TV, Mpls; 9 a.m. – Noon; 5-11 p.m.
 - 14 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; 9 a.m.- 10 p.m.
 - 14 – Election Hotline, WCCO-TV; 6 a.m. – 11 p.m.
 - 15 – Election Hotline, WCCO-TV; 6 a.m. – 8 p.m.
 - 15 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.
 - 15 – **Primary Election Day**

- 17 – MN Compact Meeting; 8:30 a.m.
23 – Leaders of Today and Tomorrow (LOTT) Rosalie Wahl fundraiser,
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.; College of St. Catherine
- October**
- 1 – Gubernatorial Candidates Debate; Brainerd; noon via MPR, KMSP-TV; rebroadcast by KMSP-TV at 8:00 p.m.; by KTCA at 10:30 p.m.
14 – LWVMN/EF Board Meeting; MWB; 9 a.m. – Noon; lunch with former Board members
16 – Gubernatorial Debate, LWV of Duluth, WDSE-TV; KBJR, MPR will broadcast; 7:00 p.m.
20 – *Presidents' Mailing*
27 – Gubernatorial Debate, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.; Blake School-Hopkins Campus; WCCO-TV, WCCO Radio

ENCLOSURES

(Included in this mailing with the *BOARD MEMO*; sent to LL Presidents and DPM subscribers)

- *Election Hotline sign-up sheets—**HELP!**/Covey
- *Memo from Nominating Committee re 1999-2001 LWVMN Officers and Directors/Cooper
- *News Release re Sept. 8th Minnesota Historical Society Stans Lecture, featuring among others LWVMN President Judy Duffy and Barbara Stuhler, co-author of *Women in Minnesota*
- *Flyer "More Strategies for Success in the Midwest: Toolkits from LWVEF"/Covey, McCoy
- *Minnesota Compact Citizen Checklist for local League Newsletters/Borgen
- *Minnesota Women's Consortium workshop information on the issue of "White Privilege"/Erickson
- *Director of Development Job Description/Erickson, Sawyer
- *"Vote Today" Outdoor Sign Order Form/Covey

BOUQUETS TO

- **Choosing Minnesota's Judges* Study Committee and Co-Chairs Janet Gendler and Helen Palmer for an excellent publication (soon to reach local Leagues and members);
- *Jean Tews, long-time Director of Development for LWVMN/EF, for her steadfast and highly successful fundraising on behalf of our programs and projects; and our best wishes as she moves to a similar position at the Minnesota Humanities Commission!
- *Leaders of Today and Tomorrow(LOTT), whose mission is to inspire the leadership of young women in public life, for becoming a program of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund—Welcome!

At its August 12, 1998, Meeting the LWVMN/EF Boards. . .

- *decided to pursue the possibility of a League of Women Voters Study Circle project focusing on immigration called "Changing Faces, Changing Communities";
- *approved the consensus questions for the Choosing Minnesota's Judges Study;
- *gave final approval to *FutureTrek* goals, objectives and strategies;
- *began planning for the 1999 LWVMN Convention.

Voter Service

(Judy Covey, 611 St. Olaf Ave., Northfield, 55057; 507/645-8920)

Voter Guides: every member will receive a copy of both the Primary and General Election *Voter Guide* at her/his home address.

General Election Voter Guides for High School Seniors: Each local League may have up to five hundred free *Voter Guides* to give to their local High Schools if they request them by September 15th. Please contact your High School Social Studies teachers. Determine the amount needed and get the proper address—(not a P.O.Box). Call Eydie Kargas at 612/473-8610 to reserve your order.

Voter Guides will not be automatically sent to 50% of High School Seniors as we have done in the past. We have not received funding at this time. If funding does come through we will provide 100 *Voter Guides* to each High School in the state.

Please ask for "thank you" notes from teachers to help us get funding for *Voter Guides* two years from now.

HELP! HELP! HELP!

Sign up for the Election Hotline today—either in Minneapolis at WCCO-TV or in St. Paul at the Minnesota Women's Building for the Secretary of State's Election Hotline. Your League will earn \$10 for each individual shift worked. Dates and shifts are enclosed in this mailing. Call Linda Loomis, 612/545-4659. There will be training provided by the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office for the St. Paul site. Participants will be paid an additional \$5.00 – date to be announced. LWVMN will brief volunteers at the WCCO-TV site.

Member Resources

(Jeanne Matlock, 1128 W. Montana Ave., St. Paul 55108; 651/488-0458; e-mail: jmatlock@pro-ms.net)

The Member Resources Committee is putting final touches on a new booklet of information to be used for orientation of new League members (not recruitment). Each League will receive two free copies and an order form. Per copy price will be determined later, but will be minimal. Hopes are for mid-September publication. Plans also include making the material available online as soon as possible. Watch for this new ORIENTATION material soon!

Kathleen Pickering, Membership Chair, will soon be sending you a sample member RECRUITMENT packet. Watch for this packet in the next few weeks.

