



League of Women Voters of Minnesota Records

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CH
PL
C.iles

MAR 26 1984

Senate
State of Minnesota

March 22, 1984

Peggy Lucas
Human Resources Co-Chair
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
555 Wabasha
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

Dear Peggy:

Thank you for your memo of March 16, communicating your concern for emergency housing and support for S.F. 1620 which establishes demonstration programs.

That measure was heard and passed out of the Senate Energy and Housing Committee on Thursday, March 15. It had my support.

Again, thanks for writing.

Sincerely,



Gen Olson
State Senator

GO/rw

COMMITTEES • Education • Local and Urban Government • Energy and Housing

SERVINGS: Deephaven, Eden Prairie (portions of), Excelsior, Greenwood, Long Lake, Minnetonka (portions of), Minnetonka Beach, Minnetrista, Mound, Orono, St. Bonifacius, Shorewood, Spring Park, Tonka Bay and Woodland



*Same letter to
all congressmen &
Senators*

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA • ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 • TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

January 19, 1982

The Honorable James Oberstar ✓
2351 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Oberstar:

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota (LWVMN) has a long-standing position in support of equal housing opportunity. We have worked hard at all levels to support housing for low and moderate income people. As a result we are extremely concerned by the recent recommendations of the Office of Management and Budget that no low income housing units be funded for the 1983 fiscal year and that all new construction and substantial rehabilitation funds be rescinded.

In a time when housing costs are dramatically escalating the need for affordable housing is desperate. We feel strongly that curtailing federal funding at this time will have grave consequences for thousands of low income households. We urge you not to support these drastic cuts.

Sincerely,

Harriette Burkhalter

Harriette Burkhalter, President

Jean Tews

Jean Tews, Action Chair
League of Women Voters of Minnesota

B/T/m

Same letter sent to both Senators and all Representatives
Copies: Burkhalter, Tews, Peggy Lucas, Office File, files of each Sen. and Rep.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA
555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

TO: Members of the House of Representatives
FROM: Mary Ann McCoy, President, League of Women Voters
of Minnesota
RE: H.F. 1810 (authorizing creation of development districts)
May 8, 1973

House File 1810 is on the Consent Calendar to be considered today, May 8. The League of Women Voters wishes to address itself to only one aspect of the bill: that is the part dealing with citizen participation in Section 10.

The League believes that, for development districts that are substantially residential, provisions for citizen input as spelled out in Section 10 are inadequate.

The advisory board's powers as presently provided are simply to advise the governing body on construction and implementation of the district and its maintenance and operation upon completion. In order to be effective, we believe that, in substantially residential districts,

- 1) the advisory board's membership should be restricted to residents and property owners inside the district's boundaries,
- 2) provision should be made to involve the advisory board in the initial and ongoing planning for the development program, and
- 3) provision should be made for the resolution of differences between the advisory board and the planning body.

The League believes that strong citizen input at the planning and priority-setting stages, with final decisions residing in the city's elected officials, proves workable. Such a partnership arrangement can respond to the needs of a neighborhood while keeping in view the long-range goals of the entire city.

In larger cities, citizen input should be organized. In smaller cities, where communications between elected officials and citizens are closer, the actual mechanism for insuring citizen input could well be less formal.

In all cases, however, an advisory board that is truly representative of an affected area should have enough power to make its voice heard even in early stages of planning.

We see citizen participation, then, as a partnership, hopefully with the respective roles and duties of each partner carefully and specifically spelled out. Such a partnership takes more time than would a single decision-making body handing down an already finished plan, but it is our contention that the time is well spent. It will result in a plan which reflects the needs of the area, and citizens who have participated in making it will sell it rather than fight it.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this very important issue.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA
555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Taxes and Tax Laws
FROM: Mary Ann McCoy, President, League of women Voters of Minnesota
RE: S.F. 1322 (authorizing creation of development districts)
May 14, 1973

The League wishes to address itself to only one aspect of the bill: that is Section 10, which deals with citizen participation. We believe that provisions for citizen input spelled out in Section 10 are inadequate.

As Section 10 presently reads, an advisory board's very existence is discretionary. Its powers are simply to advise the governing body on construction construction and implementation of the district and its maintenance and operation upon completion.

In order to be effective, we believe that citizen participation should not be left to the discretion of the governing body. Furthermore, in the case of substantially residential development districts,

- 1) the advisory board's membership should be restricted to residents and property owners in the district,
- 2) the board's powers should include involvement in the planning for the development program, and
- 3) provision should be made for the resolution of differences between the advisory board and the planning body.

Strong citizen input at the planning and priority-setting stages, with final decisions residing in the city's elected officials is workable. Such a partnership arrangement can respond to the needs of a neighborhood while keeping in view the long-range goals of the entire city.

In larger cities, citizen input should be organized. In smaller cities the actual mechanism could well be less formal. In all cases, however, an advisory board that is truly representative of an affected area should have enough power to make its voice heard even in early stages of planning.

Citizen participation, then, is a partnership, hopefully with the respective powers of each partner specifically spelled out. Such a partnership takes more time than would a single decision-making body handing down an already finished plan, but we believe the time is well spent. A plan will result which reflects the needs of the area, and citizens who have participated in making it will sell it rather than fight it.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this very important issue.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102

May 11, 1973

The Hon. George Conzemius
Senate Chambers
St. Paul, Minn. 55155

Dear Sen. Conzemius,

The League requests that you consider an amendment to Section 10 of your development district bill, S.F. 1322. We have been unable to see you, but have left a copy of the amendment with your secretary, and enclose one in this letter.

The amendment's effect is to make Section 10's provisions for citizen participation stronger. Realizing that local circumstances differ widely throughout the state, we have worded the amendment to deal with these differences.

Our main concern is that people living or having business interests in development districts, especially substantially residential ones, have a voice in the planning of those districts.

Rep. Cumiskey, the House author, has now agreed to add this amendment to his bill. In addition, Lyall Schwarzkopf indicates the Minneapolis City Council, for one, finds the amendment acceptable.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Pat Lucas

Mary Rollwagen
Members of Human Resources Committee

enc.



TIME FOR ACTION

HOUSING LEGISLATION

Senate File 1287 (authors K. Hughes, Davies, Popham) and House File 1545 (authors Flakne, Frenzel, Smaby, Norton, Overgaard) were introduced on March 21. Governor LeVander called a special press conference to indicate his strong support of the bill.

The bill extends the fair housing law to cover the sale of single-family, owner-occupied housing which is privately financed (this includes 73% of the housing on the market). This housing provision is exactly in accordance with the League consensus. Governor LeVander, in his January inaugural address, urged the legislature to "include the sale of privately financed housing." Both political parties favor this extension of coverage.

Official Letter: We expect these bills to be heard by the Civil Administration, Judiciary and Finance Committees in the Senate and by the Civil Administration and Appropriations Committees in the House.

This is a general Time for Action. You should write an official letter, encourage members to write letters and build support for this legislation in your community. BEGIN RIGHT NOW!

Official Response: We have included the voting records of Senators and Representatives on past civil rights legislation. Refer also to your legislative interview. Tailor your letter to your representative. Refer to his authorship of present bills and his past support of legislation. Thank him for his efforts in the past. Ask him specifically for his vote in a committee if he is a member and for his vote on the floor. Refer to the green Position VOTER for the League position on housing. Refer to Project Update: Discrimination in Housing if you feel you need additional information. Use your own words in paraphrasing League material.

Inform your members through articles in your bulletins, through general meetings and unit meetings. You might have each member bring stationary to a unit meeting and write letters right there. Encourage members to discuss bills with neighbors and friends.

Community Response: The Minnesota Council on Civil and Human Rights, numerous community Civil Rights Councils, Minnesota Council of Churches, the Republican and Democratic parties, the Council on Religion and Race, ministers and lay church leaders, social agencies and community leaders support this legislation.

In order to have a concentrated effort at this time, you should contact representatives of all of these endorsing groups in your community reminding them that letters to legislators are needed now. Contact your newspaper editors for a favorable editorial. Ask ministers and prominent citizens to write letters to the newspaper. Arrange short talks or announcements for groups you feel will be interested.

Your League lobbyist is actively supporting this legislation at the Capitol. This will not be effective, however, unless we have your push on the local scene to back up our efforts.

LWV of Minn., SOS, U of Minn., Minneapolis, Minn. 55455
March 28, 1967

Eg. of Op.

The LWV of _____
responded to the Time for Action on housing in the
following manner:

Letters:

Community Action:

Return to state office.

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE 1967 CIVIL RIGHTS BILL
(S.F. 1287 H.F. 1545)
BY THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

Minnesota has a tradition! Some 20 years ago Minnesota businesses took special steps to hire minorities on an equal basis. Since 1955, the State Legislature of Minnesota has consistently moved ahead enacting legislation to insure equality of opportunity. Subsequent legislation has strengthened the state's stand for equality. This is the pattern throughout Minnesota's history. Minnesota has and can continue to lead in civil and human rights for all its citizens with the passage of this Bill.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota also has a tradition! Since 1949, the League has studied equality of opportunity. Our early efforts were directed toward securing a Fair Employment Practices Law in 1955. Recently, members of the League studied equality of opportunity in housing and arrived at a consensus supporting the extension of the housing coverage to owner-occupied, single family dwellings which are privately financed. Our housing study in 1966 was done by local Leagues representing every area of the state from International Falls to Albert Lea, Moorhead to Winona, White Bear Lake to Rock County. We have strong member agreement throughout the entire state for the extension of fair housing coverage.

The League supports the additional housing coverage included in this proposed Bill. With the broad base of community which the League represents, this is an indication of widespread acceptance of a stronger anti-discrimination housing law by Minnesotans. This additional coverage includes 73% of the home market, none of which is presently covered. The most effective work in civil rights in Minnesota to date has been with employment in large industries - housing lags behind. The League also supports the provisions of the Bill which provide for more effective procedures and adequate funds to administer our anti-discrimination law.

The Civil Rights Bill which you are considering is another step forward in insuring equality of opportunity to all citizens of the state - thus strengthening the human resources of the State of Minnesota.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA • ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 • TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

February 14, 1980

Barbara Akre, Legislative Action Chair
League of Women Voters of Duluth
Box 3330
Duluth, MN 55803

Dear Barbara:

Thank you for your letter of February 2. I am very sorry that the copy of LWVMN testimony on H.F. 1012 was not included with the TIME FOR ACTION. Perhaps the testimony would have answered some of your questions about the bill. I am sending the testimony to you now.

LWVMN recognizes that the answer to the problem of housing for families is to increase the housing supply. We do support programs which would do so. We have protested HUD budget cuts for housing subsidy programs in letters to President Carter, our congressmen and senators. However, at the same time, we feel something must be done to assure equal access to the housing that does exist.

Representative Mary Murphy voted in favor of H.F. 1012 at its hearing before the House Judiciary Committee February 7.

Sincerely,

Jean Tews
Human Resources Co-chair

T:M
Enclosure

March 26, 1976

To: Members of the Conference Committee on H.F. 1137

From: Jerry Jenkins, President of the League of Women
Voters of Minnesota

Re: H.F. 1137

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota wishes to urge your prompt action on H.F. 1137. We strongly support the basic concept and provisions of this bill.

The housing situation in Minnesota is not improving and in fact the plight of many of our lower income families becomes worse with each passing year. Please do not allow this very important piece of legislation to be overlooked in the closing days of the session.

April 1, 1975

Representative Franklin J. Knoll
Room 289
State Office Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Representative Knoll,

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota wishes to assure you of our continued interest in and support of measures which will help to provide safe and sanitary housing in a suitable environment for all the citizens of Minnesota.

We have supported the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency since its creation and would once again like to be counted among the supporters of your bill H.F. 1137. We would appreciate your including our endorsement in your presentation to the Governmental Operations Committee on Thursday, April 3, 1975.

Should you desire written or oral testimony at a latter date please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann McCoy
President, League of Women Voters of Minnesota

Testimony given to the Housing Subcommittee of the
House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development
By Patricia Lucas, Lobbyist

April 18, 1977

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has worked in support of legislation that would provide an orderly process for both landlord and tenant to resolve their differences since 1969. Many positive steps have been taken by past sessions of the Legislature.

We recognize that the supply of housing in Minnesota is still inadequate. Because of the inadequate supply, free choice in rental housing is not available. As a result, many citizens are living in substandard housing without access to an alternative. Those of minorities and low income are particularly hard hit by this shortage.

The League of Women Voters is of the opinion that while the ultimate solution to this housing shortage is the production of more housing units at prices that make dwellings available to all income levels, there is also the need for legislation to insure that those units that are now available are maintained in a safe and sanitary condition.

It has been our contention that laws provide the possibility of legal redress to an aggrieved citizen and give an avenue for peaceful, orderly resolution of differences. This bill does not increase the responsibility of the landlord; however, should the landlord fail to maintain his property according to his prior agreement with the tenant and minimum standards of health and safety, the tenant would be able to remedy the situation.

We urge your favorable consideration of H.F. 774.

FOUR-STAR BOND

SOUTHWORTH CO. U.S.A.

25% COTTON FIBER

To: Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Pat Lucas, Lobbyist, League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Re: S.F. 848
Date: May 2, 1977

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has worked in support of legislation that would provide an orderly process for both landlord and tenant to resolve their differences since 1969. Many positive steps have been taken by past sessions of the Legislature.

We recognize that the supply of housing in Minnesota is still inadequate. Because of the inadequate supply, free choice in rental housing is not available. As a result, many citizens are living in substandard housing without access to an alternative. Those of minorities and low income are particularly hard hit by this shortage.

The League of Women Voters is of the opinion that while the ultimate solution to this housing shortage is the production of more housing units at prices that make dwellings available to all income levels, there is also the need for legislation to insure that those units that are now available are maintained in a safe and sanitary condition.

It has been our contention that laws provide the possibility of legal redress to an aggrieved citizen and give an avenue for peaceful, orderly resolution of differences. This bill does not increase the responsibility of the landlord; however, should the landlord fail to maintain his property according to his prior agreement with the tenant and minimum standards of health and safety, the tenant would be able to remedy the situation.

We urge your favorable consideration of S.F. 848.

ACTION ALERT
ON HOUSING

To: Local League Presidents, Action Chairmen and Human Resources Chairmen
From: Pat Lucas, Housing Lobbyist
Re: H.F. 1137 - companion to S.F. 1314 (Humphrey, J. Keefe and Willet)

January 15, 1976

Background: This bill was sent to conference committee during the last days of the 1975 session. The House has passed the conference version. The Senate did not act on the conference version. There has been talk, during the interim, of sending the bill back to conference committee and also enlarging the conference committee. It seems that a number of Senators have things that they would like to add. These additions do not deal with the major impact of the bill which is a \$40 million appropriation to be used in various grant and loan funds.

- 1 - \$28 million for rehabilitation loan and grant programs.
- 2 - \$5 million for a revolving loan fund for development of housing for native Americans.
- 3 - \$6.85 million for basic homes programs.
- 4 - \$150,000 for research, design, coordination and marketing of alternative housing for senior citizens.

While the concerns that are being expressed by some of the Senators merit attention, it would be best to take them up in separate legislation either in this session or in 1977.

The housing crisis in Minnesota is getting progressively worse and those that are hardest hit are those in the low and moderate income brackets. We need this legislation now. (Capitol Letter April 7, 1975)

WHAT TO DO: Please contact your Senator and urge his support of H.F. 1137.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
February 1974

Memo for Development Districts
Re: Statewide Development District bills
HF 1810 - SF 1322
To: Local League Presidents
From: Pat Lucas

Local municipal officials are requesting this legislation to enable them to redevelop sections of their cities that are showing signs of blight or are in danger of soon becoming blighted. They are of the opinion that they must have this tool on a statewide basis to avoid the necessity for individual municipalities to seek legislation. Several communities now have this legislation in effect - Red Wing, Duluth, Hopkins, Minneapolis (limited), Robbinsdale, St. Paul.

While local officials now plan to use the development district method in primarily commercial areas, League lobbyists have many concerns about the possible implications for housing and people.

Our concerns are expressed in the two attached statements. Also provided for your information is a summary of the Minneapolis League's recent study.

The major change that we have been requesting is that there be a mandatory requirement for a citizens advisory committee. We are not very popular at this point and are concerned that you know what we are doing and why so that you may respond to questions from your state representatives and senators.

The current status of the bills: HF 1810 has been passed by the House and is in a very different and in our opinion much better form than it started; SF 1322 is out of committee. It has been amended and now contains a stronger citizen advisory board and housing provisions. The bill will most likely end up in a conference committee and there is some doubt that there will be time to resolve the differences.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Taxes and Tax Laws
by Patricia Lucas, Lobbyist, League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Monday, February 18, 1974 - 2:00 PM - Room 15

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has sought the opportunity to testify today in regard to S.F. 1322. We have been aware of needs both in housing supply and in financing services in Minnesota. We realize that solutions to these problems are not simple. We wish to bring some of our concerns to your attention as you consider S.F. 1322.

In order to make the tax increment concept work, it appears that you must take property that has a very low assessed value and through redevelopment, significantly increase the value to pay off the bonds. In raising the value and the intensity of use to which the land is put you could significantly raise the cost of services to the area at the same time that the assessed value is frozen thus limiting the revenues that are possible from this property. The freezing of the assessed value also affects other taxing jurisdictions such as the county, school district and even the state. The increased costs of services are shifted to the total population of the various taxing jurisdictions.

The chief area of League's concern is the effect of this bill on housing for low and moderate income families. We realize that this bill is not designed as a housing measure. However, the League is of the opinion that it has serious housing implications. I have stated earlier that you must significantly increase the value of the property. This could be translated into taking units that now house lower income families and run down businesses and transforming them into higher density, higher cost units and businesses with greater economic potential.

We do not mean to indicate that we feel that this method should not be used at all. We recognize that there is a need for revitalizing many sections of our cities large and small. Because of the situation that now exists at the federal level we can see this approach and other similar approaches being used more extensively by local governments and we are concerned that the citizen living in these areas have a meaningful voice in shaping the future of their neighborhood.

We believe that provisions for citizen input spelled out in Section 10 are inadequate. As Section 10 presently reads, an advisory board's very existence is discretionary. Its powers are simply to advise the governing body on construction and implementation of the district and its maintenance and operation upon completion. It is our opinion that it should be incumbent upon the governing body to assure that the residents and property owners are actively involved in all stages of the redevelopment process.

Furthermore, in the case of substantially residential development districts,

- 1) the advisory board's membership should be restricted to residents and property owners in the district.
- 2) the board's powers should include involvement in planning for the development program, and
- 3) provision should be made for the resolution of differences between the advisory board and the planning body.

Strong citizen input at the planning and priority-setting stages, with final decisions residing in the city's elected officials is workable. Such a partnership arrangement can respond to the needs of a neighborhood while keeping in view the long-range goals of the entire city.

In larger cities, citizen input should be organized. In smaller cities the actual mechanism could well be less formal. In all cases, however, an advisory board that is truly representative of an affected area should have enough power to make its voice heard even in early stages of planning.

Citizen participation, then, is a partnership, hopefully with the respective powers and responsibilities of each partner specifically spelled out. Such a partnership takes more time than would a single decision-making body handing down an already finished plan, but we believe the time is well spent. A plan will result which reflects the needs of the area, and citizens who have participated in making it will sell it rather than fight it.

The Minneapolis League of Women Voters has recently completed a study of the two development districts that presently exist in Minneapolis. I would like your permission to ask Mary Rollwagen from the Minneapolis League to make a brief summary of their findings and conclusions.

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Taxes and Tax Laws
by Mary Rollwagen, Lobbyist, League of Women Voters of Minneapolis

I am Mary Rollwagen; I represent the League of Women Voters of Minneapolis. The Minneapolis League has recently completed a study of the two Development Districts underway in Minneapolis, and of the use of the tax increment method of financing these districts. Our members have concluded that they approve the use of tax increment financing as one tool for redevelopment, but recommend great caution in that use. I'd like to cover three of the findings of our study for you and then the positions the League has adopted pursuant to that study.

I - Implications for housing: While tax increment financing was first proposed in Minneapolis as a tool to revitalize commercial areas, its actual use is in residential or combined commercial-residential areas. The need for greatly increased market value to generate added revenue to pay off the bonds tends to have the following impact on housing:

- a) high-use, high density and high valued structures must prevail to generate the needed increment.
- b) inclusion of low or moderate income housing is impractical, if not impossible without separate funding from sources other than the bonds.
- c) it helps to begin with low density, low-value areas included so boundaries tend to be drawn around residential areas, since commercial property is taxed at a higher rate.
- d) rehabilitation of existing structures is impractical, since not enough increment can be generated; thus sound structures as well as unsound may have to be razed.

The net effect in Minneapolis will be to provide more housing units for middle to upper income people in the city; it will be hard to provide an economic mix within a district, however, and the supply of housing for low and moderate income and elderly people is likely to be diminished. Relocation benefits for displaced people are adequate, but finding new places to live may be impossible within the district and difficult outside it.

II - Proliferation of use of tax increment: The city is not the only agency using tax increment financing. Chapter 462 authorizes any local HRA to use this tool; at the time of our study (November 1973) the Minneapolis HRA was using tax increment financing to partially fund five of its renewal projects. Our Port Authority (MIDC) has also requested the power to use this method. It appears there is a possibility that an excessive amount of market value could be frozen by the several agencies using this tool.

III - The city's use of the tool for redevelopment is hampered by lack of eminent domain powers: Minneapolis has experienced some difficulty in acquiring the land within the districts through negotiated purchase without eminent domain. Acquisition costs are increased, time is increased and tax benefits to acquired businesses are foregone.

The Minneapolis League has adopted several positions with regard to Development Districts from this study. First, we support the use of tax increment financing as one tool for redevelopment, but urge that it be used with caution.

Our concern for caution leads us secondly, to support careful limitations and conditions on its use: the limits on size or market value in the present bill are necessary, especially since the use of tax increment financing by other agencies is not limited. We agree that 30 years should be the maximum period for bonds.

We propose a further condition. League members voted overwhelmingly to support a requirement for the inclusion of low income housing in residential or commercial-residential development districts. We would like to see an amendment to that affect in this bill.

Lastly the League supports granting the power of eminent domain in development districts; at the same time we feel that with the granting of that power should go a strengthening of the powers of a resident board and provision for its input into the planning of the district.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102

To: Members of the House Governmental Operations Committee
Re: H.F.s 3156, 3157 and 3183
From: Pat Lucas, State Human Resources Committee of the
League of Women Voters of Minnesota

February 18, 1974

The League of Women Voters has been actively concerned about the provision of adequate, safe and sanitary housing for all the citizens of Minnesota. We have worked to provide a diversity of housing choice in our individual communities and on measures at the state level which would provide financial assistance to those of low and moderate income to acquire housing or to improve their present housing.

It has long been our belief that we must not only build new housing units but must also use a variety of means to maintain our existing housing stock. Recent actions at the federal level, impoundment, withholding and lack of funds for new units, makes it even more imperative that we take new and innovative steps in Minnesota to preserve and revitalize those units we now have.

The Legislature has been very sympathetic to measures designed to meet the housing needs of its low and moderate income families. Three bills that you are considering are, in our view, excellent measures to enable local units of government themselves or through their Housing and Re-development Authorities to accomplish this task. We commend you on your previous support and urge your favorable consideration of H.F. 3156, H.F. 3157 and H.F. 3183.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102

To: Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives
From: Mary Ann McCoy, President, League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Re: HF 2950, amending the State Housing Finance Agency Act of 1971

March 7, 1974

The LWV has been actively concerned about the provision of adequate, safe and sanitary housing for all the citizens of Minnesota. The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has approximately 5000 members belonging to 69 local Leagues throughout the state. Our members have worked to provide a diversity of housing choice in their individual communities as well as on measures at the state level which would provide financial assistance to those of low and moderate income to acquire housing or to improve their present housing.

It has long been our belief that a variety of means must be employed not only to provide new housing units but also to maintain our existing housing stock. With the present uncertainty in the direction of federal housing programs and the loss of the successful federal loan and grant program, such programs at the state level are of vital importance.

HF 2950 provides the needed assistance for new housing and housing rehabilitation throughout the State. The League strongly supports this bill and wishes to call your attention to our attitudes on the following major provisions:

1. The League supports the raising of the State Housing Finance Agency bonding authority from \$150,000,000 to \$500,000,000. We believe that the mechanism for providing an additional 17,000 to 18,000 low and moderate income housing units in Minnesota during the next three to five years should be supported now by providing the bonding authority in this session.
2. We also support the bonding authority for up to \$100,000,000 for rehabilitation loans and the appropriation of \$1,000,000 for use in securing bonds sold for the rehabilitation loan program. The League further approves of the State Housing Finance Agency's approach to home rehabilitation because the use of the existing expertise in the cities and counties (such as HRA's and private lenders) will keep additional administrative costs to a minimum.



3. We believe that the grant portion of the bill for housing rehabilitation is of vital importance since many low income persons throughout the state would be unable to take advantage of the program on a loan basis only. Until the grant monies are available the rehabilitation loan program will benefit only the moderate income person who can handle the additional monthly costs. Although an appropriation request for grants in the rehabilitation program will not be made until the 1975 session of the Legislature, the League approves the inclusion of Section 7 which establishes the framework for using the grants with the loan program in rehabilitation. With the approval of the mechanism at this time the State Housing Finance Agency will be able to have the procedures for grants and grant-loan combinations ready for implementation when the expected appropriation is approved by the 1975 Legislature.

5. And finally, the addition of two public members to the Agency's Board would, in our opinion, insure broader citizen participation and provide additional input on the housing needs throughout Minnesota.

We urge your favorable consideration of HF 2950. It has long been our belief that a variety of means must be employed to maintain our existing housing stock. With the present uncertainty in the direction of federal housing programs and the loss of the successful federal loan and grant program, such programs at the state level are of vital importance.

HF 2950 provides the needed assistance for new housing and housing rehabilitation throughout the state. The League strongly supports this bill and wishes to call your attention to our attitudes on the following major provisions:

1. The League supports the raising of the State Housing Finance Agency bonding authority from \$100,000,000 to \$200,000,000. We believe that the mechanism for providing an additional \$100,000,000 to the low and moderate income housing units in Minnesota during the next three to five years should be approved now by providing the bonding authority in this session.

2. We also support the bonding authority for up to \$100,000,000 for rehabilitation loans and the appropriation of \$1,000,000 for use in securing bonds sold for the rehabilitation loan program. The League further approves of the State Housing Finance Agency's approach to home rehabilitation because the use of the existing expertise in the office and counties (such as RHA's and private lenders) will keep additional administrative costs to a minimum.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
February 1974

Testimony before Appropriations Committee,
State House of Representatives
by Lorraine Wood, Housing Lobbyist, League of Women Voters of Minnesota
in support of H.F. 2950.
February 22, 1974 - State Office Building

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is in agreement with the state's contention that home rehabilitation is a strong priority on the list of Minnesota's housing needs for rural and suburban areas as well as the inner cities. With the loss of the successful federal loan and grant program for home rehabilitation much of the impetus has been lost, and such a program at the state level is of vital importance.

Although an appropriation request for grants in the rehabilitation program will not be made until the 1975 session of the Legislature, the League approves the inclusion of Section 7 which establishes the framework for using the grants with the loan program in rehabilitation. With the approval of the mechanism at this time the State Housing Finance Agency will be able to have the procedures for grants and grant-loan combinations ready for implementing when such an appropriation is approved by the Legislature.

The League believes that this grant portion of the bill for housing rehabilitation is of vital importance since many low income persons throughout the state would be unable to take advantage of the program on a loan basis only. Until the grant moneys are available the rehabilitation loan program will benefit only the moderate income person who can handle the additional monthly costs.

The League supports the bonding authority for up to \$100,000,000 for rehabilitation loans and the appropriation of \$1,000,000 for use in securing bonds sold for the rehabilitation loan program. The League further approves of the State Housing Finance Agency's approach to home rehabilitation because the use of the existing expertise in the cities and counties (such as HRA's and private lenders) will keep additional administrative costs to a minimum.

The League also supports the raising of the State Housing Finance Agency bonding authority from \$150,000,000 to \$500,000,000. We believe that the mechanism for providing an additional 17,000 to 18,000 low and moderate income housing units in Minnesota during the next three to five years should be supported now by providing the bonding authority in this session.

We urge your approval of these amendments to the State Housing Finance Agency Act of 1971.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
February 1974

Testimony before Appropriations Committee,
Division on State Departments, State House of Representatives
by Lorraine Wood, Housing Lobbyist, League of Women Voters of Minnesota
in support of H.F. 2950.
February 19, 1974 - State Capitol

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is in agreement with the state's contention that home rehabilitation is a strong priority on the list of Minnesota's housing needs for rural and suburban areas as well as the inner cities. With the loss of the successful federal loan and grant program for home rehabilitation much of the impetus has been lost, and such a program at the state level is of vital importance.

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We urge your approval of these amendments to the State Housing Finance Agency Act of 1971.

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Taxes and Tax Laws
by Patricia Lucas, Lobbyist, League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Monday, February 18, 1974 - 2:00 PM - Room 15

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has sought the opportunity to testify today in regard to S.F. 1322. We have been aware of needs both in housing supply and in financing services in Minnesota. We realize that solutions to these problems are not simple. We wish to bring some of our concerns to your attention as you consider S.F. 1322.

In order to make the tax increment concept work, it appears that you must take property that has a very low assessed value and through redevelopment, significantly increase the value to pay off the bonds. In raising the value and the intensity of use to which the land is put you could significantly raise the cost of services to the area at the same time that the assessed value is frozen thus limiting the revenues that are possible from this property. The freezing of the assessed value also affects other taxing jurisdictions such as the county, school district and even the state. The increased costs of services are shifted to the total population of the various taxing jurisdictions.

The chief area of League's concern is the effect of this bill on housing for low and moderate income families. We realize that this bill is not designed as a housing measure. However, the League is of the opinion that it has serious housing implications. I have stated earlier that you must significantly increase the value of the property. This could be translated into taking units that now house lower income families and run down businesses and transforming them into higher density, higher cost units and businesses with greater economic potential.

We do not mean to indicate that we feel that this method should not be used at all. We recognize that there is a need for revitalizing many sections of our cities large and small. Because of the situation that now exists at the federal level we can see this approach and other similar approaches being used more extensively by local governments and we are concerned that the citizen living in these areas have a meaningful voice in shaping the future of their neighborhood.

We believe that provisions for citizen input spelled out in Section 10 are inadequate. As Section 10 presently reads, an advisory board's very existence is discretionary. Its powers are simply to advise the governing body on construction and implementation of the district and its maintenance and operation upon completion. It is our opinion that it should be incumbent upon the governing body to assure that the residents and property owners are actively involved in all stages of the redevelopment process.

Furthermore, in the case of substantially residential development districts,

- 1) the advisory board's membership should be restricted to residents and property owners in the district.
- 2) the board's powers should include involvement in planning for the development program, and
- 3) provision should be made for the resolution of differences between the advisory board and the planning body.

Strong citizen input at the planning and priority-setting stages, with final decisions residing in the city's elected officials is workable. Such a partnership arrangement can respond to the needs of a neighborhood while keeping in view the long-range goals of the entire city.

In larger cities, citizen input should be organized. In smaller cities the actual mechanism could well be less formal. In all cases, however, an advisory board that is truly representative of an affected area should have enough power to make its voice heard even in early stages of planning.

Citizen participation, then, is a partnership, hopefully with the respective powers and responsibilities of each partner specifically spelled out. Such a partnership takes more time than would a single decision-making body handing down an already finished plan, but we believe the time is well spent. A plan will result which reflects the needs of the area, and citizens who have participated in making it will sell it rather than fight it.

The Minneapolis League of Women Voters has recently completed a study of the two development districts that presently exist in Minneapolis. I would like your permission to ask Mary Rollwagen from the Minneapolis League to make a brief summary of their findings and conclusions.

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Taxes and Tax Laws
by Mary Rollwagen, Lobbyist, League of Women Voters of Minneapolis

I am Mary Rollwagen; I represent the League of Women Voters of Minneapolis. The Minneapolis League has recently completed a study of the two Development Districts underway in Minneapolis, and of the use of the tax increment method of financing these districts. Our members have concluded that they approve the use of tax increment financing as one tool for redevelopment, but recommend great caution in that use. I'd like to cover three of the findings of our study for you and then the positions the League has adopted pursuant to that study.

I - Implications for housing: While tax increment financing was first proposed in Minneapolis as a tool to revitalize commercial areas, its actual use is in residential or combined commercial-residential areas. The need for greatly increased market value to generate added revenue to pay off the bonds tends to have the following impact on housing:

- a) high-use, high density and high valued structures must prevail to generate the needed increment.
- b) inclusion of low or moderate income housing is impractical, if not impossible without separate funding from sources other than the bonds.
- c) it helps to begin with low density, low-value areas included so boundaries tend to be drawn around residential areas, since commercial property is taxed at a higher rate.
- d) rehabilitation of existing structures is impractical, since not enough increment can be generated; thus sound structures as well as unsound may have to be razed.

The net effect in Minneapolis will be to provide more housing units for middle to upper income people in the city; it will be hard to provide an economic mix within a district, however, and the supply of housing for low and moderate income and elderly people is likely to be diminished. Relocation benefits for displaced people are adequate, but finding new places to live may be impossible within the district and difficult outside it.

II - Proliferation of use of tax increment: The city is not the only agency using tax increment financing. Chapter 462 authorizes any local HRA to use this tool; at the time of our study (November 1973) the Minneapolis HRA was using tax increment financing to partially fund five of its renewal projects. Our Port Authority (MIDC) has also requested the power to use this method. It appears there is a possibility that an excessive amount of market value could be frozen by the several agencies using this tool.

III - The city's use of the tool for redevelopment is hampered by lack of eminent domain powers: Minneapolis has experienced some difficulty in acquiring the land within the districts through negotiated purchase without eminent domain. Acquisition costs are increased, time is increased and tax benefits to acquired businesses are foregone.

The Minneapolis League has adopted several positions with regard to Development Districts from this study. First, we support the use of tax increment financing as one tool for redevelopment, but urge that it be used with caution.

Our concern for caution leads us secondly, to support careful limitations and conditions on its use: the limits on size or market value in the present bill are necessary, especially since the use of tax increment financing by other agencies is not limited. We agree that 30 years should be the maximum period for bonds.

We propose a further condition. League members voted overwhelmingly to support a requirement for the inclusion of low income housing in residential or commercial-residential development districts. We would like to see an amendment to that effect in this bill.

Lastly the League supports granting the power of eminent domain in development districts; at the same time we feel that with the granting of that power should go a strengthening of the powers of a resident board and provision for its input into the planning of the district.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102

Memo to: Governmental Structures Subcommittee of the
Senate Governmental Operations Committee
From: Mary Ann McCoy, President, League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Re: SF 3222, amending the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Act of 1971

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota supports SF 3222 which expands the existing powers of the State Housing Finance Agency to allow it to make loans and grants for rehabilitation of existing housing.

The League agrees with the State's contention that home rehabilitation is a strong priority on the list of Minnesota's housing needs for rural and suburban areas as well as the inner cities. With the loss of the successful federal loan and grant program for home rehabilitation much of the impetus has been lost, and such a program at the state level is of vital importance.

The proposed addition of two public members to the present Agency Board would also, in our opinion, provide the opportunity to assure outstate involvement in the Agency's activities.

Although an appropriation request for grants in the rehabilitation program will not be made until the 1975 session of the Legislature, the League approves the inclusion of Section 7 which establishes the framework for using the grants with the loan program in rehabilitation. With the approval of the mechanism at this time the State Housing Finance Agency will be able to have the procedures for grants and grant-loan combinations ready for implementing when such an appropriation is approved by the Legislature.

The League believes that this grant portion of the bill for housing rehabilitation is of vital importance since many low income persons throughout the state would be unable to take advantage of the program on a loan basis only. Until the grant moneys are available the rehabilitation loan program will benefit only the moderate income person who can handle the additional monthly costs.

The League supports the bonding authority for up to \$100,000,000 for rehabilitation loans and the appropriation of \$1,000,000 for use in securing bonds sold for the rehabilitation loan program. The League further approves of the State Housing Finance Agency's approach to home rehabilitation because the use of the existing expertise in the cities and counties (such as HRA's and private lenders) will keep additional administrative costs to a minimum.

The League also supports the raising of the State Housing Finance Agency bonding authority from \$150,000,000 to \$500,000,000. We believe that the mechanism for providing an additional 17,000 to 18,000 low and moderate income housing units in Minnesota during the next three to five years should be supported now by providing the bonding authority in this session.

We urge your approval of SF 3222.

February 21, 1974



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102

Memo to: Senate Finance Committee
From: Mary Ann McCoy, President,
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Re: S.F. 3222
March 12, 1974

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is in agreement with the state's contention that home rehabilitation is a strong priority on the list of Minnesota's housing needs for rural and suburban areas as well as the inner cities. With the loss of the successful federal loan and grant program for home rehabilitation much of the impetus has been lost, and such a program at the state level is of vital importance.

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We urge your approval of these amendments to the State Housing Finance Agency Act of 1971.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102

To: Members of the House Governmental Operations Committee
Re: H.F.s 3156, 3157 and 3183
From: Pat Lucas, State Human Resources Committee of the
League of Women Voters of Minnesota

February 18, 1974

The League of Women Voters has been actively concerned about the provision of adequate, safe and sanitary housing for all the citizens of Minnesota. We have worked to provide a diversity of housing choice in our individual communities and on measures at the state level which would provide financial assistance to those of low and moderate income to acquire housing or to improve their present housing.

It has long been our belief that we must not only build new housing units but must also use a variety of means to maintain our existing housing stock. Recent actions at the federal level, impoundment, withholding and lack of funds for new units, makes it even more imperative that we take new and innovative steps in Minnesota to preserve and revitalize those units we now have.

The Legislature has been very sympathetic to measures designed to meet the housing needs of its low and moderate income families. Three bills that you are considering are, in our view, excellent measures to enable local units of government themselves or through their Housing and Re-development Authorities to accomplish this task. We commend you on your previous support and urge your favorable consideration of H.F. 3156, H.F. 3157 and H.F. 3183.



NOV 8 1977

November 7, 1977

The Honorable Rudy Perpich
Governor of the State of Minnesota
130 State Capitol
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Governor Perpich:

The League of Women Voters of Minneapolis supports the concept of job-sharing which you recently proposed. Equal access to employment is one of the League's national positions.

Job sharing and flexible scheduling are both means to this end since they give people with marketable skills and a desire to work the satisfaction of using their skills on the job while also having time for their communities and their families.

The lack of adequate child care makes job sharing and flexible time especially appealing to young couples with children. Shared jobs also provide an opportunity for people who may later have to enter the work force full time to maintain job skills on a part-time basis while their families are young. This would help to alleviate the problems faced by displaced homemakers.

Flexible scheduling and job sharing are timely concepts. It is our hope that your support of these options in employment will be the subject of legislative action.