BOARD MEMO



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
MINNESOTA

550 Rice Street • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103
Phone 612-224-5445 • Fax 612-290-2145
lwvmn@mtn.org
<http://freenet.msp.mn.us/ip/pol/lwvmn>

AUGUST 1998

79 Years – a Voice for Citizens, a Force for Change

1 800-663-9328

Fax #: 1-651-290-2145

e-mail: lwvmn@mtn.org

Note: the Judicial Study packet materials will be mailed to local Leagues the week of August 31st; the publication *Choosing Minnesota's Judges* will be mailed to every member at about the same time

- August
- 12 – LWVMN/EF Board Meetings; approval of *FutureTrek*
 - 19 – *Presidents' Mailing*
 - Voter Service Committee Meeting; 9:30 a.m.
 - Debates Meeting re Oct. 1st Debate in Brainerd
 - 20 – Martin Grant Candidate Forum Award letters and checks to recipients
 - 26 – Women's Equality Day; Groundbreaking for Minnesota Woman Suffrage Memorial, noon, State Capitol Mall, corner of Constitution and Cedar
 - Luncheon, at MWB, immediately following; see flyer
 - 29 – DFL Gubernatorial Debate at State Fair; WCCO-TV booth; 2:00 p.m.; broadcast at 7:00 p.m., WCCO-TV
 - 31 – Judges Study packets mailed to local Leagues
 - Study mailed to all members
- September
- 31 – Primary *Voter Guide* ready for distribution; mailed to members
 - 1 – Member Resources Committee; 1:00 p.m., MWB
 - 2 – *FutureTrek*; 11:30 a.m., MWB
 - 3 – 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. – reception for Development Director, Jean Tews
 - 7 – Labor Day, LWVMN Office closed
 - 8 – Stans Lecture, "Not Privilege but Justice," Minnesota Historical Society; 7:00 p.m.; see flyer
 - 9 – LWVMN visits Jane Addams School, Neighborhood House, St. Paul; discussion re potential Study Circle project on Immigration
- Election Hotline--HELP!**
- 11 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
 - 12 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; Noon – 6 p.m.
 - 13 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; Noon – 6 p.m.
 - 13 – Election Hotline, WCCO-TV, Mpls; 9 a.m. – Noon; 5-11 p.m.
 - 14 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; 9 a.m.- 10 p.m.
 - 14 – Election Hotline, WCCO-TV; 6 a.m. – 11 p.m.
 - 15 – Election Hotline, WCCO-TV; 6 a.m. – 8 p.m.
 - 15 – Election Hotline, MN Women's Building, St. Paul; 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.
 - 15 – **Primary Election Day**

- 17 – MN Compact Meeting; 8:30 a.m.
23 – Leaders of Today and Tomorrow (LOTT) Rosalie Wahl fundraiser,
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.; College of St. Catherine
- October**
- 1 – Gubernatorial Candidates Debate; Brainerd; noon via MPR, KMSP-TV; rebroadcast by KMSP-TV at 8:00 p.m.; by KTCA at 10:30 p.m.
14 – LWVMN/EF Board Meeting; MWB; 9 a.m. – Noon; lunch with former Board members
16 – Gubernatorial Debate, LWV of Duluth, WDSE-TV; KBJR, MPR will broadcast; 7:00 p.m.
20 – *Presidents' Mailing*
27 – Gubernatorial Debate, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.; Blake School-Hopkins Campus; WCCO-TV, WCCO Radio

ENCLOSURES

(Included in this mailing with the *BOARD MEMO*; sent to LL Presidents and DPM subscribers)

- *Election Hotline sign-up sheets—**HELP!**/Covey
- *Memo from Nominating Committee re 1999-2001 LWVMN Officers and Directors/Cooper
- *News Release re Sept. 8th Minnesota Historical Society Stans Lecture, featuring among others LWVMN President Judy Duffy and Barbara Stuhler, co-author of *Women in Minnesota*
- *Flyer "More Strategies for Success in the Midwest: Toolkits from LWVEF"/Covey, McCoy
- *Minnesota Compact Citizen Checklist for local League Newsletters/Borgen
- *Minnesota Women's Consortium workshop information on the issue of "White Privilege"/Erickson
- *Director of Development Job Description/Erickson, Sawyer
- *"Vote Today" Outdoor Sign Order Form/Covey

BOUQUETS TO

- **Choosing Minnesota's Judges* Study Committee and Co-Chairs Janet Gendler and Helen Palmer for an excellent publication (soon to reach local Leagues and members);
- *Jean Tews, long-time Director of Development for LWVMN/EF, for her steadfast and highly successful fundraising on behalf of our programs and projects; and our best wishes as she moves to a similar position at the Minnesota Humanities Commission!
- *Leaders of Today and Tomorrow (LOTT), whose mission is to inspire the leadership of young women in public life, for becoming a program of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund—Welcome!

At its August 12, 1998, Meeting the LWVMN/EF Boards. . .

- *decided to pursue the possibility of a League of Women Voters Study Circle project focusing on immigration called "Changing Faces, Changing Communities";
- *approved the consensus questions for the Choosing Minnesota's Judges Study;
- *gave final approval to *FutureTrek* goals, objectives and strategies;
- *began planning for the 1999 LWVMN Convention.

Voter Service

(Judy Covey, 611 St. Olaf Ave., Northfield, 55057; 507/645-8920)

Voter Guides: every member will receive a copy of both the Primary and General Election *Voter Guide* at her/his home address.