Sincerely,

Sally Sawyer
President

Joan Higinbotham Kay Kessel
Human Resources Co-Chairmen

SS/JH/KK:gd

File

TIME FOR ACTION

TO: All Local League Presidents and/or Action Chairs
FROM: Jean Tews, LWVMN Human Resources Co-chair
RE: H.F. 1012, Discrimination Against Children in Housing
DATE: February 12, 1980

H.F. 1012 (Clark, Wenzel, M. Sieben, Heinritz, Valen) will amend the Minnesota Human Rights Act to prohibit the practice of denying housing to persons because they have children living with them. Exceptions will be made for a building in which a majority of dwelling units are occupied by or available for occupancy by elderly persons (55 years of age) or any owner-occupied building containing four or fewer dwelling units.

LWVMN testified in favor of such legislation at a hearing before the House Judiciary Law Reform Subcommittee on December 13, 1979. At that time H.F. 1012 and H.F. 888 (Kahn, Byrne, Kroening, Pleasant, Pehler) were under consideration. The two bills have now been combined into a revised version of H.F. 1012, omitting H.F. 888's somewhat controversial inclusion of students as another protected class. LWVMN testified in favor of the revised H.F. 1012 at a hearing of the full House Judiciary Committee February 7th. The bill was passed by the committee 11 to 7. It will be debated on the House floor the week of February 19th. The Senate companion to H.F. 1012 will be introduced soon by Senator Neil Dietrich (DFL, St. Paul).

Please contact your representative to urge her/his support for H.F. 1012 before the House debate the week of February 19th.

Included with this TIME FOR ACTION is a copy of LWVMN testimony on H.F. 1012.

TO: Members of the House of Representatives
FROM: Pamela Berkwitz, President
Jean Tews, Human Resources Chair
RE: House File 1012
DATE: February 26, 1980

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota asks for your support for H.F. 1012 prohibiting discrimination in housing against families with children.

A severe housing shortage now exists in Minnesota. Home ownership is becoming less affordable. The number of rental units is declining, while an increased number of households are looking for a place to live. Many former rental units have been converted to condominiums. Much of the rental housing does not allow families with children.

Discrimination in housing occurs most easily when there is a housing shortage. The discrimination against families with children affects all economic levels but hits hardest those families with lower incomes whose chances of affordable housing are the most limited. Prohibiting children in dwellings can become a tool for excluding minorities, for excluding single parent families, for excluding welfare recipients, and for excluding others who have been traditionally discriminated against in housing.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has a strong position in favor of equal opportunity for housing. We support H.F. 1012, which will prohibit discrimination in housing against families with children. We believe such legislation will be of assistance to families who are unable to find decent affordable housing.

We must all work to protect the basic human right to shelter.
We urge your support for H.F. 1012.

Testimony by Jean Tews, Human Resources Co-chair
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
for
House Judiciary Law Reform Subcommittee
December 13, 1979

A severe housing shortage now exists in Minnesota. Home ownership is becoming less affordable. The number of rental units is declining, while an increased number of households are looking for a place to live. Many former rental units have been converted to condominiums. Much of the rental housing does not allow families with children.

Discrimination in housing occurs most easily when there is a housing shortage. The discrimination against families with children affects all economic levels but hits hardest those families with lower incomes whose chances of affordable housing are the most limited. Prohibiting children in dwellings can become a tool for excluding minorities, for excluding single parent families, for excluding welfare recipients, and for excluding others who have been traditionally discriminated against in housing.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has a strong position in favor of equal opportunity for housing. We support legislation which will prohibit discrimination in housing against families with children. We believe such legislation will be of assistance to families who are unable to find decent affordable housing.

We must all work to protect the basic human right to shelter.

Testimony by Jean Tews, Human Resources Co-chair
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
for
House Judiciary Committee
February 7, 1980

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Testimony by League of Women Voters of Minnesota
in support of SF 1975
for
Senate Judiciary Committee

A severe housing shortage now exists in Minnesota. Home ownership is becoming less affordable. The number of rental units is declining, while an increased number of households are looking for a place to live. Many former rental units have been converted to condominiums. Much of the rental housing does not allow families with children.

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The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has a strong position in favor of equal opportunity for housing. We support SF 1975 which will prohibit discrimination in housing against families with children. We believe such legislation will be of assistance to families who are unable to find decent affordable housing.

We must all work to protect the basic human right to shelter. We urge your support for SF 1975.

Testimony by League of Women Voters of Minnesota
in support of SF 1975

for

Judicial Administration Subcommittee of Senate Judiciary Committee
March 13, 1980

A severe housing shortage now exists in Minnesota. Home ownership is becoming less affordable. The number of rental units is declining, while an increased number of households are looking for a place to live. Many former rental units have been converted to condominiums. Much of the rental housing does not allow families with children.

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The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has a strong position in favor of equal opportunity for housing. We support SF 1975 which will prohibit discrimination in housing against families with children. We believe such legislation will be of assistance to families who are unable to find decent affordable housing.

We must all work to protect the basic human right to shelter. We urge your support for SF 1975.

Testimony by League of Women Voters of Minnesota
in support of SF 1975
for
Senate Judiciary Committee
March 17, 1980

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We must all work to protect the basic human right to shelter. We urge your support for SF 1975.

Testimony by League of Women Voters of Minnesota
in support of HF 1012
for
Senate Finance Committee
March 1980

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The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has a strong position in favor of equal opportunity for housing. We support HF 1012 which will prohibit discrimination in housing against families with children. We believe such legislation will be of assistance to families who are unable to find decent affordable housing.

We must all work to protect the basic human right to shelter. We urge this committee to support HF 1012 by funding additional personnel for Department of Human Rights.

March 26, 1976

To: Members of the Conference Committee on H.F. 1137

From: Jerry Jenkins, President of the League of Women
Voters of Minnesota

Re: H.F. 1137

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota wishes to urge your prompt action on H.F. 1137. We strongly support the basic concept and provisions of this bill.

The housing situation in Minnesota is not improving and in fact the plight of many of our lower income families becomes worse with each passing year. Please do not allow this very important piece of legislation to be overlooked in the closing days of the session.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
February 1974

Memo for Development Districts
Re: Statewide Development District bills
HF 1810 - SF 1322
To: Local League Presidents
From: Pat Lucas

Local municipal officials are requesting this legislation to enable them to redevelop sections of their cities that are showing signs of blight or are in danger of soon becoming blighted. They are of the opinion that they must have this tool on a statewide basis to avoid the necessity for individual municipalities to seek legislation. Several communities now have this legislation in effect - Red Wing, Duluth, Hopkins, Minneapolis (limited), Robbinsdale, St. Paul.

While local officials now plan to use the development district method in primarily commercial areas, League lobbyists have many concerns about the possible implications for housing and people.

Our concerns are expressed in the two attached statements. Also provided for your information is a summary of the Minneapolis League's recent study.

The major change that we have been requesting is that there be a mandatory requirement for a citizens advisory committee. We are not very popular at this point and are concerned that you know what we are doing and why so that you may respond to questions from your state representatives and senators.

The current status of the bills: HF 1810 has been passed by the House and is in a very different and in our opinion much better form than it started; SF 1322 is out of committee. It has been amended and now contains a stronger citizen advisory board and housing provisions. The bill will most likely end up in a conference committee and there is some doubt that there will be time to resolve the differences.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Taxes and Tax Laws
by Patricia Lucas, Lobbyist, League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Monday, February 18, 1974 - 2:00 PM - Room 15

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has sought the opportunity to testify today in regard to S.F. 1322. We have been aware of needs both in housing supply and in financing services in Minnesota. We realize that solutions to these problems are not simple. We wish to bring some of our concerns to your attention as you consider S.F. 1322.

In order to make the tax increment concept work, it appears that you must take property that has a very low assessed value and through redevelopment, significantly increase the value to pay off the bonds. In raising the value and the intensity of use to which the land is put you could significantly raise the cost of services to the area at the same time that the assessed value is frozen thus limiting the revenues that are possible from this property. The freezing of the assessed value also affects other taxing jurisdictions such as the county, school district and even the state. The increased costs of services are shifted to the total population of the various taxing jurisdictions.

The chief area of League's concern is the effect of this bill on housing for low and moderate income families. We realize that this bill is not designed as a housing measure. However, the League is of the opinion that it has serious housing implications. I have stated earlier that you must significantly increase the value of the property. This could be translated into taking units that now house lower income families and run down businesses and transforming them into higher density, higher cost units and businesses with greater economic potential.

We do not mean to indicate that we feel that this method should not be used at all. We recognize that there is a need for revitalizing many sections of our cities large and small. Because of the situation that now exists at the federal level we can see this approach and other similar approaches being used more extensively by local governments and we are concerned that the citizen living in these areas have a meaningful voice in shaping the future of their neighborhood.

We believe that provisions for citizen input spelled out in Section 10 are inadequate. As Section 10 presently reads, an advisory board's very existence is discretionary. Its powers are simply to advise the governing body on construction and implementation of the district and its maintenance and operation upon completion. It is our opinion that it should be incumbent upon the governing body to assure that the residents and property owners are actively involved in all stages of the redevelopment process.

Furthermore, in the case of substantially residential development districts,

- 1) the advisory board's membership should be restricted to residents and property owners in the district.
- 2) the board's powers should include involvement in planning for the development program, and
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Strong citizen input at the planning and priority-setting stages, with final decisions residing in the city's elected officials is workable. Such a partnership arrangement can respond to the needs of a neighborhood while keeping in view the long-range goals of the entire city.

In larger cities, citizen input should be organized. In smaller cities the actual mechanism could well be less formal. In all cases, however, an advisory board that is truly representative of an affected area should have enough power to make its voice heard even in early stages of planning.

Citizen participation, then, is a partnership, hopefully with the respective powers and responsibilities of each partner specifically spelled out. Such a partnership takes more time than would a single decision-making body handing down an already finished plan, but we believe the time is well spent. A plan will result which reflects the needs of the area, and citizens who have participated in making it will sell it rather than fight it.

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by Mary Rollwagen, Lobbyist, League of Women Voters of Minneapolis

I am Mary Rollwagen; I represent the League of Women Voters of Minneapolis. The Minneapolis League has recently completed a study of the two Development Districts underway in Minneapolis, and of the use of the tax increment method of financing these districts. Our members have concluded that they approve the use of tax increment financing as one tool for redevelopment, but recommend great caution in that use. I'd like to cover three of the findings of our study for you and then the positions the League has adopted pursuant to that study.

I - Implications for housing: While tax increment financing was first proposed in Minneapolis as a tool to revitalize commercial areas, its actual use is in residential or combined commercial-residential areas. The need for greatly increased market value to generate added revenue to pay off the bonds tends to have the following impact on housing:

- a) high-use, high density and high valued structures must prevail to generate the needed increment.
- b) inclusion of low or moderate income housing is impractical, if not impossible without separate funding from sources other than the bonds.
- c) it helps to begin with low density, low-value areas included so boundaries tend to be drawn around residential areas, since commercial property is taxed at a higher rate.
- d) rehabilitation of existing structures is impractical, since not enough increment can be generated; thus sound structures as well as unsound may have to be razed.

The net effect in Minneapolis will be to provide more housing units for middle to upper income people in the city; it will be hard to provide an economic mix within a district, however, and the supply of housing for low and moderate income and elderly people is likely to be diminished. Relocation benefits for displaced people are adequate, but finding new places to live may be impossible within the district and difficult outside it.

II - Proliferation of use of tax increment: The city is not the only agency using tax increment financing. Chapter 462 authorizes any local HRA to use this tool; at the time of our study (November 1973) the Minneapolis HRA was using tax increment financing to partially fund five of its renewal projects. Our Port Authority (MIDC) has also requested the power to use this method. It appears there is a possibility that an excessive amount of market value could be frozen by the several agencies using this tool.

III - The city's use of the tool for redevelopment is hampered by lack of eminent domain powers: Minneapolis has experienced some difficulty in acquiring the land within the districts through negotiated purchase without eminent domain. Acquisition costs are increased, time is increased and tax benefits to acquired businesses are foregone.

The Minneapolis League has adopted several positions with regard to Development Districts from this study. First, we support the use of tax increment financing as one tool for redevelopment, but urge that it be used with caution.

Our concern for caution leads us secondly, to support careful limitations and conditions on its use: the limits on size or market value in the present bill are necessary, especially since the use of tax increment financing by other agencies is not limited. We agree that 30 years should be the maximum period for bonds.

We propose a further condition. League members voted overwhelmingly to support a requirement for the inclusion of low income housing in residential or commercial-residential development districts. We would like to see an amendment to that affect in this bill.

Lastly the League supports granting the power of eminent domain in development districts; at the same time we feel that with the granting of that power should go a strengthening of the powers of a resident board and provision for its input into the planning of the district.

Summary of the Development Districts Study

Minneapolis faces problems common to many cities: declining population, loss of middle and upper-middle income families, concentration of others requiring extensive social services, removal of housing, decline of commercial areas and loss of industry. These trends indicate increasing costs for social services, shrinking tax revenues, a decline in the job market and a threat to the social and economic vitality of the city and the entire area, all of which increase the difficulty of attracting conventionally financed development to the city. Another problem is housing, and finding ways to maintain and rehabilitate city neighborhoods. Financing redevelopment is a major problem, with federal categorical grants drying up and revenue sharing uncertain.

As a response to the problems the 1971 Legislature authorized Minneapolis to create two demonstration *development districts*. The Act was intended primarily for commercial redevelopment, but may also be used for residential. It enables the city to assemble land, clear it, and sell it to developers at reasonable cost, while exercising control over planning and design. After public hearings and the Planning Commission's recommendation, the City Council designates the districts, at which time it must present a program for their physical improvement.

Minneapolis' two projects are currently under way. Nicollet-Lake is primarily a commercial development, with a shopping mall, a recreation center and about 600 units of market-rate housing. Loring Park is mainly residential, providing about 2600 units of housing on 26 acres, and including a "finger park" between Loring Park and the Mall.

The key to the Development District Act is *tax increment financing*, a method of local funding, which under present law is used for development districts and Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) projects. The City sells bonds to pay for acquiring land and building public facilities. The *original assessed valuation* of the property is determined, and from the base year until the bonds are paid off, all taxes (to the city, county and school district) are based on that value. Owners within the district pay taxes on the *increasing value* of their property as redevelopment proceeds. The difference (above the original assessed valuation) is used to pay off the bonds.

While the Legislature didn't specify criteria for selecting sites, nor impose limits on their size, for purposes of development it did not grant the city *power of eminent domain*, a power to condemn private property for public use with just compensation to the owner. Many officials believe that without such power it will be almost impossible to carry out the development program.

Relocation of residents and businesses is a major cost of land acquisition. Although present law doesn't require it, Minneapolis has pledged relocation benefits at levels specified in the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Act of 1970, and has contracted with the Minneapolis HRA to do the work. HRA may slow the pace of demolition if its cumulative workload is too great or if there is no possibility for relocation.

Planners face problems with tax increment financing, which depends on greatly increased property values. It is conducive to building high-rise high-density housing for middle to upper income groups. (Market rate housing is taxed at 40%; subsidized housing at 22%.) Development districts tend to be located where valuations are low or declining, removing low-income housing - hard to replace with the funding now available. Further, this method discourages rehabilitation of existing structures.

The Minneapolis Industrial Development Commission (MIDC) is asking legislation to permit it to use the development district idea in attracting industry back to the city. Between 1962 and 1970 Minneapolis lost 176 industrial firms to the suburbs. MIDC has

been working with the Minneapolis HRA, already empowered by state law to use tax increment financing. With the current moratorium on federal funds, HRA has partially funded five urban renewal projects that way and is seeking to finance three industrial projects and one residential-commercial. The City Council must approve all such projects.

Tax increment financing is controversial for many reasons. Of the total tax dollar on Minneapolis property, 34.2% goes to the city, 22.6% to the county and 41.3% to the school district. In development districts valuations are frozen for all taxing jurisdictions, all of which are concerned about their tax base; however, the county and the school district have no vote in the matter.

One controversy arose because the City Council and its Department of Planning and Development have sought the same powers HRA already has; i.e., that it not be limited to two development districts. While some limits on the proportion of land or tax base in development districts will probably be imposed, such limits would not apply to HRA projects. Thus, the Council will have to "watchdog" the amount of valuation frozen.

* The lack of time or boundary limits is of great concern. *Proposed amendments would set a 30 year limit on maturation of bonds, and certain limits on boundaries. It has been suggested that the city must freeze values before demolition starts.*

* There are no criteria for designating a development district; e.g., it need not show blight. It's hard to predict whether a borderline area's value will go up or down. Some suggest waiting until the value is low enough to attract private developers; *others say that isn't really an alternative, since low price doesn't guarantee a buyer. There are advantages to renewing an area before it reaches rock bottom, including the city's control of its own growth pattern.*

* While tax revenues from development districts are frozen, costs of services (police, fire, schools, etc.) may increase. *A debatable question.*

* Tax increment financing means increased reliance on the property tax at a time when the state is seeking alternatives. *However, in the funding of education and welfare there have been major shifts away from the property tax.*

High relocation costs make it seem feasible to draw district boundaries around low density areas, probably removing scarce low-income housing. While benefits are generous, relocation choices for low-income people are limited. Development district housing is geared to middle and upper income groups and toward high density. While long range plans on both city and metro levels favor high density housing near retail centers, there is concern for maintaining existing neighborhoods. Also, security is a serious problem in high density housing, although design is considered a key factor.

The degree of citizen participation has been controversial. The law permits the City Council to *appoint* a citizens advisory board. The LWV of Minneapolis has testified in favor of *mandatory, elected resident councils*, to have input at all stages of planning, with final decisions made by the Council. The LWV of Minnesota plans to suggest an amendment with similar provisions.

The Legislature is considering *statewide development district legislation* that will apply to Minneapolis if passed. Proposed amendments include limiting the amount of land or taxable valuation that could be frozen in development districts, and putting a 30 year limit on the maturation of bonds.

Other possible limitations: requiring the city to pay part of the tax increment to other taxing bodies; or remove completed parcels of land as the project progresses; specifying criteria for sites (presence of blight or restrictions on location); requiring the city to provide replacement housing (to increase the supply of low to moderate income housing); requiring the city to freeze valuations before demolition occurs; requiring approval from the Minneapolis Historical Preservation Commission before buildings of historical or neighborhood importance could be removed.

Citizen Participation

During the 1971 legislative session the League spoke in opposition to several bills which would have provided for referenda in urban renewal projects. These bills did not pass. We believe that the use of referenda would hinder and delay necessary housing development rather than provide positive force for citizen participation in the re-creation of a community. While we opposed these bills, the League recognized the need for a mechanism that would approach urban renewal projects or any public neighborhood re-development from a position point of view and we have been working toward positive measures in this session.

The urban renewal guide lines for "maximum feasible citizen participation" from the Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommend an advisory citizen group but remain very general in details for implementation (e.g. the citizen group need not be elected), and the result has been that cities and HRA's have had considerable latitude in their handling of citizen input. Where some have made a serious effort to involve the citizen, others have given the concept little more than lip service.

The League believes that a system of citizen representation which allows for strong citizen input at the neighborhood planning and priority levels with the final decision in the hand of the municipality's elected officials would prove most workable. Such a partnership arrangement can respond to the needs of the neighborhood while keeping in view the long range planning goals of the entire city.

To make such a partnership between neighborhood and city council workable, it is our opinion that the following procedures are essential.

1. Election by the neighborhood of its representatives (known as a project area committee - PAC)
2. Formal recognition by the elected officials of the PAC
3. Review power for the PAC
4. Funding for the PAC (for office, staff part-time block workers, supplies and outside consultation.)

The intent of such an agreement is to provide continuous input from the neighborhood on goals and priorities and a viable chain of communication between the neighborhood and redevelopment authorities throughout the planning process.

One further step is necessary to insure the PAC's remaining on an equal footing with the redevelopment authority. That is the executing of a contract for settling of differences between the PAC and authority: First - negotiation between the two, and if that fails both bodies to make full presentation of the differing plans before the city council for its decision.

It should be pointed out that the establishment of a PAC is not an automatic miracle worker. The PAC's duty is to fully involve its neighborhood in the establishing of its goals and priorities. If a PAC does not take its responsibility seriously, using block workers to gather input and

establishing committees for planning, it is making its decisions in a vacuum, and is apt to find itself confronted by a number of neighborhood residents who report to the city council that the PAC isn't speaking for them. The effectiveness of a PAC is in direct proportion to the amount of involvement and consensus it has established in its neighborhood.

The League recognizes that PACs are the concern of older and larger communities. Fairly clearly defined neighborhoods which are at least 40% residential with a community of interests (aside from deterioration and housing problems) and a population of from two or three thousand to as high as 25,000 can be served by an elected PAC. Smaller cities with populations of 35,000 or less would be wise to employ a PAC's full resources for planning goals (i.e. neighborhood coordinator, block workers, committees) and hold neighborhood meetings to establish priorities on the types of housing, open space and community facilities.

A delineated PAC structure designed to insure maximum citizen participation in their individual community should be instituted at the first stages of establishing need and planning.

The future of urban renewal as a federal program is uncertain, but housing and redevelopment needs in the cities will remain. If revenue sharing in community development becomes an actuality, the cities will need to apply mechanisms such as we suggest here to achieve workable programs.

At the present time one statewide bill, HF 1050 (Dieterich), has been introduced which would require an elected PAC to have participated in the formulation of the redevelopment plan. This bill further requires that the PAC approve the plan - essentially veto power - and the League does not approve of this negative approach. This bill does not as yet have five authors, nor does it have a Senate companion file. It has been referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations. League lobbyists have been expressing their concerns as outlined above. A similar bill pertaining only to Minneapolis (HF 409 Berglin and SF 382 Spear) has been heard in each house. The Minneapolis LWV testified in support of the general intent of this bill but has indicated their opposition to the veto power and suggested alternatives as outlined above. Should the statewide bills reach the hearing stage, the state lobbyists will be speaking to the concerns that have been expressed above.

Summary Report: Midwest Conference on Non-federal Roles in Rural Housing
Madison, Wisconsin, October 8-10, 1974.
(Based on the full report filed by Charlotte Cooper, LWV of
Freeborn County)

The popularly held notion that substandard housing exists primarily in urban slums and inner city ghettos is laid to rest by the figures:

- two-thirds of the substandard housing in the U. S. is in nonmetropolitan areas.
- the rate of bad housing in rural areas is nearly five times that of the cities.
- in Minnesota, of all units which are substandard, 10.1% are urban, 23.5% are in rural areas.

The conference looked at the issues of how can state and local governments best use federal housing programs, implement them by innovative programs that supplement the federal efforts, maximize the federal contribution, and combine the effort with state resources to do a better job serving the rural poor.

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 does not do a great deal in seeking solutions to housing needs of rural America. One of the major problems is that rural housing has always been treated as the stepchild of urban housing. The new law is a compromise between continuing traditional public housing programs and replacing the special categorical grants by returning housing to the private sector through revenue sharing. Section 8, Lower Income Housing Assistance Program, is the primary program to emerge from the act. It is a modified leasing and rent supplement program, subsidizing rents to owners of rental units occupied by eligible low income families and elderly. However, at least \$75 million remains in new authorization to be spent by public housing agencies for construction of traditional public housing. For the first time there is authorization for operating subsidies for existing public housing. Indian housing authorities have had \$45 million authorized for traditional public housing since it is recognized that leasing programs are not feasible for the Indian population. The only categorical program that has remained in the new law is Section 312 for Rehabilitation Grants. The 1974 law sets up a formula for entitlements of Community Development Funds: 80% to the metropolitan areas; 20% to nonmetropolitan areas. Within metropolitan areas, it is divided on the basis of population, number of people in poverty (OEO standard), and number of overcrowded housing units. (If the formula based on poverty and overcrowding within the metro areas had been applied to the total population, 60% of the funds would have gone to urban areas, 40% to rural needs. Prior to this law, HUD had been allocating 40% of its funds to rural areas.) The whole new Community Development Program was designed with urban areas in mind. The new law attempts to get the community development subsidized housing and ongoing planning programs together as closely as possible. To apply for funds, a community must file a comprehensive community development plan, including a housing assistance plan. The concept is a good one, but the subsidies in the bill are totally inadequate.

In 1968, it was estimated that six million federally subsidized new or rehabilitated housing units would be needed in the next 10 years. The new law provides for one-half million units over the next few years. It mandates that communities define their housing needs and make plans to meet them, but it does not provide nearly adequate federal subsidies to make any realistic dent.

The rural housing situation in Minnesota has been analyzed by the Housing Task Force of the Rural Development Council. One conclusion is that the state has been negligent in really dealing with the federal agencies in terms of allocating subsidy dollars according to a state plan or state strategy for solving housing problems in rural areas. The Minnesota FHA allocation policy does require that half of the resources must be used outside the metropolitan area and has met that objective in the multiple family dwelling program. But no state can appropriate the kind of dollars that are necessary to subsidize rural housing. In Minnesota, 86% of state taxes go back to local governments.

There is not money available for the state to fund the cost of a major subsidy program in housing. It is therefore necessary to get every dime possible out to the federal programs and make sure that their allocation decisions conform to an acceptable state planning strategy for rural areas.

There are opportunities in the new housing act for state agencies to be effective in the areas of:

1. Holding allocating agents of the federal government accountable.
2. Developing cooperative mechanisms with substate planning departments to change the federal allocating and budgeting decisions affecting rural areas so that they have some realistic relationship to existing needs.

Although the new bill goes into effect January 1, 1975, there is continuing need for public advocacy, especially pressure on Congress for appropriations. The law is only the authorization, providing the tools. Members of Congress need positive reinforcement from their constituents in order to act to meet housing needs. The thrust of public support must be twofold - to press for the most favorable interpretation of the law along with the needed appropriations, and secondly, to begin again to work for more and better legislation.

FILE COPY

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
January 1971

To: Presidents and Human Resource Chairmen in the 7 county
Metropolitan Area

From: Mrs. Russell Lucas, Human Resources Chairman

Subject: Housing Chapter of the Metropolitan Development Guide

Enclosed you will find summaries of the Housing Chapter of the Development Guide. Complete copies of this guide may be obtained from the Metropolitan Council, Suite 101, Capitol Square Building, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101. This guide was approved, subject to public hearing, by the Metropolitan Council on Wednesday, December 23, 1970. The public hearing will be on Thursday, February 4th at 7:30 p.m. at the St. Paul Arts and Science Center, 30 E. 10th St. (10th St. exit off #94).

The policies as stated in this housing guide are in line with our National Equal Opportunity in housing position. In fact a majority of them are specifically listed in the Housing Supply Checklist. Using the national position your League may take action in support of this Housing Chapter. You may encourage your members to attend the hearing and to write in support to their Council representatives, your League may make a statement and write as a League in support of this chapter, just to mention a few things you can do. You should make sure that your members are aware of the Housing Chapter and of its contents and of your action.

In the last mailing from the office of the state LWV you received a copy of the testimony that was given on your behalf at a Guide Committee meeting in December. We plan to testify again at the hearing on February 4th. Please inform your members of this testimony.

Enclosures: 2 copies of memo
2 copies of summary
2 copies of Metro Council Districts
1 card - please return to indicate your action.

(Reprinted from Metropolitan Council Summary)

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
Suite 101, Capitol Square Building, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

WHAT IS THE HOUSING CHAPTER OF THE DEVELOPMENT GUIDE?

Improving the quality of life enjoyed by the residents of the seven-county Metropolitan Area is the aim of the Metropolitan Council and its Development Guide. The Housing Chapter, along with the other Guide chapters, will provide guidelines for the social, economic, and physical development of the area.

The Housing Chapter poses in problem format the scope of the Metropolitan housing problem. The text discussion centers around the various constraints faced by the Area in providing an adequate supply of housing at prices and rents people can afford.

All Metropolitan Area families have been affected by the continuous rise in housing costs, but the rise has been more acutely felt by the low and moderate income families. It is mainly to the low-and-moderate income families the Housing Code is addressed. Although the policies have beneficial implications for all income groups.

Housing finance is the first problem discussed in the text. The cost and supply of money problem is perhaps the most severe constraint standing in the way of the development of lower income housing. Active participation by both the public sector--at the federal, state, and metropolitan levels--and the private sector are needed to increase the amount and adequacy of housing funds.

Land, labor, and building materials add significantly to the housing cost picture. Expansion of housing subsidy programs is needed to ensure construction of low-and-moderate income housing.

Building codes which are frequently outdated also add to housing costs by reducing ability to use innovative and cost reducing construction advances. The great variance by community of codes is another problem. Building codes should be updated and made uniform across the Metropolitan Area.

Zoning and subdivision regulations are the main development control tool utilized by local governments. These regulations often result in the exclusion of lower income housing from many parts of the Area. They should be changed to make them less exclusionary and they should be uniform throughout the Area.

The property tax is a part of the actual housing cost to both renter and owner; any inequality in its effect should be eliminated.

A major constraint in meeting the regional housing need is the way in which government operates in the planning, coordinating, and supplying of low-and-moderate income housing. Local agencies are hampered by

bonding and jurisdictional limitations. A metropolitan agency should be established to coordinate and direct the attack on the housing problem; it should also be supplied with adequate funds or funding powers to effectively meet Area's needs.

To improve the social and economic welfare of all residents of the Area positive steps are required to insure all accessibility to Area opportunities. The construction of a variety of housing types for a wide range of income levels in all parts of the Area would accomplish this end.

In the developing parts of the Area it is desirable to have residential development coordinated with the establishment of a full range of community support services and facilities. Housing developments should be included in the staging plans for major diversified centers, utilities, the transportation system, and open space.

Involuntary relocation and security of occupancy are significant problems in the Area, particularly for lower income households. Replacement housing and relocation assistance should be provided before demolition of any housing units. Also efforts should be taken to ensure the continued liveability of housing units.

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
Suite 101, Capitol Square Building, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

POLICIES FROM FINAL DRAFT
HOUSING SECTION
OF THE METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

A. HOUSING FINANCE

1. Encourage the federal government to expand and adequately fund housing programs for low-and-moderate income persons in the Area.
2. Encourage federal and state programs to stimulate and expand housing mortgage financing on a continuous basis.
3. Encourage banks, savings and loan institutions, insurance companies, and state and private investment and pension funds to increase the flow of mortgage money for housing.
4. Encourage programs at the federal, state, and metropolitan level to stimulate and provide funds for low-and-moderate income housing (e.g. issuance of tax exempt bonds, rent supplements, down payment assistance and subsidized variable interest rates).
5. Take all measures required to insure that the area is at all times receptive as possible for the receipt of federal housing funds.

B. OTHER HOUSING COSTS (Land, labor, materials, codes, land use regulations, and property taxes)

6. Develop metropolitan programs to assist in land acquisition, in site development, and in reduction of land cost for developers of low and moderate income housing.
7. Encourage the state legislature to authorize the establishment of a uniform building code based on performance criteria to allow for substantial flexibility in materials and techniques.
8. Encourage the state legislature to charge a State Agency with the responsibility of testing, updating, and reviewing appeals to the uniform building code.
9. Encourage the state legislature to charge a State Agency with the responsibility of testing and certifying manufactured housing and manufactured housing and components.
10. Broaden the concept of residential zoning to provide greater freedom to develop a variety of housing types in all desirable housing locations and further provide for flexibility in design (e.g. planned unit development).
11. Set uniform minimum acoustical, air pollution control, site-screening for residential uses in "buffer" locations.
12. Develop model regional residential zoning, subdivision ordinances and planned unit development ordinances and encourage their adoption by municipalities.

13. Develop local land-use regulations that are conducive to the construction of moderate and low priced housing.
14. Assign a lower priority in the review of requests for federal funds to communities whose plans and ordinances do not provide for low-and-moderate income housing.
15. Develop multi-family housing units, manufactured housing and mobile homes in the same type of location used for conventional single family housing.
16. Tax mobile homes in the same manner as conventional housing and insure fair treatment for mobile home occupants.
17. Encourage efforts to eliminate any inequality in the application of the property tax.
18. Develop tax laws that will encourage home improvements.

C. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF HOUSING PROGRAMS

19. Establish a regional agency under the Metropolitan Council which would:
 - a. Provide assistance in the development of regional housing plan and program and work for its implementation.
 - b. Provide housing and housing subsidies for low and moderate income persons.
 - c. Provide planning, educational, and technical assistance to communities, housing and redevelopment authorities, citizen housing groups, developers and builders.
 - d. Collect and distribute Area-wide housing and housing-related data on a regular basis.
 - e. Coordinate public and private agencies involved in the provision of housing to improve production, efficiency, and consistency with the metropolitan plan.
 - f. Continually investigate innovative techniques to provide housing.

D. DIVERSITY OF HOUSING CHOICE

20. Provide a reasonable diversity of housing types and choice between ownership and rental for income groups in a variety of locations suitable for residential development throughout the Metropolitan area.
21. Provide an open housing market for all persons regardless of race, age, religion, sex or ethnic background.
22. Incorporate low and moderate income level housing into the overall metropolitan housing market, through the use of such programs as scattered site development, leasing or rent supplement.

23. Require high quality building and site design in all residential developments.

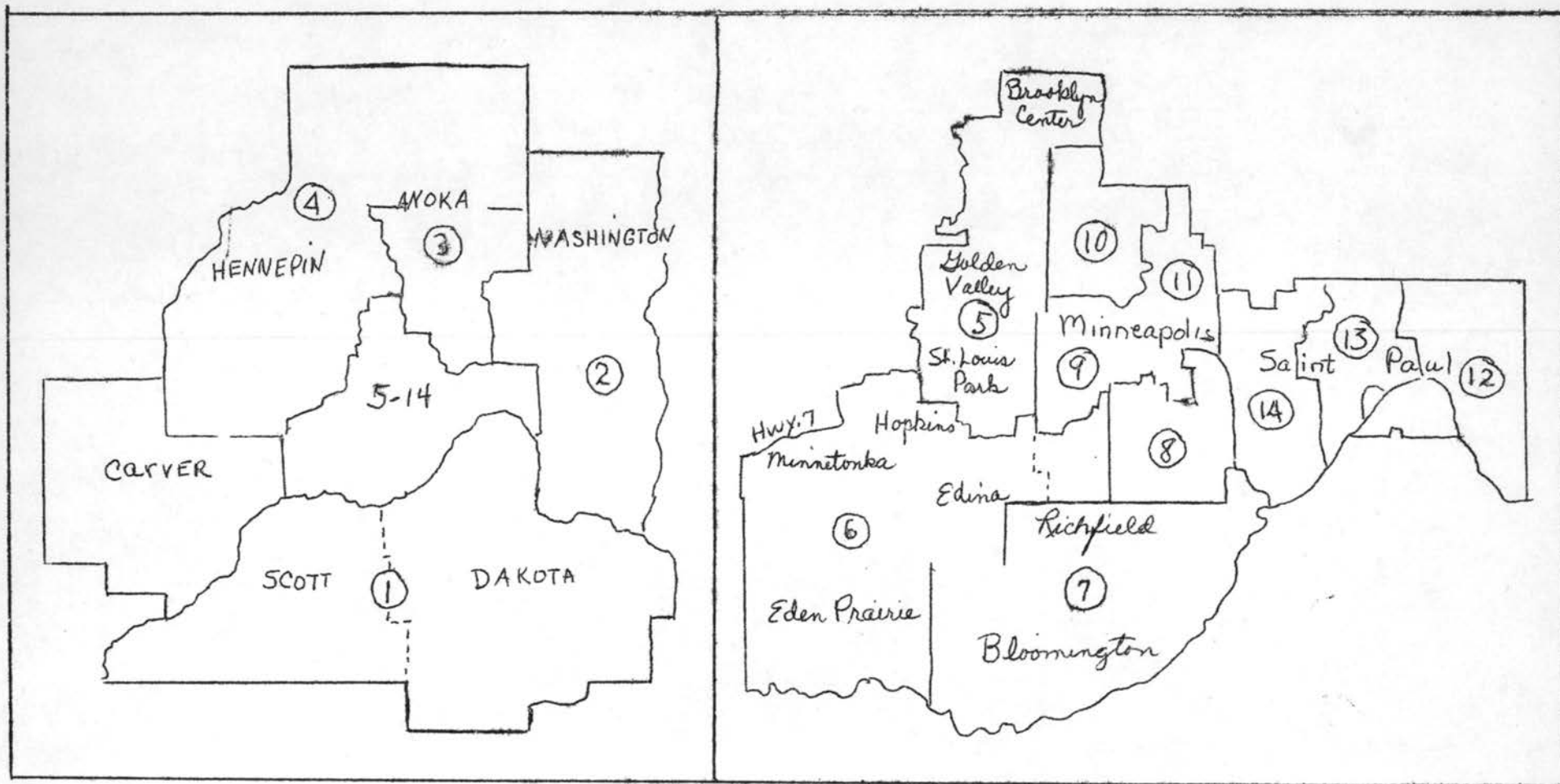
E. COORDINATED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

24. Coordinate the construction of housing with the provision of its necessary support facilities and services.
25. Encourage development of high density, multi-income residences in the proximity of concentrations of economic and employment activity, especially near the major diversified and industrial centers.
26. Respect the natural hydrology and physical features in developing new residential complexes.

F. SECURITY OF OCCUPANCY

27. Provide for suitable and acceptable replacement housing for people before they are removed by housing and redevelopment activities, transportation expansion, and private action.
28. Develop a model housing code based on health, safety and welfare considerations and provide for its local adoption and periodic updating.
29. Develop methods to ensure compliance with housing codes in the Area, and provide adequate levels of public assistance to aid compliance by low-and-moderate income persons.
30. Establish regional training programs for housing and building code inspectors.
31. Support the adoption of legislation to improve the legal rights of tenants regarding housing conditions, retaliatory eviction, and housing code enforcement procedures.

Approved, subject to public hearing, by the Metropolitan Council on Wednesday, December 23, 1970.



METRO COUNCIL
DISTRICTS

LWV of Minn., 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minn. 55102

The LWV of _____
took the following action:

The LWV of _____ did not take action
because:

Please return to: Mrs. Russell Lucas
LWV of Minn., 555 Wabasha
St. Paul, Minn. 55102

Housing Section of Metropolitan Development Guide

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
December 1970

To: Presidents of Hennepin County Leagues

FILE COPY

From: Pat Lucas

Re: Low and moderate income housing in "The Preserve"

Enclosed is an informational sheet on the Minnegasco Housing Campaign and a sample petition for individuals.

Local Leagues may support this type of campaign under our National Housing position.

You may distribute these petitions to your members and the community. Write in support of including all levels of housing in the initial plan for "The Preserve". Write as a League and also testify if you so desire.

For further information and/or copies of the petition call Polly Staunton 545-8017.

MINNEGASCO HOUSING CAMPAIGN

Greater Metropolitan Federation

Minnegasco with Carter & Gertz engineers is developing an 1,100 acre site in Eden Prairie called "The Preserve".

What is "The Preserve" ?

- A ten year development to house a minimum of 15,000 people costing \$200 million when completed
- An approved planned unit development including a diversity of housing types, schools, parks, churches, and commercial properties with opportunities for employment in suburban industry nearby
- BUT.... no specific provisions have been made for housing for people with low or moderate incomes.