General Election Voter Guides for High School Seniors: Each local League may have up to five hundred free *Voter Guides* to give to their local High Schools if they request them by September 15th. Please contact your High School Social Studies teachers. Determine the amount needed and get the proper address—(not a P.O.Box). Call Eydie Kargas at 612/473-8610 to reserve your order.

Voter Guides will not be automatically sent to 50% of High School Seniors as we have done in the past. We have not received funding at this time. If funding does come through we will provide 100 *Voter Guides* to each High School in the state.

Please ask for "thank you" notes from teachers to help us get funding for *Voter Guides* two years from now.

HELP! HELP! HELP!

Sign up for the Election Hotline today—either in Minneapolis at WCCO-TV or in St. Paul at the Minnesota Women's Building for the Secretary of State's Election Hotline. Your League will earn \$10 for each individual shift worked. Dates and shifts are enclosed in this mailing. Call Linda Loomis, 612/545-4659. There will be training provided by the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office for the St. Paul site. Participants will be paid an additional \$5.00 – date to be announced. LWVMN will brief volunteers at the WCCO-TV site.

Member Resources

(Jeanne Matlock, 1128 W. Montana Ave., St. Paul 55108; 651/488-0458; e-mail: jmatlock@pro-ms.net)

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

MINNESOTA

550 RICE STREET ST. PAUL, MN 55103 PHONE (612) 224-5445

To: Local League Presidents

From: LWVMN Nominating Committee: Sandy Cooper, LWV Eastern Carver County, Chair;
Carolyn Cushing, LWV ROMA FH; Linda Satorius, LWV Minneapolis

Re: 1999-2001 LWVMN Officers and Directors

Date: August 20, 1998

The LWVMN Nominating Committee will present a slate of officers and directors to the LWVMN Convention April 16-17, 1999. Six officers, eight directors, the chair plus two members of the nominating committee and the chair of the budget committee will be elected by the delegate body. In addition up to eight directors may be appointed by the LWVMN Board.

We are asking your input both as to your own availability and desire to serve on the state board for the next two years, and your recommendations of others with talent and commitment whom you may have noticed during your tenure. Please take a moment to fill out this form and return it to me at the address below.

Name _____ Local League _____

Phone _____

Are you available to serve on the LWVMN Board in the 1999-2001 biennium?

_____ Yes _____ No

Is there a particular portfolio that interests you? _____

Are there other talented individuals whom you have observed during your tenure that you would like to recommend for nomination to the board?

Name _____ LWV of _____

Address _____ Phone: Home: _____

Work: _____

League interest area/position recommended: _____

Name _____ LWV of _____

Address: _____ Phone: Home: _____

Work: _____

League interest area/position recommended: _____

Please Return to: Sandy Cooper

9730 County Road 43

Chaska, MN 55318

urgent!!!

~~~~~

## *Volunteers Needed*

~~~~~

The Primary Election is fast approaching.

*Many opportunities to volunteers still exist at both the
St. Paul and Minneapolis locations.*

*Please consider this opportunity as a fun and easy
way to earn money for your League.*

Call Linda Loomis at 545-4659 to sign-up.

Volunteer Today!!!

LWVMN Election Hotline

Location: St. Paul-
MN Women, s
Bldg.

Friday, September 11

9 am-noon	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1	Susan Weisbrod	
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		

Saturday, September 12

3-6 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		

Friday, September 11

noon-2:30	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1	Susan Weisbrod	
Phone 2	Kay Erickson	
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		

Sunday, September 13

noon-3	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		

Friday, September 11

2:30-5 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		

Sunday, September 13

3-6 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		

Saturday, September 12

noon-3 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		

Monday, September 14

9 - noon	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		

LWVMN Election Hotline

Location: St. Paul-
MN Women, s
Bldg.

Monday, September 14

noon-2:30	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
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Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		
Phone 13		
Phone 14		
Phone 15		
Phone 16		
Phone 17		
Phone 18		
Phone 19		
Phone 20		

Monday, September 14

5-7:30p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		
Phone 13		
Phone 14		
Phone 15		
Phone 16		
Phone 17		
Phone 18		
Phone 19		
Phone 20		

Monday, September 14

2:30-5 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		
Phone 13		
Phone 14		
Phone 15		
Phone 16		
Phone 17		
Phone 18		
Phone 19		
Phone 20		

Monday, September 14

7:30-10p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
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Phone 15		
Phone 16		
Phone 17		
Phone 18		
Phone 19		
Phone 20		

LWVMN Election Hotline

Location: MN Women's
Bldg.

Tuesday, September 15

7-10a.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		

Tuesday, September 15

10 - noon	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1	Susan Weisbrod	
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
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Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		
Phone 13		
Phone 14		
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Phone 16		
Phone 17		
Phone 18		
Phone 19		
Phone 20		

Tuesday, September 15

noon-2:30	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
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Phone 12		
Phone 13		
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Phone 15		
Phone 16		
Phone 17		
Phone 18		
Phone 19		
Phone 20		

Tuesday, September 15

2:30-5p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
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Phone 9		
Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		
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Phone 14		
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Phone 16		
Phone 17		
Phone 18		
Phone 19		
Phone 20		

Tuesday, September 15

5-8p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
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Phone 15		
Phone 16		
Phone 17		
Phone 18		
Phone 19		
Phone 20		