Eden Prairie Village Council has approved a resolution urging Minnegasco to provide a wide range of housing costs in "The Preserve". In a highly commendable resolution, the Council urges Minnegasco to "provide for a sufficient range of housing costs which would allow the less economically fortunate, the aged, the poor, and the minorities an opportunity to contribute to our community..."

Civic groups in Eden Prairie have written to Minnegasco and Carter & Gertz about their plans to provide a wide range of housing costs. BUT.... replies have been vague and non-committal.

Minnegasco is able to enter the land development business because of profits from consumers of all economic levels. As an essential utility which operates with minimal competition, these profits enable the company to enter the land development business. Therefore, Minnegasco has a greater responsibility to the general public than most private developers.

(over)

What Can You Do ?

We are asking all people concerned about the housing crisis

- To sign a petition urging Minnegasco to make public some specific plans to provide housing for low and moderate income people in "The Preserve"
- To join the Minnegasco Housing Campaign. For further information contact Sonja Anderson (941-3078), Virginia Gartner (941-1803), John Sauer (825-4724) or Polly Staunton (545-8017).

The Minneapolis Tribune

THE VOICE OF MINNESOTA AND THE UPPER MIDWEST

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VOLUME CIV
NUMBER 182

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1970

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A Housing Protest from the Suburbs

THAT was an unusual protest the other day in downtown Minneapolis—suburban women in hard-hats seeking public support for low-income housing in a Minneapolis Gas Co. development in Eden Prairie. Unusual or not, the protest involves an important issue.

Lack of low- and moderate-income housing in the suburbs has become a major problem in this area. Bloomington, which for too long sought high-income housing for maximum tax returns, now finds that it has too few dwellings within the price range of service workers, city employees and others who work in the community. Much of the housing in Bloomington, in fact, is too expensive for the sons and daughters of existing residents. Some of the other suburbs are in the same position.

Eden Prairie officials are aware of the problem and want to see a broad range of housing in the gas company's "Preserve" development. They say that the company's project concept does call for such housing. But

the key question is whether the developers will include low-income housing in their first-phase plan, yet to be presented. The company has been vague on that point—saying it wants "the widest possible range of housing consistent with development costs."

The reason that the first phase is so important is that failure to provide a range of housing in the beginning will make it even more difficult to do so later. A beginning community of upper-income homeowners could become a built-in pressure group against broadening the home choices in subsequent phases of the project. This sort of pressure is one of the main obstacles to low-income housing now in the developed suburbs.

The "Preserve" development, starting as it is from bare ground and involving a good deal of planning, provides an opportunity for a model community with a wide population mix. The developers have access to a number of federal programs for lower-income housing. The mistakes of the past need not be repeated.

GREATER METROPOLITAN FEDERATION

Minnegasco Housing Campaign

TO: Paul R. Doelz, Chairman of the Board, Minnegasco
Paul W. Kraemer, President, Minnegasco

FROM: A Concerned Consumer

RE: Diversified Housing Costs in "The Preserve" in the Village of Eden
Prairie

Minnegasco is developing a planned community, "The Preserve" in the Village of Eden Prairie on a 1,100 acre site which will house 15,000 people. As one of your consumers, I am concerned that the company provide a wide range of housing costs in "The Preserve."

I would like to call your attention to the following:

1. Minnegasco, an essential utility which operates with minimal competition, makes a profit from all people in the Minneapolis area enabling the company to enter the land development business. It is the company's responsibility to provide a broad spectrum of housing costs for the public.

2. The Eden Prairie Village Council has approved an excellent statement urging Minnegasco to provide a wide range of housing costs in "The Preserve." This is a commendable action which should be heeded and supported.

Therefore, I call upon you as officers of Minnegasco to publicly announce your plans to provide a wide range of housing costs for the public you serve in this suburban development. It is important that you inform the public of your plans to diversify housing costs at an early date.

Name

Address

City

ZIP

December 1970

Minutes

Nov. 30, 1970

Next Meeting:

Tues., Jan. 5, 8:00

St. Paul League Office

Legislative Committee on Housing

Minnesota League of Women Voters

The meeting was called to order by Pat Lucas of the state Board, who, in addition to her position as Item Chairman for the Housing part of our DHR item, is also functioning as Legislative Chairman, under Fran Boyden, for Housing.

Present were: Mesdames Brustad, Knutson and Sasseville, Bloomington; Bratrud, Taylor, Shellum, Crouch, Rollwagen, Mpls.; Waterous, Dieterich, St. Paul; Reindel, Wayzata Area; McCoy, Phillips, Lucas and Jenkins, State Board.

Pat opened the meeting by briefly summing up how this committee came to be. It began with a Housing committee of the Minneapolis League, which determined that it would concentrate on legislative proposals. Finding that little could be accomplished without working through the state Board, and not wishing to duplicate any state League Housing activity, the Minneapolis committee offered its services to Pat Lucas who was working with little help. Since our purpose was to investigate and support legislative action consonant with League positions, it seemed logical that the committee have a broad base of members, including as many as possible from all Leagues. It is hoped that the committee will continue to attract Leaguers from many areas, and any suggestions regarding potentially interested people will be appreciated.

I. Discussion of Legislative Proposals

The purpose of this discussion was to determine what types of proposals would fit under League positions, rather than to pick any specific ones.

- A. Tenants' Rights: The state League has testified in favor of tenants' rights bills at interim Senate subcommittee on Special Projects (Judiciary).
- B. Uniform State Building Code: Support for such legislation would fall under League positions. The committee felt that the League should actively support a bill which would require Uniformity, have modification procedures written in, and which is performance-based. All League members in the state must be informed, probably through a Board Memo, of the need for and probable impact of such legislation.

Katie Sasseville will draft a page or so of background, helped by research from Connie Waterous, Jane Crouch and Mary Rollwagen, and get it to Pat.

- C. State or Regional Housing or Development Authority: Discussion of this complex subject was tabled until the next meeting when we know more about the various proposals and when they will hopefully have been somewhat consolidated.

II. Conference for bill-proposers

It was agreed that the League would hold a get-together for all the various groups and individuals who are planning to propose legislation so that they can meet each other, perhaps work together so that the legislators are not confronted with multiple bills on every subject, each slightly different from the other.

Sue Taylor will chair this activity, with help from Jane Crouch, Helen Reindel, Janet Dieterich and Mary Rollwagen.

The first order of business will be to attempt to interest another group in joint sponsorship of such a conference. A tentative date for what will probably develop into a day's worth would be between Christmas and New Years.

III. Letter and Appointment with Anderson

Pat said that she will go ahead and, using Nancy Shellum's draft and the campaign Housing Position paper, write a letter for Mrs. Janski to sign, requesting an appointment with Governor-elect Anderson. Sue indicated that he would be open to such a meeting. Pat and Mrs. Janski would go and indicate to him our concern that housing be a priority item with him, detail some of our League positions and offer him some background, perhaps as to some of the needs.

IV. Minnegasco's "Preserve" policies

Polly Staunton, from the Greater Metropolitan Federation, reported that Minnegasco has not indicated whether or not they intend to provide a wide range of housing in their development in Eden Prairie. The Eden Prairie Village Council has issued a resolution favoring a wide range, and the Federation is currently conducting a campaign to convince Minnegasco that providing for low and moderate income housing is necessary. She passed out materials and unsigned petition-like letters to be forwarded to the Federation and thence to Minnegasco.

Mary Rollwagen

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
December 1970

HOUSING COMMITTEE

Mrs. Russell Lucas (Pat) 3264 N. Victoria, St. Paul 55112 484-9671

BLOOMINGTON

Mrs. Jan Brustad 9031 - 11th Ave S Bloomington 55420 881-7130
Mrs. Ann Knutson 10716 James Rd, Bloomington 55431 881-1510
Mrs. John Sasseville (Katie) 10619 James Rd, Bloomington 55431 881-9626

BURNSVILLE

Mrs. Burton Fosse (Peggy) 1905 Melody Lane, Burnsville 55378 890-3529

GOLDEN VALLEY

Mrs. Pam Greenman 301 Ardmore Drive, Golden Valley 55422 374-1608

HOPKINS

Mrs. Jane Abts 12921 Melody Lane, Hopkins 55343 938-2541

MINNEAPOLIS

Mrs. John Bratrud (Nancy) 4925 Logan Ave S, Mpls 55409 926-4039
Mrs. John Rollwagen (Mary) 715 W. Minnehaha Pkwy, Mpls 55419 825-5032
Mrs. Robert Taylor (Sue) 5205 Humboldt Ave S, Mpls 55419 827-4857
Mrs. Tom Wilson (Dorothy) 2650 S. 6th St, Mpls 55406 339-6502
Mrs. William Madden (Carol) 129 W. 48th St, Mpls 55409 822-7237
Mrs. Bernard Shellum (Nancy) 5109 Upton Ave S, Mpls 55410 926-1360
Mrs. Ford Crouch (Jane) 814 W. 53rd St, Mpls 55419 824-1540

MINNETONKA

Mrs. John Luhta (Gwen) 3606 Croftview Terrace, Mtna 55343 473-6104

ST. PAUL

Mrs. Fred Waterous (Connie) 792 Fairmount Ave, St. Paul 55105 225-6865
Mrs. Neil Dieterich (Janet) 2263 Priscilla St, St. Paul 55108 644-6815
Mrs. George Young (Billy) 1307 Chelmsford, St. Paul 55108 644-0645
Mrs. Cecil Wood (Lorraine) 904 Lincoln, St. Paul 55105 226-5806

WAYZATA

Mrs. Frederick Reindel (Helen) 15714 Holdridge Rd, Wayzata 55391 473-5838

ST. LOUIS PARK

Lynda A. Johnson 1328 E. Lake St, Apt. 336, Hopkins 55343 935-7661

November 4, 1970

FILE COPY

SUBJECT: Housing Legislation

The following legislative recommendations are made under the Human Resources item of the League of Women Voters of the United States rather than the State Equality of Opportunity Item since the National Office has supplied us with guide lines for action covering housing legislation.

National Human Resources item: Support of equal opportunity in education, employment and housing. Evaluation of further measures to combat poverty and discrimination.

The supply of safe and sanitary housing for families of low and moderate income is dangerously low in Minnesota and particularly in the metropolitan area. A combination of factors makes the situation a critical one. Such factors include tight money, limited federal subsidies and a proliferation of building codes and zoning ordinances.

The Board of the St. Paul League of Women Voters believes the following kinds of legislation would help to alleviate the situation and recommends to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota that it support and work for the passage of such legislation in the 1971 legislature.

1. Creation of a State Housing Development Corporation funded by the Legislature to provide seed monies to non-profit or limited profit corporations or consumer housing cooperatives for the building of housing for low and moderate income families.
 - a. Such a development corporation should also have machinery to provide information, technical services, etc.
 - b. Under such a development corporation should also be included monies for low interest home improvement loans for low and moderate income homeowners - hopefully with protection against increased real estate taxation provided in the law.
2. Uniform State Building Code

To assure the use of up-to-date cost-cutting (but not quality cutting) building methods, including prefabricated structures, a uniform building code to replace the 200 plus separate codes in the state is necessary.

 - a. Under this code the State should serve as a clearing house for code improvement and updating and should provide testing and certification.
 - b. Under this code the State should provide Inspectors to inspect premanufactured housing at the assembly site.

Housing Legislation cont.

3. County Housing Authority

There is need to go beyond municipal boundaries for public housing for families and the elderly - particularly for cities of the first class. Also many smaller municipalities do not have the resources or the will to maintain active housing authorities.

NOTE: There is support among various groups for a regional or metro Housing Authority (and also for a regional or metro development corporation instead of a state development corp., and it is our feeling that the basic need here is for machinery to provide public housing beyond municipal boundaries, and in the case of a development corp., the machinery and seed monies to assist in the building of low and moderate income housing). We feel that bills which we are assured can adequately perform these functions and show the greatest chance for passage should be supported without our quibbling over which segment of government does the work.

Our preference does lie, however, with a County Housing Authority since the smaller communities have an already built-in working arrangement with the county. Also, in the 7 county area, the Metro Council would be able to review all plans and assure coordination in land use.

As to the State development corporation, it is our feeling that such a revolving fund placed in the State planning section could more equitably serve the whole state.

4. Tenants Rights Legislation - to include legislation for tenants' rent withholding.

The St. Paul Board would like to commend the State League for early support of this important legislation.

5. We feel that, along with diversified building codes, local zoning laws are a stumbling block in the production of low and moderate income housing, and some legislative assistance is necessary. One possible approach to implementing the need to provide housing in an integrated (both economic and racial) society could be a Metro Land Use Appeals Board. Such an Appeals Board would be empowered to waive zoning laws where the proposed development is shown to be in accordance with metropolitan objectives.

The total autonomy of municipalities in zoning decisions has had the effect of ghettoizing our society through the exclusion of or separation from other housing of low and moderate income housing. Any legislation which might have a positive integrating effect on new towns and other suburban housing should be looked into.

Presented by

Lorraine B. Wood
(Mrs. Cecil Wood), Urban Renewal
Item Chairman

FILE COPY

A GUIDE FOR LOCAL LEAGUE ACTION ON STATE AND NATIONAL POSITIONS IN HUMAN RESOURCES/EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

September, 1971

LOCAL ACTION WORKSHOPS - HOUSING

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND ON THE STATE HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY ACT

In the National League of Women Voters' Memo, "Housing Supply: A Checklist for Analysis and Action," two of the aims cited call for state and local governments to assist in establishing agencies to aid, promote, coordinate and supplement the housing programs of the federal government and the private sector, and for sufficient funds to be made available by government at all levels for these housing programs.

These objectives might feasibly be attained through the establishment of a State Housing Finance Agency. This Agency would be empowered to provide state resources by selling revenue bonds, which could be combined with federal dollars available for low and moderate income housing in the state. A coordinated agency of this type is valuable because it has the administrative capability to take greater advantage of federal programs, can establish additional priorities for federal funds and can provide financial assistance at a cost below the regular money market. The federal government will be the guarantor of the revenue bonds since only projects eligible for Federal Housing administration mortgage guarantees will be considered.

The authors of the bill hope that the agency will provide safe and sanitary housing for persons of low and moderate income of which there is a shortage at present. Provision of this type of housing could also help to eliminate the congregations of people in these income levels in urban centers or smaller localities, a situation which the League feels limits proper housing options.

In accordance with these goals, the agency is empowered to:

- 1 - make federally insured construction loans to sponsors of low and moderate income housing projects if private lenders cannot meet equal terms,
- 2 - make temporary loans to non-profit sponsors to defray development costs to sponsors of low and moderate income housing projects,
- 3 - help make long term federally insured mortgage loans to sponsors,
- 4 - purchase federally insured securities if the agency determines that proceeds from such securities will be used for low and moderate income housing assistance. (This would provide for individual loans to low income families.)

To enable the agency to carry out the above duties, it may sell bonds and notes, and take necessary actions related to the management of the funds

arising from the sale of these bonds and notes. The agency is also permitted to provide technical assistance, conduct special research studies and housing policy planning, advise the State Investment Board as to which ways are the most effective to use State Investment funds to meet housing needs, and to help develop a Uniform State Building Code. The agency would also encourage the cooperation between the finance agency and regional or area housing authorities as a means to attain adequate housing facilities for low and moderate income persons while looking at total environmental needs.

The property of the State Housing Finance Agency and its income and operation, plus the bonds and notes of the agency shall be tax exempt, but the projects receiving money from the agency will pay taxes. To provide an adequate framework for the agency, the bill established two funds. The Housing Development Fund for the issuance of temporary loans to non-profit sponsors and operation of the agency. The Bond Fund to secure the notes and bonds of the agency and to assure bondholders are provided with all possible guarantees. The monies in the Bond Fund shall be used for payment of principal of the agency's notes and bonds. Monies in excess of this amount may be transferred into the Development Fund. \$250,000 has been requested for the initial establishing and operation of the agency. The recommended authorization of bonds for the agency is \$150 million.

Similar legislation has proved workable in Michigan and West Virginia to date.

WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW?

Inform your community about the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. You may want to emphasize the following positive elements of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency which would aid in the production of low and moderate income housing.

1. Housing costs for low and moderate income families will be lowered since the agency will be able to lend money to sponsors of low and moderate income housing at a lower interest rate than is currently available.
2. A revolving fund for seed money and development loans plus construction financing loans and permanent mortgage loans to sponsors of low and moderate income housing will allow construction of more housing units at a lower cost per unit.
3. The production of scattered-site single family housing for those with low and moderate incomes will be increased by the Agency's power to purchase federal securities from the Government National Mortgage Association (Ginny May). The management of these mortgage portfolios would be the responsibility of private mortgage institutions.

4. Needed technical assistance to the sponsoring organizations will be provided by the agency.
5. You might wish to assist groups interested in sponsoring low and moderate income housing in seeking information and expertise from this agency.

The temporary office for the MHFA is:

Mr. James Solen
Office of Metropolitan and Urban Affairs
State Planning Agency
Capitol Square Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

A brochure describing the work of the agency will be available in November and copies will be sent with the Board mailing.

FILE COPY

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
November, 1971

Attached is a copy of the letter sent to the State Building Code Advisory Committee (9 members); to Herbert Meyer, State Building Inspector; and to Richard L. Brubacher, Commissioner of Administration.

November 18, 1971

Dear

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is vitally concerned about the housing situation in Minnesota. Because of this concern we worked actively during this past legislative session in many areas of housing legislation. One of these areas was uniform state building codes. Since we now have this much-needed legislation, and you will be instrumental in adapting the state codes, we would like to express to you our major concerns.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota believes that the health and safety of Minnesota's citizens is of primary importance. We are also of the opinion that a code based on performance standards will provide these safeguards as well as allow for the use of new materials and methods as they are developed. Utilization of new materials and methods and rapid updating of our code is essential to facilitate the production of housing for all income levels.

The League also is of the opinion that training of inspectors and adequate inspection criteria are essential to the health and safety. Several instances of improper inspection in Sec. 235 housing has pointed up the need for this at all cost levels.

We also wish to take this opportunity to state that we were pleased to observe while attending the recent public hearings on the code, that you share many of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann McCoy
State President
League of Women Voters of Minnesota

FILE COPY

SAMPLE SPEECH ON DISCRIMINATION IN HOUSING:

" DISCRIMINATION IN HOUSING - 1966"

"Housing seems to be the one commodity in the American market that is not freely available on equal terms to everyone who can afford to pay."

This statement was made in 1959 in the report of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Since then the situation has not improved noticeably. Much of the housing market is still unavailable to minorities for reasons unrelated to personal worth or ability to pay.

In the 1960 census, Minnesota's Negro citizens lived primarily in the Twin Cities. With few exceptions they were concentrated in a limited number of census tracts in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Since then, the state has shown concern by proclaiming equal rights, fostering equal opportunity and passing anti-discrimination laws.

In 1957 the legislature declared that practices of discrimination and segregation in housing were against the public policy of the state. In 1961 legislation was passed creating the State Commission Against Discrimination and declaring it to be the public policy of Minnesota to foster equal employment and housing opportunities for all individuals. The housing portion of this law went into effect December 31, 1962. Discriminatory practices in the sale, rental or lease of property are prohibited. It also applies to discrimination in the actions of real estate agents in financing and advertising. The act covers all publicly assisted housing such as that with FHA and VA guaranteed mortgages. Exempted are the rental of rooms in an owner-occupied dwelling; the rental of half of an owner-occupied duplex; and the rental, lease or sale of a one-family dwelling, owner-occupied and privately financed. Administration of the law rests with SCAD - the State Commission Against Discrimination.