LWVMN Election Hotline

Location: WCCO -
Minneapolis

Sunday, September 13

9:00-noon	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		

Monday, September 14

9:00-noon	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		

Sunday, September 13

5-8 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1	Ardis Wexler	
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
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Phone 9		
Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		

Monday, September 14

noon-2:30	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1	Kay Erickson	
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
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Phone 8		
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Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		

Sunday, September 13

8-11 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
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Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		

Monday, September 14

2:30-5:30	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1	Kay Erickson	
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		

Monday, September 14

6-9 a.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		

Monday, September 14

5:30-8 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1	Ardis Wexler	
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		
Phone 7		
Phone 8		
Phone 9		
Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		

LWVMN Election Hotline

Location: WCCO

Monday, September 14

8-11 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
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Phone 11		
Phone 12		

Tuesday, September 15

2:30-5:30	Volunteer	Affiliation
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Phone 9		
Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		

Tuesday, September 15

6-9 a.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
Phone 2		
Phone 3		
Phone 4		
Phone 5		
Phone 6		

Tuesday, September 15

5:30-8 p.m.	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
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Phone 11		
Phone 12		

Tuesday, September 15

9:00-noon	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
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Phone 6		

Tuesday, September 15

noon-2:30	Volunteer	Affiliation
Phone 1		
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Phone 10		
Phone 11		
Phone 12		



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

M I N N E S O T A

550 RICE STREET ST. PAUL, MN 55103 PHONE (612) 224-5445

To: Local League Presidents
From: Kay Erickson, Chair, Office Management Committee
Sally Sawyer, Executive Director
Re: Job opening on LWVMN office staff
Date: August 20, 1998

Attached please find the job description for the staff position of Director of Development for the League of Women Voters of Minnesota and the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund. Please publicize in your bulletins and pass to any good prospects.

Candidates should have related experience and with specific responsibilities as outlined in the attached job description. Desirable qualities include:

- *strong interpersonal, organizational and administrative skills;
- *ability to work collegially with both volunteers and paid staff;
- *excellent communication skills, both verbal and written;
- *enthusiasm for the League, its mission and programs;
- *networking skills;
- *ability to recognize/seize new funding opportunities; vision.

Deadline for application is October 15, 1998. Please send letter of application and resume to: Office Management Committee, League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 550 Rice St., St. Paul, MN 55103.

Basic Functions: The Director of Development will be responsible for working with the Executive Director, the President of the Board of Directors and the Board Director of Development to plan, structure and implement all fund-raising programs. This includes annual (individuals, corporations, foundations), capital, endowment and planned giving contributions as well as special events. She will also provide advice and support for local Leagues in matters of fund-raising and finance and will handle all local League Education Fund accounts.

Specific responsibilities

Plans and facilitates the identification, screening, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship of gift and grant prospects, either directly or through others

Researches and solicits prospects. Maintains prospect/donor records.

Develops budgets and writes grant proposals for specific projects and for general operations
Coordinates funder contacts, including soliciting grants and in-kind assistance

Responsible for timely acknowledgment and receipt of contributions.

Prepares reports to Board and other development reports

For *Voter*: prepares acknowledgement of donors, planned giving articles, other development articles

Oversees development of fund-raising and Ed Fund publications, including Annual Report, EF brochure (*Make Democracy Work*), planned giving and other brochures

Coordinates planned giving program including identification, solicitation and cultivation of donors, special events (Legacy Circle luncheon) and other Legacy Circle recognition; annual timeline

Staffs special events and donor recognition activities
Staffs Development Committee and other development functions

Identifies and plans special fund raising opportunities

Serves as a resource in long-range planning and in total LWVMN budget-making

Responds to inquiries from local Leagues about development concerns

Serves as administrator of LWVMNEF

- Prepares information for Board meeting agendas
- Develops and processes state League projects through EF approval process
- Maintains records and files for all state Ed Fund projects
- Maintains records of contributions
- Maintains local League financial records
- Maintains local League Ed Fund project proceedings.
 - Routes projects through approval process
 - Maintains file for each local League
- Serves as local League contact for Ed Fund use/transactions
 - Notifies of all deposits and withdrawals
 - Notifies of project approval
- Works with Board Development Chair in
 - Keeping current local League Guidelines for Use of LWVMNEF
 - Advising local leagues on all aspects of fundraising
- Identifies and cultivates members of Advisory Board

***More Strategies for Success in the Midwest:
... Toolkits from LWVEF, "Just in Time!"***

The Voter Service Committee announces additional resources that League members and others may use to support their educational activities--during the candidate meetings this fall in Election '98, and in the post-election weeks as newly-elected public officials organize and take office as public policy makers! These materials will be helpful, too, as we arrange public meetings to share responses received from candidates--win or lose--after the 1998 Elections, as part of the LWVMEducation Fund's candidate survey project!

The LWV Education Fund has developed informational materials and discussion guides that review the history of money in politics, examine the core values and controversies of our political system, and address possible reforms. The toolkits challenge the users to develop their own ideas on money and politics through interactive training sessions. All these tools assist participants to strengthen their capacity to conduct sustainable civic education and citizen participation.

Available for loan from the State League office, provided by the Joyce Foundation of Chicago to the LWVEducation Fund:

Community Leader Materials --real hands-on discussion guides, background facts and figures on how money in politics affects your life (in oh, so many, many ways!) and sample news releases and questions for candidates at candidate meetings!