The commission method of enforcement gives the law sanction power, but the main emphasis of enforcement is through persuasion. Those running afoul of the law, wittingly or unwittingly, are given the opportunity during confidential investigations and conferences to explain their position. Usually an agreement is reached which is satisfactory to both parties. The main emphasis is to prevent discrimination in the future. If all attempts to reach agreement fail, the ultimate sanction is a trial in district court. This could result in a contempt citation for failure to comply with the court's order.

As of 1964, after two years of functioning under the housing law, SCAD had handled 146 complaints. Race or color accounted for 97% of them. Sixty-eight percent were alleged discriminatory practices in refusal to rent apartments. Of the 146, 52 were satisfactorily concluded, 47 were still in process, 40 were withdrawn or dismissed as having no probable cause, and seven were dismissed due to lack of jurisdiction. In 1965 there was increased use of SCAD with 98 complaints filed. The pattern was similar to previous years.

What have been the results of these efforts of the state to assure equal opportunity in housing? Statistics are limited, but areas of high concentration of minorities still exist; by sight count, public schools have as high as 90% Negro enrollment; suburban areas have almost no minorities.

There are three principle causes of the segregation:
The first is discrimination. In the book, Crisis in Black and White, Charles Silberman points out that while northern whites are perfectly willing to grant Negroes their formal rights as citizens, they have been unwilling, so far, to grant the

social acceptance that would make those rights meaningful. This is shown by such comments as, "They're human beings just like the rest of us, but I wouldn't want one living next door." In the 1964 poll conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Commission, 80% of the whites interviewed preferred to live in all-white neighborhoods.

Second is the poverty of the minority groups. Low income limits the range of housing choices. But median rent paid by whites and non-whites is often the same, as shown by a study done in Chicago. If economics were the only cause of segregation, rental housing should be comparatively unsegregated. In fact, it is not. SCAD's experience with the large number of discrimination complaints involving refusal to rent indicates that more than money is a factor.

Third is by choice of the minority group. There is an element of truth in this statement. However, since many Negroes may face social ostracism if not outright violence when they move into an all-white neighborhood, the choice can hardly be considered a free one. In the same poll conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Commission, 88% of the Negroes in the Twin Cities indicated that they preferred to live in an integrated neighborhood.

For many years the League of Women Voters of Minnesota has been interested in equal opportunity legislation. It has been our belief that when standards of conduct are embodied in the law, an aggrieved citizen has recourse to an orderly effective redress of those grievances. This not only leads to a just solution, but it provides a peaceful method to reach that solution. After studying the current situation, the League feels that more needs to be done to assure fair housing opportunities to all. We favor broadening the coverage of the current housing act to include the sale of privately financed houses which are occupied by their owners.

In a recent survey by the U.S. Department of Commerce of the five-county metropolitan area, 73% of the homes are not covered by the State Act Against Discrimination because they are not financed by either FHA or VA loans. In other portions of the state there is probably even less governmentally assisted financing. It is believed that this means that most housing lies outside of SCAD's jurisdiction. This jeopardizes the faith a citizen can have in the state policy against discrimination.

Seventeen states and numerous cities now have anti-discrimination housing laws. While they vary in their scope and method of enforcement, some do apply to privately financed homes. So far, these laws have been upheld in 20 state court decisions with two declaring them unconstitutional. This issue has not yet come before the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the coming Minnesota legislative session, the League of Women Voters will be working to strengthen the state's fair housing law. We hope you will share our concern that more needs to be done. If you do, talk about it with your neighbors; let your legislators know. Be an active and an effective citizen. The opportunity to obtain decent living and housing accommodations without discrimination is recognized and declared to be a civil right. This our legislature has already said. Let us make it truly meaningful by broadening the housing law.

(This speech can be expanded in many directions:

1. The effects of the current pattern of housing - the ghetto, the blight, the high cost in needed services, the waste of human life, how this contributes to the problem of our cities. Also the effect on the white suburb of not having the chance to know minority peoples.
 2. Greater detail on the present law and the working of SCAD.
 3. Information on the housing ordinances in St. Paul and Minneapolis.
- Take along for distribution the SCAD flyer on the housing law.)

FILE COPY

LWV of Minnesota, State Organization Service, U. of M., Minneapolis, Minn. 55455
September 1965

This is going on Duplicate
President's Mailing

P R O J E C T U P D A T E

Included in this mailing are the Project Update sheets on housing and home rule. These publications are designed to be every member pieces. They are readable and inexpensive - 10¢ each. Your members will be ready to reach a meaningful consensus if they have an opportunity to prepare themselves ahead of time.

Also in this mailing are bibliographies on each item, consensus report forms for each item (one for each of your units) and a discussion outline - remember, your Outlook for Work suggested that both items could be handled at the same meeting. There is an outline for each unit, too.

The local consent and discrimination in housing material is written to give a broad, state-wide picture of these items.

To tie this information in to your community, the item chairman on housing should find out what citizen groups, if any, are active in the field of housing discrimination in your community.

The item chairman on local consent should talk to your municipal officials and legislators to ask their opinions about the local consent provision. Ask them to give you an example of a special law passed for your municipality. Send a copy of your legislators' comments to the state League office; these will be most helpful to the State Action Chairman.

PROJECT UPDATE

Discrimination in Housing

Home Rule

for every member 10¢ each

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

If you are going to talk about Home Rule and Housing the same evening:

Urge your members to read the two publications before the meeting.

We suggest you discuss Home Rule first, and then Housing.

Suggestions for visual aids:

1. Local consent - Perhaps a simple chart showing your council asking your legislator for a special law, his asking the legislature, then the law coming back to the council for approval. Also, a poster giving short definitions of home rule, special legislation, local consent.
2. Housing - Perhaps a map indicating where whites and non-whites live if this is pertinent to your community.

The Discussion Leader should:

1. State the goal of the meeting: To reach consensus on local consent and housing coverage.
2. Remind members that both subjects are the result of Project Update, arising from an experimental single list adopted by the 1965 State Convention with the object of reviewing our old positions.
3. Emphasize that though both subjects are closely related to legislation introduced in the last legislature we do not reach consensus on specific legislation.
4. Explain that from the decisions reached in discussion units throughout the state the state Board will determine a position and that on the basis of this position will evaluate legislation for 1967 as it is proposed or perhaps sponsor a League bill.

Local Consent

The resource leader should review the history of special legislation, the amendment containing the local consent provisions and the problems it is now causing.

Review our present position.

Discussion questions:

1. What is the relationship between the state and the local units of government?
2. Who can and will most effectively solve metropolitan problems?
3. Will local responsibility and home rule be encouraged or not if local consent is modified? If it is abolished?

Discussion Outline, Home Rule and Housing

Housing

The resource leader should summarize the provisions of the 1961 law.

State our present position.

Discussion questions:

1. Why was the 1961 Act written the way it was?
2. What changes do you think have taken place in the last five years in the housing field?
3. What factors other than legislation have been influential in these changes?
4. What changes, if any, do you think should be made in the law?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Problems of Discrimination, 1961, League of Women Voters of Minnesota. This is the basic League publication in this field.

Human Resources: Minnesota's Changing Patterns, League of Women Voters of Minnesota. Contains general background.

Report, 1959, Legislative Interim Commission on Housing Discrimination and Segregation Practices, is in part summarized in Problems of Discrimination and the housing study. Gives background on the thinking of legislators at that time.

Report to the Commission on Civil Rights, 1961, Minnesota State Advisory Committee.

1961 Commission on Civil Rights Report Housing gives the national picture.

Fair Housing Laws, 1964, Housing and Home Finance Agency, gives the texts of all state and municipal fair housing laws.

Anti-discrimination Laws of Minnesota 1962, Walter Mondale, gives the text of all laws through 1961.

Metropolitan Population Study, Part III Characteristics. 1963, Twin Cities Metropolitan Planning Commission. Has a number of interesting charts and graphs based on the 1960 census.

Trends in Housing, National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, a bi-monthly publication, is the most up-to-date source for current legislation.

"Residential Segregation", Karl Taueber, article in Scientific American, August 1965, an account of metropolitan segregation. Very interesting.

AN AMERICAN DILEMMA 1944, Gunnar Myrdal. A classic study of the Negro in America.

REPORT FORM

CONSENSUS ON HOUSING

Unit _____ LWV of _____
(your league)

What exceptions, if any, should there be in the coverage of a fair housing law?

Why?

How strongly did your members feel on this subject?

How many unit meetings were spent on this item?

Were they well attended?

How many members read UPDATE HOUSING before the meeting?

List any non-League material which was used by resource leaders.

Be sure to fill in the "Why?" section. Report areas of agreement and significant minority viewpoint. This information will be of great help to your local and state Boards in trying to plan your future in the 1967 Legislature.

opinion polls. The Minnesota Legislature should lead the way in making residential housing open to all citizens. Advocates of extending coverage to owner-occupied duplexes find the possible invasion of privacy involved in the limited sharing of facilities insufficient justification for continuing this exception.

The inclusion of rooms in owner-occupied one-family dwellings is supported by those who feel that making any exceptions in a civil rights law weakens the whole

principle of nondiscrimination. This extension seems to have the least popular support.

Yet even a single exemption in a civil rights law leaves the implication of second class citizenship. "Housing", wrote author Woody Klein, "is not simply an economic or real estate problem. Housing is people, human beings whose destinies are directed and shaped by the nature of the home in which they are born and in which they grow".

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA
State Organization Service
University of Minnesota — Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

September 1965

Project Update

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

Discrimination in Housing

"Equality of Opportunity:

1. Support of policies to insure equality of opportunity in employment, housing, public accommodations, education and other public services for all citizens.
2. Support of commission administration of anti-discrimination laws.
3. Support of state responsibility for Indian citizens."

League Background

Our Current Agenda item on Equality of Opportunity contain positions reached in previous years' studies and also offers some new areas for exploration. The League's concern for civil rights dates back to 1949 when a broad study of the problems of discrimination led to the support of a fair employment law passed in 1955. In 1961 League members focused attention on housing and the special problems of Minnesota Indians. The 1963 League Convention recommended the continuation of the Indian study. Now in 1965 League members have again expressed concern with the broad spectrum of equality of opportunity and particularly housing.

Our Position: "The League of Women Voters of Minnesota opposes discriminatory practices which deny rights to any citizen on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin or age. Anti-discrimination legislation, enforced by commission administration, is a necessary means of eliminating such discrimination. We support the present legislation regarding employment, real property, and public accommodations as partially achieving this end."

This position includes support of the 1961 law regarding housing. Since the housing law, unlike the laws on employment and public accommodations, was not in operation at the time of our study, it was impossible for League members to reach conclusions on whether or not the housing law was adequate.

The 1965 Legislature: The League supported three bills of a five-bill civil rights package which were offered as amendments to the State Act Against Discrimination. The League-supported bills passed. These bills extend coverage of the employment provisions of the law to include employers with eight or less employees, place the enforcement of our public accommodations law under the State Commission Against Discrimination, and streamline procedures of the Commission.

On two bills the League had no position. One dealt with the revocation of licenses for business or labor

organizations which continued discriminatory practices. The second would have extended the coverage of the housing law. Neither of these bills passed.

Introduction

In employment and earnings, education, use of public facilities and in voting rights, minority groups have been making measurable progress toward equality. Housing and residence, however, have seemed more resistant to demands for equal treatment. The purpose of this study will be to examine the possibility of extending the coverage of the housing provisions in the State Act Against Discrimination. What exceptions, if any, should there be in a fair housing law? Before attempting to answer this question it is necessary to review the pattern of discrimination, its causes, and trends in fair housing legislation.

The Pattern of Discrimination

There is no need to further document the existence of residential segregation. It is found in Northern and Southern cities, in small towns, and in rural areas. All minority groups, Orientals, Indians, Mexicans, Negroes and Jews, have been the objects of discrimination. The problem today is most acute for Negroes in large metropolitan areas. The Negro migration from the rural South began before the first World War and has continued unabated for fifty years. Negroes have found themselves forced into ever-growing belts in central cities. Minnesota has received only a small portion of the migration, but the pattern is the same. In 1960 Minnesota had 22,000 Negroes with all but 2,000 living in the Twin City areas. Ninety percent of the metropolitan Negroes were found in either Saint Paul or Minneapolis and within the cities were concentrated in three areas in Minneapolis and one in Saint Paul. In Duluth and Rochester Negroes are more generally dispersed throughout the population.

Between 1950 and 1960 the Negro population of the Twin Cities area increased by 8,000. Most of the increase occurred in or adjacent to areas which already had a substantial number of Negroes. However, there was a moderate dispersion into suburban areas. Civil rights leaders feel that the increasing urbanization of Negroes is producing bigger and bigger "black ghettos" and that segregation is deepening. Other observers feel that there has been some progress in dispersion in the last ten years and that there are a number of positive factors which will reverse the historical trend. Factors cited are changing attitudes among whites, increasing opportunities for employment and higher incomes among Negroes, state and local laws on fair

housing, increasing activity on the part of churches and citizens groups, and the increased availability of housing in general.

The Causes

Three principal causes of segregation in housing are:

1. Choice of the minority groups,
2. Poverty of the minority groups, and
3. Discrimination.

Attitudes on fair housing legislation are influenced by the relative importance assigned to these causes.

Choice: It is often suggested that Negroes prefer to live in Negro neighborhoods. Since there are no actual legal barriers to Negroes moving anywhere they please, there is certainly an element of truth in this statement. However, as Gunnar Myrdal suggested in *AN AMERICAN DILEMMA*, the choice can hardly be considered a free one since Negroes may face social ostracism if not outright violence as they move into all-white neighborhoods. In a poll conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Commission in 1964, 88% of the Negroes in the Twin Cities indicated that they preferred to live in an integrated neighborhood.

Poverty: To the extent that Negroes are unable to afford houses in certain areas, segregation can be attributed to economic factors rather than discrimination. Among non-whites, the unemployment rate has been substantially higher than in the white population. Studies have shown that the median income for the Negro is substantially below that of his white counterpart; this holds true even for the college graduate. Opponents of fair housing legislation frequently cite this cause, arguing that efforts to improve the purchasing power of minority groups will in the long run be more effective than legislation. The same factor is also considered important by civil rights proponents. Eugene Wolfe, director of the Council for Civic Unity in San Francisco, cited the cost factor as crucial in the dispersion of Negroes to the suburbs. He pointed out that Negro population fell dramatically in outer suburbia of the Bay area as homes increased in cost, and he urged fair-housing groups to work actively for more moderately priced housing in suburban communities.

But economic factors can supply only part of the answer. Detailed studies by Karl Taeuber, a sociologist at the University of Wisconsin, point to several inconsistencies. In Chicago, Illinois, the median rent paid by whites and non-whites was the same so that if economics were the only cause, rental housing should be comparatively unsegregated. In fact, it is not. And again in no city do non-whites with high incomes live randomly scattered throughout the same areas as high-income whites.

Discrimination: In the past many forces have operated to maintain segregation. Government agencies, real estate brokers, financial institutions, property owners and the minority groups, themselves, all contributed to the preservation of segregated housing. Discrimination as a matter of law ended in 1948 when the United States Supreme Court held restrictive covenants unconstitutional. Since the middle of World War II, the federal government has become increasingly concerned with the housing problems of minority groups. Agencies such as the FHA, which were initially in-

involved in protecting neighborhoods against incompatible racial and social groups, have rewritten their policies several times and now encourage equal treatment of all citizens. Discrimination is a matter of attitude on the part of whites. Even in states with the broadest of fair housing laws it continues in subtle forms.

It is clear that the trend today in America is toward religious and racial tolerance. A number of studies indicate that prejudice in all forms is on the decrease. A Gallup Poll in 1965 asked whites what they would do if Negroes moved in next door. Eight out of ten Americans said they would do nothing. Even among Southerners, only 23% of the people questioned indicated that they would move. A majority of Americans now seem to accept the fact that integration is inevitable. An increasing number are actively promoting integration through membership in fair housing groups sponsored by churches, communities, and governmental officials. Minnesota now has 22 Citizens Committees which are concerned with ending discrimination.

Yet it is equally clear that many whites do not want Negroes as neighbors. 80% of whites who were interviewed in 1964 by the Metropolitan Planning Commission stated that they preferred all-white neighborhoods. In California public opposition to fair housing laws was shown when an amendment to the state constitution repealing the existing law and preventing the future adoption of such legislation was passed by a two to one majority. Fair Housing Acts have also been defeated by referendum in Akron, Berkeley, Seattle, Tacoma and Detroit.

Fair Housing Legislation

In recent years state and local governments have endorsed legislation as a means of ending discrimination. There has been a movement toward a single state agency to administer all such laws, to receive and investigate complaints, to emphasize education and mediation, and with enforcement powers through the courts where conciliation fails.

The coverage of state housing laws falls into three general categories:

1. States which regulate only low-rent public housing;
2. States which regulate private housing which is financed by VA or FHA loans; and
3. States which regulate housing which is privately financed.

The pattern has been for states to start with narrow coverage and later expand it. In 1955 New York State was the pioneer in regulating publicly financed private housing. In 1959 state legislatures in Colorado, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Oregon passed laws prohibiting discrimination in privately financed housing as well. In 1965 Indiana, Rhode Island and Maine adopted legislation regulating the private market, bringing the total number of states with this form of coverage to 15. In other states such as Wisconsin, Illinois and Maryland, fair housing legislation was defeated. During 1965 most legislatures were debating and accepting or rejecting laws with broad coverage, excluding only rooms in owner-occupied dwellings and perhaps owner-occupied duplexes.

Besides this type of legislation, at least three states regulate the activities of real estate brokers. Non-discrimination is enforced through the licensing procedure.

Congress has not taken specific action in the field of fair housing, although the 1949 Housing Act set as a goal, "A decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family." A number of succeeding acts have been designed to provide housing for low-income families on a nondiscriminatory basis.

In 1962 President Kennedy issued an Executive Order specifying that FHA and VA loans must be non-discriminatory. The Order is not retroactive and covers only new loans and therefore affects a relatively small percentage of the market. The National Committee against Discrimination in Housing has urged President Johnson to issue a new order extending coverage to all banks and savings and loan associations chartered by the federal government.

The Minnesota Act of 1961

In 1957 the Minnesota Legislature appointed an interim commission to investigate discrimination in housing. The commission held hearings and issued a report. Although the ten members of the commission were evenly divided on the wisdom of legislation prohibiting discrimination, the 1961 Legislature passed an act creating a State Commission Against Discrimination and prohibiting discriminatory practices in the sale, rental or lease of property. Three kinds of housing were exempted:

1. Rental of part of an owner-occupied duplex,
2. Rental of rooms in a one-family dwelling in which the owner lives, and
3. Rental, lease or sale of a one-family dwelling, owner-occupied and privately financed.

The law went into effect on December 31, 1962.

In the 1965 Legislature a bill was introduced which would have extended the coverage of the law to all one-family and duplex housing. The bill was sponsored by the Minnesota Council for Civil and Human Rights, a coordinating organization made up of representatives from human rights agencies, governmental and private, church groups, etc. The bill passed the Senate but died in committee in the House.

A survey by the U.S. Department of Commerce found that in the five-county metropolitan area of Hennepin, Ramsey, Anoka, Washington and Dakota counties 27% of single-family dwellings are covered by either FHA or VA loans. No figures are available on a statewide basis, but a sampling indicates that there are probably a greater number of VA and FHA loans in the Twin City area than outside. As of July, 1965, SCAD had processed eleven complaints regarding single-family dwellings. In six cases the homes were publicly financed and SCAD had jurisdiction. All six of these cases were successfully resolved. In the five cases where SCAD did not have jurisdiction, although they attempted conciliation, they were unsuccessful.

What Should be the Exceptions from Coverage?