Destination Democracy: A Guide to Money and Politics is a solutions-centered two-part video and Internet project of the Benton Foundation designed to increase citizen understanding and drive citizen discussion.

Campaign Finance Reform Series--four booklets researched and published by the Brennan Center for Justice, New York University School of Law.

Several joint publications of the LWVEF and the Harwood Group ("People Change the Equation, Money + Politics"), including a glossary and a public voice on money and politics.

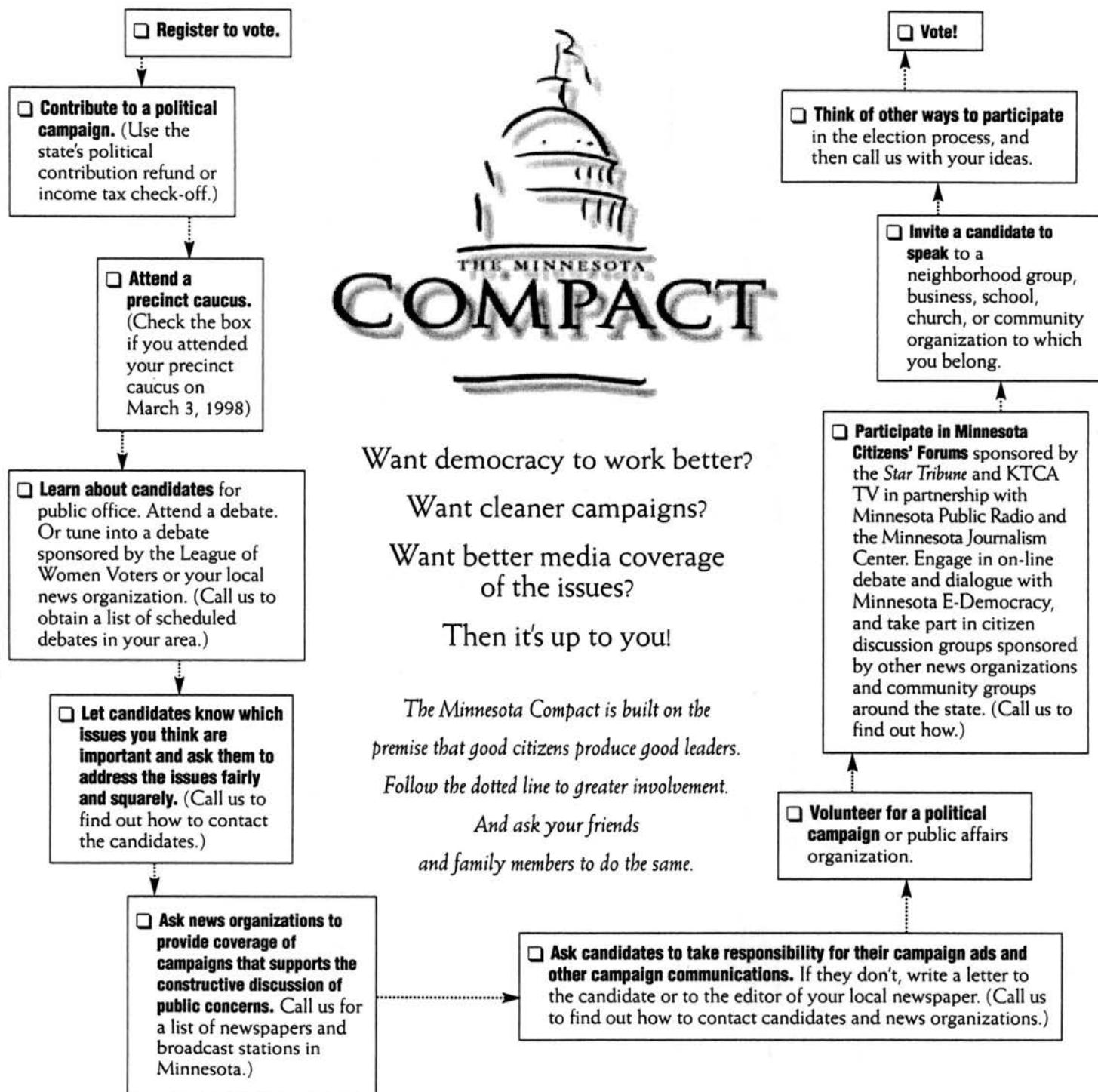
Center for Responsive Politics: Ten Myths about Money in Politics

Please call Mary Ann McCoy, project director, for more information: 651-224-5445 or 1-800-663-9328, for Greater Minnesota.

"Blurb" for post Board meeting mailing to Local League Presidents,
August, 1998

- - submitted by Mary Ann McCoy, 8-17-98

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CHECKLIST ☒



● If you are calling from within the Twin Cities metropolitan area, dial 224-5445. Outside the metro area, call 1-800-663-9328. If you wish, you can also contact us by e-mail (lwvmn@mtn.org). And check out our website (www.bettercampaigns.org/MinnesotaCompact). Information provided will be limited to the campaigns for Governor, state offices and the U.S. House of Representatives since these high-profile races tend to set the tone for the state. However, citizens are urged to be attentive to candidate conduct and media coverage in election campaigns at all levels throughout the state of Minnesota.