Public opinion ranges from those who feel that all racial discrimination is wrong and should be outlawed in all forms to those who feel that the present law

was in itself a mistake. For others the question is one of obtaining a balance between the goal of equality of opportunity and undue governmental interference with the private lives of its people.

Most of the significant arguments for keeping the law as it is can be found in the report of the 1957 Interim Commission and in the account of the 1961 Legislature. The Interim Commission felt that it was valid to distinguish between publicly and privately financed housing. "Racial or religious discrimination by a private individual is one thing; racial or religious discrimination in which the government participates is another. Where public money or public support are involved we believe that rightly the highest standards of conformity to our American ideals should be expected." It was on this basis that the 1961 law was written to cover almost all publicly financed housing. A second distinction was made between governmental regulation of an individual in his private activities and in his business activities. The law as drafted covers those whose business centers around the marketing of housing accommodations. All apartment houses, new houses sold by a builder and permanent rental one-family dwellings are covered whether they are privately or publicly financed. Third, the 1961 Legislature reflected a widespread concern that regulation of the rental of rooms in an individual's home or the rental of an owner-occupied duplex where facilities are shared constituted an invasion of privacy. Therefore, these rentals are exempted no matter how the buildings may be financed and even though they may be regarded as business transactions. A fourth consideration is related to difficulties of enforcement. Frequently an administrator must depend on a series of acts showing a pattern of behavior in making the determination that discrimination exists. An individual home owner sells only one house at a time and it is therefore impossible to find a pattern of discrimination. Finally, in 1961, legislators felt that the regulation of all single family dwellings would be unacceptable to the public. When laws go too far beyond the consensus of the public they become unenforceable. Those who today wish the law to remain as it is use similar arguments, warning that we must not try to move too rapidly in the field of civil rights stressing the need for education, and the necessity for patience on the part of Negroes and whites alike. They feel that the ultimate solution to the problem cannot be obtained by coercive legislation.

Arguments made by those who wish to extend the coverage of the law to all single-family dwellings might be summed up as follows: Four years ago, housing legislation was still experimental. Now we have had an opportunity to observe the operation of SCAD. Education is important, but the experience of SCAD indicates that an agency must also have jurisdiction to be effective. SCAD should not be denied the opportunity to operate in the majority of one-family residences. In the years ahead, increasing numbers of Negroes in Minnesota will be purchasing homes; we must act now if we are going to prevent the development of ghettos and the attendant problems of *de facto* school segregation and limited opportunities. The climate for integration is improving; this is shown by the activity of other state legislatures and by public

League of Women Voters of the U.S.
1200 - 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

January 1969

EXPLANATION OF FAIR HOUSING POSITION

In May 1968, the League adopted a position in support of fair housing, specifying that the right of all persons to buy or rent dwellings, regardless of race, color, religion, or national origin should be secured by law. On January 10, 1969, based on League responses to the proposed Guidelines for Fair Housing Standards (see page 9, Human Resources Leaders' Guide, August 1968), a revised Human Resources position was adopted by the national board. Included in the new statement of position are Fair Housing Criteria.

Essentially, the housing criteria emerge from responses to the first of the four questions on the report forms for the proposed Guidelines for Fair Housing Standards. Responses to the second question,* relating to experience with fair housing legislation were not uniform; the third and fourth were general questions not related to specifics of fair housing legislation per se. While answers to the last two questions did not actually define the position itself, they did describe members' attitudes about various problems related to implementation of fair housing.

Agreement was nearly unanimous on all sections of question number 1, with two exceptions: Under criterion 1a, though a minority supported some exemptions in fair housing coverage, such as owner-occupied houses, there was clear consensus for no exemptions. Under criterion 1c, while there was strong consensus that the federal government has a special responsibility for fair housing and that it should apply both the "carrot and the stick" to bring about equal opportunity in access to housing, there were qualifications about when and how the "stick" should be applied.

The Fair Housing Criteria as stated in the Revised Position and as explained above should be clear in general. Two aspects of the new position perhaps need some further clarification, namely, the special role of the federal government and the need for effective fair housing legislation at all levels of government.

The League position regarding the role of the federal government in fair housing can be summarized as follows:

Recognizing that all levels of government and the private sector as well have responsibilities to fulfill, the federal government -- because of the considerable influence at its disposal -- has a special role to play. Federal funds should not be used to initiate or perpetuate housing discrimination; furthermore the federal government can and should combat institutionalized housing discrimination through fair housing legislation and also through --

- the awarding and withdrawing of federal contracts
- the placement of federal installations
- selective withholding of federal funds where patterns of housing discrimination occur.

Federal contracts and federal installations often influence the economic development of communities; this influence should also guarantee equal opportunity in access to housing for all citizens.

*See last section of this explanation.

In supporting selective withholding of federal funds, the League means that insofar as possible, federal funds should be withheld from those most responsible for the perpetuation of discriminatory patterns. The League does not want innocent citizens to be punished for the discriminatory practices of others, but at the same time the League wants all citizens to understand that discriminatory patterns do not persist unless communities allow them to persist. At a minimum, patterns of discrimination within a community depend on the existence of covert community support. Selective withholding of funds should be applied constructively, not punitively, to dissolve covert community support for discrimination.

In applying its option to withhold funds, the federal government should avoid imposing penalties on lower income and minority groups because of possible discriminatory practices of other segments of the population.

Fair Housing Legislation at local, state and national levels.

The desirability of fair housing legislation at the national level was implicit in the May 1968 position as well as in all responses to the Guidelines. The second question on the proposed Guidelines was intended to elicit information relating to the need for legislation at other levels of government as well. Of the Leagues responding, a bare majority indicated support for legislation at all three levels, with a sizeable number indicating support for legislation at least at the state level in addition to the federal level. However, since responses to this question came, by and large, only from Leagues in communities which have had some experience with state or local fair housing laws -- a minority of Leagues -- no clearly enunciated position has emerged with respect to the desirability of fair housing legislation at all levels of government. Still, responses to other questions, (notably criterion 1d) relating to enforcement of fair housing laws suggest the following:

Whether or not states and localities should have fair housing legislation in addition to federal legislation depends on factors that can best be determined by the Leagues at those levels, keeping in mind these considerations

- Enforcement of federal legislation through federal machinery will depend on federal funding.
- Easily accessible avenues for mediation and redress and assurance of speedy resolution of disputes might be enhanced by having local or state enforcement machinery.
- On the other hand, local enforcement machinery might be used as a method to delay effective action provided under federal legislation, even though federal procedures are designed to prevent such delay.
- In evaluating fair housing proposals, therefore, assurance should be sought that no level of government is able to hinder the just enforcement procedures of another level of government.

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League of Women Voters of the U.S.
1200 - 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

January 1969

REPORT FORM

TO: The National League Board

FROM: The League of Women Voters of _____

(address) _____

(Zip Code)

RE: Fair Housing Consensus

From our knowledge of the discussions on fair housing in our League, our League thinks that implementation of equality of opportunity for access to housing depends not only on nondiscriminatory practices but also on the availability of an adequate supply of housing for low and moderate income families.

YES _____

NO _____

COMMENTS:

Date _____ (return by April 1, 1969)

Signed _____

(office in local League)

(One copy for local League files, one copy for national office and one copy for your state League.)

FILE COPY

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
December 1970

HISTORY OF LEAGUE SUPPORT OF TENANTS' RIGHTS LEGISLATION

Late in the 1969 session several bills were introduced dealing with tenants' rights. Three of these bills contained essentially the same provisions as those in the bills that are summarized below. At that time, April and May of 1969, the League testified in favor of this type of legislation and issued two Calls for Action to Leagues in CMAL and Duluth. We supported this legislation under the National equality of opportunity in access to housing position. Access is not equal when landlords are able to exploit tenants. There were also indications at that time that the answer to the consensus question asking if members felt that "equality of opportunity for access to housing depends not only on nondiscriminatory practices but also on the availability of an adequate supply of housing for low and moderate income families", would be a strong YES. (The reply to the consensus question was YES.) The "adequate supply of housing for low and moderate income families" was interpreted to mean safe, healthy housing.

On April 17, 1970, the League of Women Voters of the United States issued "Housing Supply: A Checklist for Analysis and Action". This was sent out on the duplicate presidents mailing. This is a guide of areas in which Leagues may act in order to implement our housing position. One of the suggestions included in the Checklist is: Rights of tenants to negotiate for proper maintenance, management of facilities, and services. This further reinforced our readiness to act in the tenants' rights area.

During the interim session the League has testified two times (May and November 1970) in favor of tenants' rights legislation. You have received copies of the testimony. (Also see November Board Memo)

The supply of housing is very inadequate, particularly in large urban areas. Those that suffer the most from this short supply are those of minorities and low income families. We realize that tenants' rights legislation will not alone solve the housing problem but it is a positive step in providing the tenant protection for his rights as well as encouraging the proper maintenance of existing housing.

HISTORY OF THREE HOUSING BILLS

Substantively, the bills deal with relief and opportunity for tenants, particularly tenants of substandard housing, to defend themselves against adverse housing conditions. Currently the slim vacancy rate in low income housing offers the tenant very little mobility. If the tenant is dissatisfied with his unit, the possibility of moving is not a likely solution. If the tenant complains to the landlord about the condition of his unit, he runs the risk of antagonizing the landlord and possible eviction. Once again, relocating is extremely difficult. These bills were not conceived as solutions to the underlying causes of the housing shortage, but rather as immediate relief to the tenant, and a means of conserving the existing housing supply. The tenant, as a consumer of the landlord's package of goods and services, has no effective protection under law

against the possibility of a defective package. The thrust of these bills is to protect a tenant from retaliatory action by a landlord and to provide an opportunity for tenants to gain access to the legal process for the purpose of redress. The right of the law-abiding landlord to choose his tenants is in no way impaired.

Procedurally, the bills were first written approximately two years ago in preparation for a public hearing on housing conditions in Minneapolis. The Minneapolis Tenants Union sought Legal Aid's help in drafting these bills (aggressively asserting tenant rights) to offer as a constructive proposal at the hearing. The bills were then taken to the 1969 Minnesota State Legislature but never reached the Senate floor. This spring the Judiciary Committee of the Senate invited the original authors of the three bills to continue work on needed housing bills. In early summer a Judiciary subcommittee on special projects heard testimony concerning the bills. Representatives from the Minnesota Apartment Association, whose membership consists of the majority of apartment owners in the state, attended the hearing and gave lukewarm support. The subcommittee, seeking a consensus, then invited these representatives from the Apartment Association to join with Legal Aid lawyers in rewriting the bills.

The bills that are attached hereto are the product of that re-writing, and represent a consensus between landlords and tenant lawyers.

#1 A BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND CHAPTER 504
BY ADDING THERETO A NEW SECTION 504.11

Synopsis: The following will apply to any residential lease contract, whether written or not.

1. The premises must be fit for normal use. This covenant cannot be waived.
2. The premises must be kept in "reasonable repair", in compliance with health and safety laws. This duty can be waived only by setting forth in conspicuous writing the special arrangements agreed to by the parties.

Even if a prospective tenant inspects the premises before signing a lease, he does not forego his rights to the benefits of the above covenants.

From the tenant's view: Under this bill, the duty to provide habitable units is in effect written into the rental contract, and this duty is squarely placed on the landlord. There is already a state law which makes it a crime for a landlord to rent substandard housing. However, the criminal approach of fining or jailing the offending landlord is ineffective in achieving repairs. The civil approach of instituting a lawsuit would allow the tenant to deal directly with his landlord concerning repairs.

From the landlord's view: The bill clearly makes exception to the repair responsibility when the disrepair is caused by the "willful, malicious, or irresponsible conduct" of the tenant.

#2 A BILL FOR AN ACT

relating to landlord and tenant
prohibiting retaliatory evictions....

Synopsis: This bill would write the defense against retaliatory eviction and/or extreme rent raise into the state law outlining the eviction procedure. If

1. the eviction (or extreme rent raise) is intended as a "penalty" for the tenant's "good faith" in either reporting a code violation or lawfully seeking to enforce his rights, and
2. if the notice to quit is served within 90 days of the date of any such act of the tenant,

then the burden of proof in the eviction process falls on the landlord.

From the tenant's view: This defense would remove the threat of eviction or extreme rent raise which currently deters many tenants from even initiating the housing inspection enforcement procedure.

From the landlord's view: The "good faith" phrase protects the landlord against the tenant who complains to the inspectors just to avoid the possibility of eviction. In the case of an alleged retaliatory rent raise the tenant cannot withhold his rent. He must pay it to the landlord or to the Court.

#3

A BILL FOR AN ACT

relating to landlord and tenant;
creating remedies for tenants of substandard housing.

Synopsis: This bill is designed to provide a procedure for obtaining needed repairs where there are housing, safety or health code violations in rental housing. An action can be brought in District Court by any tenant of a building in which a violation is alleged to exist.

- I. The action shall begin by service of a complaint and summons issued by a judge or clerk of courts.
 - A. The complaint should:
 1. state material violations
 2. state relief sought
 3. be accompanied by
 - a. a copy of the official report of inspection, or
 - b. a statement that a request for inspection was made to the appropriate department, and that the owner was requested to correct the alleged violation.
 - B. The summons should:
 1. specify the time and place of the hearing (not less than 3 days nor more than 10 days after receipt of complaint by clerk)
 2. state that, if the landlord failed to appear and offer a defense, the relief requested in the petition would be granted
 3. be served on the landlord at least 3 and not more than 10 days before the hearing.
- II. As a defense the landlord may establish that:
 - A. the violations do not in fact exist or have been remedied
 - B. such violations have been caused by willful, malicious or irresponsible conduct of a complaining tenant
 - C. any tenant has unreasonably refused entry to the owner for the purpose of correcting the violation.
- III. Upon finding the complaint proved, the court has several options:
 - A. order the owner to immediately remedy the violation
 - B. order the tenant to repair the violation and deduct the cost from his rent

- C. appoint an administrator
(this can be any person other than an owner of the building involved who, in the court's opinion, is qualified to administer the funds to be collected; he would use rental moneys to repair the violation, subject to the court's supervision)
- D. determine the extent to which any uncorrected violations impair the tenant's use and enjoyment of premises and abate the rent accordingly, and
- E. in all cases grant such other relief as the court sees just and proper.

From the tenant's view: The 'unlawful detainer' act establishes the procedures by which the landlord evicts a tenant. This bill (Bill #3) is patterned after that act in an effort to establish procedures by which the tenant can get into court as fast as a landlord can. The tenant can, under this bill, sue his landlord for necessary repairs. If judgment is against the landlord, the repairs will be made or the rent will be reduced.

From the landlord's view: The code violations in point are limited to those which "materially endanger the health or safety of the tenant." Once again the landlord is protected against any willful, malicious, or irresponsible conduct by the tenant which led to the violation. And, if the judgment is served against him, the landlord can arrange for the repairs himself unless the judge feels he will not do it promptly. If an administrator is appointed, he uses the collected rents not only to pay the repairs but also to pay the debt service (mortgage).

FILE COPY

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
April 1969

To: Members of the Board, League of Women Voters of Minnesota
From: Irene Janski, Marian Watson, Frances Farley
Re: Interpretation National Housing Consensus
Date: April 3, 1969

A comprehensive tenants rights bill has been developed by tenants groups, attorneys, and legal aid societies from Hennepin and Ramsey Counties. As of today, agreement has been reached on contents of the bill. Legislative sponsors are nearly all committed.

Main provisions of the bill provide recourse for tenants when landlords do not keep premises in safe condition and provide recourse in case of retaliatory evictions.

Because we feel a direction must be determined on this issue before our next board meeting, we have met in executive session and wish to recommend the following to the board:

We suggest that Leagues in Minnesota can support a tenants rights bill under a reasonable interpretation of "equality of opportunity in access to housing" in the national housing position. We believe that access is not equal when landlords are able to exploit tenants.

Further, the answer to the following fair housing consensus statement was due in the national office on April 1:

From our knowledge of the discussions on fair housing in our League, our League thinks that implementation of equality of opportunity for access to housing depends not only on nondiscriminatory practices but also on the availability of an adequate supply of housing for low and moderate income families. Yes _____ No _____

Indications are that consensus on this statement will be an overwhelming YES - nationally. We can tell you that we have received copies from almost half of the Minnesota Leagues and that all but one League give strong affirmative answers.

Therefore, we suggest that we interpret "adequate supply of housing for low and moderate income families" to mean safe, healthy housing.

This interpretation of the current and the upcoming national housing consensus puts us in a position to support a tenants rights bill that speaks to the right to equal access to safe housing.

When the bill is introduced, state board members and local Leagues will be informed. Local Leagues should be sure that their memberships fully understand the basis for this kind of interpretation if they wish to make it.

Until the bill is actually in process, we have offered assistance to the tenants groups in such matters as legislative mechanics.

C A L L T O A C T I O N

TENANTS' RIGHTS LEGISLATION

From: Mrs. Russell Lucas, State Board Human Resources Chairman

Now is the time for you to support three bills dealing with Tenants' Rights. Your lobbyists have been busy urging support of these proposals and they have come a long way-NOW-we need your help!

Included in this "Time for Action" you will find:

- A brief history of three bills
- A brief outline of the housing crisis and how these bills offer some remedy. .
- A statement given on your behalf in support of these bills.
- A list of the House and Senate Judiciary Committee members and a status report of the bills in each house.
- A brief summary of the bills.

HISTORY - The bills were first written approximately two years ago. The bills received only brief hearings during the 1969 Session. The League of Women Voters supported the proposals at that time. During the interim the Special Projects Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary heard testimony concerning the bills. The bills were presented by Paul Marino of the Minneapolis Legal Aid Society. The representatives from the Minnesota Apartment Owners Association, whose membership consists of the majority of apartment owners in the state, attended the hearing and gave lukewarm support. The subcommittee, seeking a consensus, then invited these representatives from the Apartment Association to join with Legal Aid lawyers in rewriting the bills. This was done through the summer and in November both groups presented the bills to the subcommittee. The subcommittee heard the testimony and favorably reported the bills back to the whole Judiciary.

The two groups and other interested citizens groups have continued to work in support of these proposals, recruiting authors, urging citizen support and lobbying to build support among the legislators.

HOUSING CRISIS - We are all aware that the housing crisis we face in Minnesota is one chiefly of supply. There is simply not enough new housing being built. The problem is also one of distribution - relatively little low and moderate income housing is available outside central cities. Furthermore, vacancy rates in rental housing generally are below 5%, which is considered tight, and when you break down that general figure to apply to lower-priced multibedroom units, the vacancy rate goes down below 1%. So we are faced with a situation in which low income people who rent are practically forced to take whatever housing they can find. Obviously much of the housing they can afford is in older buildings in which problems of maintenance and repair are ever present.

Currently a tenant has two "rights" available to him - to pay rent and to move. The second "right" for low-income tenants has been effectively

removed because of the shortage. The Housing Inspection System was devised to increase the tenants capability to convince his landlord to make necessary repairs, but its enforcement procedures involve either criminal action against landlords who do not comply or condemnation of building, both of which practices the inspectors are reluctant to use. Furthermore, many tenants do not initiate the inspection system by making a complaint, as the landlords threaten them with eviction in retaliation. Landlords on the other hand, have the right to collect rents, choose their tenants, evict them without giving cause, and to initiate court action to protect their rights and property.

The three bills discussed in detail below do not address themselves to the problem of supply except if passed they would have the effect of conserving the "habitability" of the present supply.

* * * * *

Testimony Presented to the
Family Problems Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee
Wednesday, March 17, 1971
By Mrs. Russell Lucas

I am Mrs. Russell Lucas, Human Resources Chairman, of the State Board of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. I am speaking in support of S.F. 502, 503 and 579.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has supported the efforts of the legislature to insure equal opportunity to adequate housing through the passage of antidiscrimination legislation. We have also supported legislation in the area of tenants' rights during the 1969 session of the legislature and during interim hearings.