The Minnesota Compact is a campaign reform initiative designed to raise the level of political discourse in Minnesota elections. The Compact aims to persuade candidates, interest groups and political parties to minimize attacks and maximize the presentation of issues and qualifications; to strengthen the tradition of substantive, informative debates; to ask news organizations to commit to covering the substance of political campaigns, and to encourage full participation by citizens in the election process.

The Minnesota Compact is a project of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund
550 Rice St., St. Paul, MN 55103 • telephone: (651)224-5445 • fax (651)290-2145

The Compact is associated with the Alliance for Better Campaigns which is funded by a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts.

August 11, 1998

Dear President or Chair:

The MN Women's Consortium is offering our member organizations the opportunity to participate in a series of workshops to deal with the issue of "White Privilege" and its relationship to racism. The objective of these workshops is to help us all become more inclusive organizations by beginning to understand the barriers that tend to keep us mostly white, middle-class women's groups.

The Consortium is able to offer these workshops free of charge because of a generous grant from the Archie D. & Bertha H. Walker Foundation. The workshop facilitators are from the Terry Group with Cathy Polanski as lead facilitator.

The workshops will be held from **5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the MN Women's Building**, 550 Rice St. A lite supper will be served so reservations are needed.

Tuesday, September 22 -- *Murphy Brown/ Oprah Go Politically Correct*: A look at how two television programs dealt with this complicated issue followed by discussion.

Tuesday, October 13 -- *Doing The White Thing Coast to Coast*: A close examination at privilege, responsibility, courage and hope.

Tuesday, November 17 -- *The Monopoly of Life*: an experiential look at the role class and power play in privilege in our everyday lives.

There is no limit on the number of participants from one organization, but we do have some space constraints so let us know as soon as possible if you would like to attend any or all of the workshops, 228-0338.

We believe this is a unique opportunity to seriously examine the role race and privilege play in our personal lives as well as ensuring that our organizations include all women. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

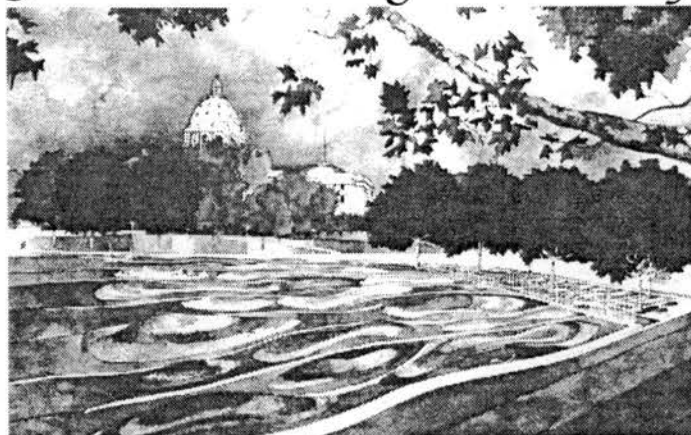
Dede Wolfson

Grace Harkness

Lorraine Hart

Minnesota Woman Suffrage Memorial

Groundbreaking Ceremony



Women's Equality Day
Wednesday, August 26, 1998
12 Noon
Capitol Mall
(Constitution Avenue and Cedar Street)



The League of Women Voters of Minnesota
The Minnesota Women's Consortium
and
The Upper Midwest Women's History Center

*cordially invite you
to a*

Groundbreaking Ceremony
for the
Minnesota Woman Suffrage Memorial

The Honorable Rosalie Wahl, Presiding

RSVP 222-2331



Lunch following the dedication
at the Minnesota Women's Building
550 Rice Street, Saint Paul
Cost: \$8.00 Reservations Required 228-0338

Vote Today Signs remind your neighbors and customers that today is an election day!

The 18" x 24" sign is double-sided, weather resistant and comes with an easy-to-use metal stake. Encourage your community to support voting! They can be used for fund-raising events or as part of a "Get Out the Vote" effort.

10 Pak Only \$60 S/H inc.



League of Women Voters of St. Tammany
Box 8 Covington, LA 70434

For more information, please call

847-0843 626-1019 892-9477

Area Code: 504

Vote Today Outdoor Sign Order Form

Yes, our league wants to support this "Get out the Vote" Campaign!

18" x 24" weather resistant, double-sided, plastic sign with a sturdy metal stake.
Paks of 10 available to all local and state leagues.

_____ @ \$60.00 (S/H Included!) = \$_____

Please send _____ additional color flyers.

SHIPPING INFORMATION

League: _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Shipping Address: _____

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No P.O. Boxes please.

For further information, please call Sandy Stoneberg
@ (504) 847-0843 Fax: (504) 649-7938 or
email Nancy Roe @ zapproe@communique.net.

Please mail your check or money order to:
LWVST P.O. Box 8 Covington, LA 70434

LWVST is an abbreviation of League of Women Voters of St. Tammany.



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS

M I N N E S O T A

550 RICE STREET ST. PAUL, MN 55103 PHONE (612) 224-5445

To: Local League Presidents & Ten Minute Activists
From: Judy Duffy, President
Date: August 20, 1998

Action Alert
Campaign Finance Reform

We have a new window of opportunity!

Please contact Senator Rod Grams and ask his support to invoke cloture and support campaign finance reform in the form of the McCain Feingold bill.