The housing supply in Minnesota is inadequate. Because of the housing shortage free choice in rental housing is not available. As a result many citizens are living insubstandard housing without access to an alternative. Those of minorities and low-income are particularly hard hit by this shortage.

The League of Women Voters is of the opinion that while the ultimate solution to this housing shortage is the production of more housing units at prices that make dwellings available to all income levels, there is also the need for legislation to insure that those units that are now available are maintained in a safe and sanitary condition. The existing complaint and code enforcement process has not been effective in accomplishing this.

It has been our contention that laws provide the possibility of legal redress to an aggrieved citizen and give an avenue for peaceful, orderly resolution of differences. There are many laws to protect the owners of dwellings. There are inadequate protections for those who occupy them. The bills that you are considering today would provide needed protection to the tenant. These bills do not increase the responsibility of the landlord. They do, however, clearly place the responsibility upon him for abiding by existing health and safety regulations and should he fail in this responsibility give the tenant the legal framework within which to effect a solution without the fear of eviction.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota therefore urges you to give favorable consideration to S.F. 502, 503 and 579.

* * * * *

The three Senate bills, #502, 503 and 579, have been heard in a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary and reported favorably to the full committee. The full Judiciary has not yet heard them. Members of the Senate Judiciary are:

Dosland, Chairman	Brown	Jensen, C. A.	Nyquist
Gage, Vice Chairman	Davies	Kalina	O'Neill
Benson	Gearty	Krieger	Parish
Bergerud	Gustafson	McCarty	Popham
Blatz	Holsten	McCutcheon	Tennessee
Borden	Hughes, K. F.	Novak	Thorup

The House companion bills, #1161, 1162, and 1163 are being heard in the House Judiciary Committee itself: 1161 and 1162 were recommended to pass March 31st, with 1163 scheduled for a hearing on April 7. 1161 and 1162 will be placed on General Orders on the House floor probably by the week of April 5. Members of the House Judiciary are:

Albertson, Chairman	Hook	Pavlak, R. L.
Bell, Vice-Chairman	Johnson, C. A.	Savelkoul
Adams, S.	Johnson, R.	Sieben
Anderson, H.	Keefe	Simmons
Berg	Knutson	Sokolowski
Chamberlain	Lee	Szarke
Connors	Menke	Ticen
Faricy	Nelson	Vento
Fena	Norton	Weaver
Flakne	Ojala	Wolcott
Fugina	Pavlak, R.	Wright

Please write your legislators now, particularly the above committee members, urging positive action on these bills at this session.

MAIN PROVISIONS

H. F. 1161 - Berg; S. F. 502 - O'Neill
"Covenant"

The following will apply to any residential lease contract, whether written or not: the premises must be fit for normal use and kept in reasonable repair. This "covenant" cannot be waived.

From the tenant's view: Under this bill, the duty to provide habitable units is in effect written in the rental contract, and this duty is squarely placed on the landlord. There is already a state law which makes it a crime for a landlord to rent substandard housing. However, the criminal approach of fining or jailing the offending landlord is ineffective in achieving repairs. The civil approach of instituting a lawsuit would allow the tenant to deal directly with his landlord concerning repairs.

From the landlord's view: The bill clearly makes exception to the repair responsibility when the disrepair is caused by the "willful, malicious, or irresponsible conduct" of the tenant.

H. F. 1162 - Savelkoul: S. F. 503 - Coleman
"Retaliatory Eviction"

This bill would write the defense against retaliatory eviction and/or extreme rent raise into the state law outlining the eviction procedure.

From the tenant's view: This defense would remove the threat of eviction or extreme rent raise which currently deters many tenants from even initiating the housing inspection enforcement procedure.

From the landlord's view: The landlord is protected against the tenant who complains to the inspector just to avoid the possibility of eviction. In the case of an alleged retaliatory rent raise the tenant cannot withhold his rent. He must pay the amount of his original obligation to the landlord or to the court.

H. F. 1163: Hock - S. F. 579 - Krieger
"Remedies"

This bill is designed to provide a procedure for obtaining needed repairs where there are housing, safety or health code violation in rental housing. An action can be brought in District Court by any tenant of a building in which a violation is alleged to exist. Upon finding the complaint proved, the court has several options:

1. Order the owner to immediately remedy the violation
2. Order the tenant to repair the violation and deduct the cost from his rent
3. Appoint an administrator to collect the rents of the building and make the repairs
4. Determine the extent to which uncorrected violations impair the tenant's use and enjoyment of premises and abate the rent accordingly
5. In all cases grant such other relief as the court sees just and proper

From the tenant's view: The 'unlawful detainer' act establishes the procedures by which the landlord evicts a tenant. This bill is patterned after that act in an effort to establish procedures by which the tenant can get into court as fast as a landlord can. The tenant can, under this bill, sue his landlord for necessary repairs. If judgment is against the landlord, the repairs will be made or the rent will be reduced.

From the landlord's view: The code violations in point are limited to those which "materially endanger the health or safety of the tenant." Once again the landlord is protected against any willful, malicious, or irresponsible conduct by the tenant which led to the violation. And, if the judgment is served against him, the landlord can arrange for the repairs himself unless the judge feels he will not do it promptly. If an administrator is appointed, he uses the collected rents not only to pay for the repairs but also to pay the debt service (mortgage). In no case may the tenant take it upon himself to keep from paying rent.

April 1971

ENCLOSED FOR YOUR INFORMATION: Background of Bills.
Testimony given in support of the Bills.
Section by section summary of the Bills.

BACKGROUND OF H.F. 1676 and S.F. 1356

In order to assist in alleviating housing shortages, and to coordinate and develop housing for low and moderate income families in the metropolitan area, the League of Women Voters of Minnesota supports H.F. 1676 and S.F. 1356, a bill establishing a Metropolitan Regional Housing Assistance and Development Agency as an "arm" of the Metropolitan Council. Our support for the bill is a manifestation of several of the guidelines for action set forth to implement our National position of Equality of Opportunity in Housing.

State and local governments should assist by establishing effective agencies to aid, promote, coordinate and supplement the housing programs of the federal government and the private sector.

Regional and metropolitan planning should be promoted to prevent haphazard urban growth, and housing for low- and moderate-income families should be provided as a part of all planned neighborhoods or communities.

Lower-income families should not be segregated in large developments or neighborhoods

Publicly-assisted housing should be included in viable, balanced communities, with provision for quality public services and facilities, including schools, transportation, recreation, etc., which will encourage integration and stability.

This bill provides for a housing agency of seven or more members, appointed by the council and responsible to it. The responsibility of the agency would be to stimulate, coordinate and develop housing for low and moderate income people. Its functions would be supported by a .1% mil. tax. The agency would have the power to ascertain the income level which would constitute low and moderate family income within the metropolitan area for purposes of the act. Furthermore, the agency would be empowered to acquire property by any lawful means, including eminent domain. Property owned by the agency is to be tax exempt, but agreement could be made with the municipality for payments in lieu of taxes. Before the agency begins construction on any housing project it is to own, the governing municipality must approve it. In the event of disagreement between the agency and the municipality, an appeal process could be pursued. In addition, any projects of the agency would be subject to local planning, zoning, sanitary and building laws.

The Metropolitan Council, in advocating the bill, presented some pertinent facts which we feel merit serious consideration. The following is taken from material prepared by the Metropolitan Council.

Basically our housing needs are twofold: to ensure the provision of an adequate supply of low and moderate income housing and to increase the opportunity for choice in the type and location of housing for low and moderate income persons in the region.

By the year 2000 the Metropolitan Area will need some 760,000 additional housing units to provide for new households and to replace housing which will be removed because of obsolescence or as a result of governmental action. This means more new housing must be built in the next thirty years than has been built since this area was first settled over 100 years ago.

To: Presidents and Human Resource Chairman - Metropolitan Area Leagues

From: Pat Lucas - State Board, Human Resources

Re: CALL TO ACTION - Regional Housing Assistance and Development Agency

H.F. 1676 - Schumann, J. Johnson, Sabo, Bell, Ticen

S.F. 1356 - Coleman, Ogdahl, Tennessen

Status of the bills: H.F. 1676 - Referred to Metropolitan and Urban Affairs Committee.
This bill has had three hearings by the Housing Opportunities Subcommittee. The subcommittee is scheduled to report on April 23.

Members of Metropolitan and Urban Affairs Committee:

Johnson, R., Chairman	Enebo	Munger	Sillers
**Forseth, Vice-Chairman	Faricy	#Newcome	#Sokolowski
#Albertson	#Graw	*North	#Ticen
#Andersen, R.	*Hanson, W.	*Pavlak, R. L.	Vento
#Bell	#Heintz	*#Petrafeso	#Weaver
Berg	#Hook	*#Plaisance	#Wingard
#Boland	*Humphrey	*Ryan	Wolcott
*Brandt	Johnson, J.	Sabo	
*Daugherty	Menke	*#Scherer	

*Members of Housing Opportunities Subcommittee **Chairman
Suburban Legislators

S.F. 1356 - Referred to Urban Affairs - No hearings have been scheduled.

Ogdahl - Chairman	Doty	McCutcheon
Wolfe, Vice-Chairman	Gearty	#Nyquist
Anderson, J. T.	#Glewwe	Palmer
#Achbach	Gustafson	Popam
#Blatz	#Hughes, J.	Tennessen
Chenoweth	Kirchner	#Thorup
Davies		

Suburban Senators

WHY A CALL TO ACTION NOW? - These bills are not moving and if anything is to be accomplished they need to start hearings in the Senate and need to get H.F. 1676 moving out of the subcommittee and back to the whole committee.

WHAT TO DO - You should write to the Chairman of the Committee and Subcommittee and to your Representative or Senator if he is on either of these committees and let him know of your concerns in the housing area and how you feel this legislation would positively effect the inadequate supply of low and moderate income housing in the metropolitan area.

If your Representative or Senator is not on this list write him anyway so that he will know of your interest and support

Let your members know of this bill and encourage them to write also.

Background - con't.

Over half of the total added housing supply during the 1970's should be affordable by low and moderate income persons if the needs of a growing population are to be met. Some 12,500 units a years need to be geared to low and moderate income households.

The gap between the cost of housing and what people can afford to pay is growing even wider. The average priced new home in the region today costs over \$28,000 without land. The vast majority of the residents of the area could not afford the monthly cost required to purchase such a house. With the increases in the cost of land, labor and materials, the private market simply cannot provide low cost housing today. Only government programs that can reduce the cost of housing through subsidies can do that. However, federal housing programs are supplying subsidies for only about 3,000 units each year for low and moderate income persons in the region. This is only about one-fourth of the estimated annual need for low and moderate income housing in the region.

In addition, the majority of the housing available for low and moderate income persons is concentrated in the center cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Housing choice for persons and families of moderate means is particularly limited in the newly developed areas; thus reducing the opportunity for lower income persons to take advantage of the employment, recreation, and public services offered in these portions of the region.

To date only 132 units of public housing is available outside the center cities, whereas close ot 10,000 units are provided in Minneapolis and St. Paul. A few additional housing authorities in suburban and fringe areas are planning small projects. Only those communities with active housing authorities can receive federal funds for public housing

There are an estimated 50,000 substandard housing units in the region. Forty thousand units are overcrowded. The vacancy rate for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area is one of the lowest of any major metropolitan area in the entire nation; vacancies are virtually non-existent for low cost housing in adequate condition. Many thousands of persons are required to spend much higher percentages of their incomes for housing than the 20-25 percent considered desirable; lowest income households in the region pay an average of over 45 percent of their incomes for their housing.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
April 1971

Testimony Presented to the
Housing Opportunities Subcommittee
of the House Metro and Urban Affairs Committee
on the subject of a regional housing assistance
and development agency for the metropolitan area.
Monday, April 12, 1971 11 a.m.
By Mrs. Russell Lucas

I am Mrs. Russell Lucas, Human Resources Chairman of the State Board of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. I wish to speak in favor of H.F. 1676.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota approves of and supports measures which will alleviate the housing shortage in our state. We are particularly concerned over the acute shortage of adequate housing for families of low and moderate income. It is evident that in order to meet the demand for such housing full advantage must be taken of federal, state and local government housing programs.

The Metropolitan Council is in a unique position to assist the private and public sectors in meeting the demands for housing by promoting and coordinating such housing programs through a regional agency. Further, the provisions for the developing, testing and reporting of methods and techniques to provide low and moderate income housing would make available to municipalities the expertise that would enable and encourage them to provide housing at all income levels within their own communities.

Also the Metropolitan Council with its function of planning for the seven county area and its responsibility for coordinating and implementing plans for parks, sewers and transportation can be the catalýst which will consider the total environment and will improve the quality of life for all citizens.

We are of the opinion, however, that a regional housing agency, just as a municipal housing agency, must be fully responsive to the citizenry and for this reason we urge that the agency proposed in this legislation be appointed by and responsible to an elected Metropolitan Council.

To: Members of the Governmental Operations Committee

From: Mrs. O. J. Janski, State President, and Mrs. Russell Lucas,
Director State Board, Human Resources

Re: Minnesota Housing Finance Agency - H.F. 1657

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota strongly supports legislation that will alleviate the acute housing shortage for low and moderate income families in the State of Minnesota.

In our recognition of this grave need we are supporting a number of related measures. Among these are bills for a Metropolitan Housing and Development Assistance Agency, County or Multicounty Housing and Redevelopment Agencies, a Statewide Uniform Building Code and Tenants Rights legislation.

Although all these bills if passed will be positive measures to deal with various aspects of the shortage of safe and sanitary housing for low and moderate income families, financial assistance and expertise at the State level is essential.

We feel that the passage of a Minnesota Housing Finance Agency bill is the key to full implementation of housing production in the State of Minnesota.

We would like to emphasize specific positive elements of H.F. 1657 which, in our opinion, would aid in the production of low and moderate income housing.

1. Housing costs for low and moderate income families will be lowered since the Agency will be able to lend money to sponsors of low and moderate income housing at a lower interest rate than is currently available.

2. A revolving fund for seed money and development loans plus construction financing loans and permanent mortgage loans to sponsors of low and moderate income housing will allow construction of more housing units at a lower cost per unit.

3. The production of scattered-site single family housing for those with low and moderate incomes will be increased by the Agency's power to purchase federal securities from the Government National Mortgage Association (Ginny May). The management of these mortgage portfolios would be the responsibility of private mortgage institutions.

4. Needed technical assistance to the sponsoring organizations will be provided by the Agency.

5. Through research and planning activities the Agency will aid financial institutions, governmental agencies and housing and supply industries in the provision of adequate housing for all citizens throughout the State.

6. Finally, the State of Minnesota can take full advantage of all federally assisted housing programs through this Agency.

We urge, therefore, your favorable consideration of H.F. 1657.

April 20, 1971

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
April 1971

Testimony Presented to the
Housing Opportunities Subcommittee
of the House Metro and Urban Affairs Committee
on the subject of a regional housing assistance
and development agency for the metropolitan area.
Monday, April 12, 1971 11 a.m.
By Mrs. Russell Lucas

I am Mrs. Russell Lucas, Human Resources Chairman of the State Board of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. I wish to speak in favor of H.F. 1676.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota approves of and supports measures which will alleviate the housing shortage in our state. We are particularly concerned over the acute shortage of adequate housing for families of low and moderate income. It is evident that in order to meet the demand for such housing full advantage must be taken of federal, state and local government housing programs.

The Metropolitan Council is in a unique position to assist the private and public sectors in meeting the demands for housing by promoting and coordinating such housing programs through a regional agency. Further, the provisions for the developing, testing and reporting of methods and techniques to provide low and moderate income housing would make available to municipalities the expertise that would enable and encourage them to provide housing at all income levels within their own communities.

Also the Metropolitan Council with its function of planning for the seven county area and its responsibility for coordinating and implementing plans for parks, sewers and transportation can be the catalýst which will consider the total environment and will improve the quality of life for all citizens.

We are of the opinion, however, that a regional housing agency, just as a municipal housing agency, must be fully responsive to the citizenry and for this reason we urge that the agency proposed in this legislation be appointed by and responsible to an elected Metropolitan Council.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha St., St. Paul, Minn. 55102 March 1971

Testimony Presented to the
Family Problems Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee
Wednesday, March 17, 1971
By Mrs. Russell Lucas

I am Mrs. Russell ~~Lucas~~ Human Resources Chairman of the State Board of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. I am speaking in support of S. F. 502, 503 and 579.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has supported the efforts of the legislature to insure equal opportunity to adequate housing through the passage of anti-discrimination legislation. We have also supported legislation in the area of tenants' rights during the 1969 session of the legislature and during interim hearings.

The housing supply in Minnesota is inadequate. Because of the housing shortage free choice in rental housing is not available. As a result many citizens are living in substandard housing without access to an alternative. Those of minorities and low-income are particularly hard hit by this shortage.

The League of Women Voters is of the opinion that while the ultimate solution to this housing shortage is the production of more housing units at prices that make dwellings available to all income levels, there is also the need for legislation to insure that those units that are now available are maintained in a safe and sanitary condition. The existing complaint and code enforcement process has not been effective in accomplishing this.

It has been our contention that laws provide the possibility of legal redress to an aggrieved citizen and give an avenue for peaceful, orderly resolution of differences. There are many laws to protect the owners of dwellings. There are inadequate protections for those who occupy them. The bills that **you are considering** today would provide needed protection to the tenant. These bills do not increase the responsibility of the landlord. They do, however, clearly place the responsibility upon him for abiding by existing

health and safety regulations and should he fail in this responsibility give the tenant the legal framework with-in-which to effect a solution without the fear of eviction.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota therefore urges you to give favorable consideration to S. F. 502, 503 and 579.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 555 Wabasha, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
February 1971

Testimony presented to the Housing Opportunities and Standards
Subcommittee of the House Metropolitan and Urban Affairs Committee

Tuesday, February 16, 1971

By Mrs. Russell Lucas, Chairman Human Resources,
League of Women Voters of Minnesota

I am Mrs. Russell Lucas, Chairman of the Human Resources Committee of the State Board of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. I am here to speak in opposition to H.F. 167 relating to municipalities; providing for referenda in urban renewal projects.

The League of Women Voters bases its opposition on a National position of support of equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing.

Referenda such as those described in this bill would, in our opinion, play a negative role in the production of housing. In H.F. 167 the municipality is instructed to provide the election machinery which means, according to the opinion of the Election Division under the Secretary of State, that the election must be carried out through the municipalities' Election Bureaus using the regular election rules as they apply in each municipality to age and registration.

In our opinion if referenda are used they are more fully participatory when they are advisory only and are run by the representative residential body, since the ground rules can then include ALL residents, including teenagers. The planning to achieve housing and produce viable balanced communities is in our opinion the place for citizen input. What the neighborhood needs and wants should be decided upon by the residents in close cooperation with the planners.

The Housing and Redevelopment Authorities are an essential part of

the mechanism needed to provide safe and sanitary housing for all through their functions of rehabilitation and land aggregation for housing development consistent with the planning goals of the municipalities.

Under the new concept of urban renewal, the Neighborhood Development Program, one starts with a representative residential body. On this base one can work for full citizen participation. We suggest that the urban renewal process could be more effective if a block contact program were included in all urban renewal Neighborhood Development Program budgets to assure a full two-way communication of needs and objectives.

Finally, the League of Women Voters of Minnesota opposes H.F. 167 since it believes that the proposed referenda could hinder and delay necessary housing development without being a positive force for citizen participation in the re-creation of a viable community.