Also thank Senator Paul Wellstone for his continued efforts in support of McCain Feingold.

**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
THE UNITED STATES**

ACTION ALERT

August 14, 1998

TO: State and Local League Presidents and DPM Subscribers

FROM: Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, President, and Eleanor Revelle, Program Chair

**Urgent Grassroots Action Needed!
Ask Your Senators to Support Campaign Finance Reform and Vote for Cloture!**

Members of the House of Representatives took an historic step on August 6 by voting 252 - 179 for the Shays-Meehan campaign finance reform legislation and sending it to the Senate. This was a tremendous victory for the League and our allies. Thank you for all the work that you and your League members did to achieve this milestone!

Now we must redouble our efforts to press the Senate to act. **Please contact your Senators and urge them to vote for campaign finance reform and to support cloture on the legislation. Tell them that the Senate must pass campaign finance reform before they adjourn.**

The Senate is scheduled to return from its summer recess on August 31. From that time until adjournment, expected around October 9, we will have a window for action. Enactment of the campaign finance bill will be a vital step in restoring the American people's faith in the integrity of the electoral process.

Opponents of reform will obstruct and delay. As you know, a majority comprising 52 Senators supported the McCain-Feingold legislation, the Senate companion to Shays-Meehan, when it was considered last year, but reformers did not have the 60 votes that were needed to invoke cloture to overcome the filibuster that blocked the bill.

With House passage of legislation, we will have another opportunity. Supporters of reform will employ a variety of parliamentary moves to force action in the Senate, despite statements by Majority Leader Trent Lott (R MS) that the legislation will not be considered again. We will seek the additional eight votes needed for cloture, as our leaders in the Senate look to other techniques under the rules to overcome the obstructionist tactics of those opposed to reform.

We need to ensure that there is very strong grassroots support for campaign finance reform. Please write and call your Senators. Ask the members of your League to write and call as well. Activate your phone trees. Enlist the support of others in your community through letters to your local paper and to other like-minded civic organization in your community.

Tell your Senators that campaign finance reform is **MUST PASS** legislation. Ask them not to yield to the obstructionist tactics of those who oppose reform. There must be an up-or-down vote on campaign finance.



1730 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20036 • 202-429-1965 • FAX 202-429-0854
World Wide Web: www.lwv.org

The Shays-Meehan bill, as it passed the House, would effectively ban "soft money," require that funding for "sham" issue ads be covered by the same rules that apply to other election activities, strengthen FEC enforcement, and create a commission to study additional ways that the campaign finance system can be improved. The McCain-Feingold bill considered earlier by the Senate was basically the same, except for the provisions related to the study commission. Just as we are working with our Hill leaders on parliamentary tactics, so we are working with them to ensure that substantive details are ironed out so that the bill has the best chance of passage. Now, the key issue really is grassroots pressure in favor of meaningful reform legislation.

Your Senators can be contacted through the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 or through offices in your state (number in your phone book). We must generate a high volume of pro-reform calls and letters.

All Democratic Senators need to hear from their constituents, even though they did vote for cloture before. In addition, the Republican Senators listed below need especially to hear that campaign finance reform must be enacted. Tell them especially that they must vote for cloture. (Those who previously voted for cloture should be thanked, and asked to do so again.)

The successful vote on the Shays-Meehan bill in the House gives us tremendous momentum! We have a real chance to pass campaign finance reform in the Senate and see it signed into law by the President. It is vitally important that we keep up our efforts!

Key Points

- Ask your Senators to support campaign finance reform and to vote for cloture.
- Campaign finance reform must be passed before the Senate adjourns. Senators should not yield to the obstructionist tactics of those who oppose reform.
- Soft money must be banned, funding for sham issue ads must be governed by the same rules as other campaign activities, and enforcement and disclosure must be improved.
- Enactment of the campaign finance bill will be a vital step in restoring the American people's faith in the integrity of the electoral process.
- A majority of the Senate and the American people support campaign finance reform legislation. There must be a fair, up-or-down vote.

For additional background information, see the League's website at <http://www.lwv.org>.

Key Targets (alphabetically by state) (* indicates previously voted for cloture)

John McCain * (AZ), Tim Hutchinson (AR), Ben Nighthorse Campbell (CO), Wayne Allard (CO), Bill Roth (DE), Richard Lugar (IN), Dan Coats (IN), Chuck Grassley (IA), Sam Brownback (KS), Pat Roberts (KS), Olympia Snowe * (ME), Susan Collins * (ME), Kit Bond (MO), John Ashcroft (MO), Spencer Abraham (MI), Chuck Hagel (NB), Judd Gregg (NH), Al D'Amato (NY), Lauch Faircloth (NC), Mike DeWine (OH), Gordon Smith (OR), Arlen Specter * (PA), John Chafee * (RI), Bill Frist (TN), Fred Thompson * (TN), Jim Jeffords * (VT).

(You might also wish to thank those Representatives who voted for Shays-Meehan in the House. Check vote # 405, either under House Roll Call Votes, 105th Congress, at <http://thomas.loc.gov> or through <http://clerkweb.house.gov/cvs/1998/index.asp>.)



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

345 KELLOGG BOULEVARD WEST
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102-1906

NEWS RELEASE

Media contact:

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This news release is available at: www.mnhs.org/histsoc/news

Quick Facts

Event: The 1998 Stans Lecture featuring Arvonne Fraser, Esther Tomljanovich, Ann Wynia, Judy Duffy and Nancy Brataas

Date: Tuesday, Sept. 8, 1998

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Minnesota History Center, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul

Cost: Free

Call for more information: 651/296-6126

ARVONNE FRASER TO LEAD DISTINGUISHED PANEL AT ANNUAL STANS LECTURE

Arvonne Fraser will combine her knowledge of women in politics with the experiences of six other women at the Minnesota History Center's annual Stans Lecture, at 7 p.m. on Sept. 8. The event marks the 79th anniversary of Minnesota's ratification of the 19th Amendment. Admission is free.

Fraser has been a senior fellow at the Humphrey Institute, a DFL candidate for lieutenant governor and a delegate to many world conferences on women's concerns. She will be joined by:

- Esther Tomljanovich, recently retired as a justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court,
- Ann Wynia, president of North Hennepin Community College and former House majority leader and Commissioner of Human Rights,
- Judy Duffy, president of the Minnesota League of Women Voters,
- and Nancy Brataas, a Rochester Republican who was the first woman elected to the state Senate.

MORE

STANS — PAGE TWO

"These women represent both parties and are sterling political characters," Fraser observes. "They're strong, able women who think politically."

The program will begin with introductions by Barbara Stuhler and Gretchen Kreuter, whose book "Women of Minnesota: Selected Biographical Essays" was one of the nation's first serious examinations of the role of women throughout the history of a state. MHS Press first published the book in 1977, and will celebrate its re-issue at the Stans Lecture. It includes a new Stuhler and Kreuter essay on women's accomplishments over the last two decades. A "Women in Minnesota" reception and booksigning will follow the program.

Fraser hopes that the Stans Lecture program will convey to the audience Minnesota's long tradition of female activism in politics. "That tradition far precedes women actually having the vote," she says. "I also hope that the program will convey the idea that women as a group have as much political responsibility as anyone else. Historically, women have complained that they haven't gotten deeply into the process. One can understand why. But we've got the vote, and we'd better be a political factor not just in the voting booth but in the legislative halls."

According to Heather Koop, who manages the Society's public programs, this event was inspired by the realization of how many women have held legislative and constitutional offices in Minnesota. The women on the panel, she notes, "have achieved a number of firsts and held a number of positions in Minnesota government." All 106 living women legislators and five constitutional officers have been invited to attend.

Fraser says she will be disappointed if women in the audience far outnumber men. "I think men still need to understand that women are a political factor, and male politicians need to pay attention to us," she says.

MORE

STANS — PAGE THREE

The Minnesota History Center is at 345 Kellogg Blvd. W. in St. Paul. Auxiliary aids and services are available with advance notice. For more information, call 651/296-6126, 1-800-657-3773 or TTY 651/282-6073.

The Minnesota Historical Society is a non-profit educational and cultural institution established in 1849 to preserve and share Minnesota history. The Society collects, preserves and tells the story of Minnesota's past through museum exhibits, extensive libraries and collections, historic sites, educational programs and book publishing.

The Society's calendar of events is posted on the internet at www.mnhs.org. The web site also has information about the History Center and all of the Society's historic sites. A free guide to historic sites can be ordered by calling 1-888-PAST FUN.

-30-

See information about books related to this lecture on reverse side.

*This lecture is made possible by support from the Maurice Stans Lecture Fund.
Promotional support by the Minnesota Women's Press.*

98/12/8

New Minnesota Historical Society Press books about Minnesota women

Back in the 1970s, Barbara Stuhler was at a publication party for her book "Ten Men of Minnesota and American Foreign Policy" when a woman asked her a provocative question. "She said, 'Why don't you write about 10 women of Minnesota?'" Stuhler recalls. The question struck a chord, and Stuhler was soon in touch with her friend Gretchen Kreuter. Together they rounded up writers for a series of essays about prominent Minnesota women, and in 1977 "Women of Minnesota: Selected Biographical Essays" was published.

This month the book will be re-issued by the Minnesota Historical Society Press. The new edition, which will be \$15.95 in paper, includes an updated chapter on women's accomplishments in the last 20 years, an additional 100 brief biographies of women who have made significant contributions to Minnesota and an updated list of women who have served in the legislature. "Our hope is that there will be a new generation of readers," Stuhler says. "It might be even more important for this newer generation to take a look at what women of the past have done, because their work made it possible for today's women to do all the things they're doing now."

In addition to Stuhler and Kreuter's book, the Press is publishing in September "Shaping My Feminist Life: A Memoir" by Kathleen C. Ridder. Long active with the Minnesota Independent-Republican party, the Urban League, the civil rights movement, and Twin Cities regional government, Ridder candidly examines her motivations, feminism, and determination to work toward social good.

The Press will celebrate the publication of "Shaping My Feminist Life" with a party and booksigning at the History Center on Oct. 6 from 5 to 7 p.m. Reservations recommended; call 651/296-2254. The History Center is at 345 Kellogg Blvd. W. in St. Paul. "Shaping My Feminist Life" is \$24.95 in cloth and \$15.95 in paper.

A complete list of MHS Press books about women's history is accessible through the Society's web site at www.mnhs.org.