

League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara Local Program Focus 2015-2016

1. 6/2009 Action consistent with these criteria for support of intergovernmental relationships: Local intergovernmental relationships may include but not be limited to shared services, cooperative agreements, mergers of local government functions, consolidations of local government structures, dissolutions of villages and towns, and annexations.

When deciding whether to support a local intergovernmental relationship, the following criteria should be applied:

- a. Cost saving and positive effect on taxes;
 - b. Quality and efficiency of services;
 - c. Cooperative and collaborative planning process;
 - d. Transparency of the process;
 - e. Well defined channels for citizen input and review;
 - f. Social and economic justice;
 - g. Provision of both short and long term evaluation.
2. 6/2012 Support of the 2012 LWVUS position on the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education, with action when appropriate. Support of the 11/2006 LWVNYS position on financing education. Continue to monitor compliance of New York Charter Schools Act.
 3. 6/2012 Support for the 1984 LWVUS Federal Fiscal Policies position with emphasis on educating League members and the public on this position.
 4. Action in support of regional land use planning enhancing urban neighborhoods, containing urban sprawl and protecting agricultural land, open space, watersheds and other sensitive areas.
 5. Support of a broader management of local government services. Specifically support of:
 - a. Regional land use planning developed by a representative body with professional staff, adequate funding, citizen participation and with authority to implement its plans;
 - b. Strategic planning and management on a Regional basis for the region-serving infrastructure such as sewers, water, highways, hospitals, regional cultural facilities and parks;
 - c. Regional support and management of services such as public transit, solid waste disposal, environmental planning, central police services and libraries;
 - d. Extension of metro light rail transportation on surface rights-of-way to connect the cities and suburbs; and
 - e. Development of redistributive revenue programs, which would narrow the inequities between the city and the suburbs and would strengthen the region economically; and
 - f. Regional management of the promotion, marketing and economic development of the region. The League further supports the consolidation of industrial development agencies on a county or regional level.
 6. Support of plans for the waterfronts of Erie County (along Lake Erie and the Niagara and the Buffalo Rivers) that provide and ensure
 - a. Year-round public access to the waterfront;
 - b. A coherent regional planning process arrived at and adopted with adequate public participation;
 - c. Only such commercial development as makes appropriate use of a waterfront location;
 - d. Documentation and preservation of the area's significant industrial, commercial and social history;
 - e. Development of services and facilities necessary for a variety of recreational activities; and
 - f. Protection and enhancement of the natural environment at the water's edge.
 7. 6/2012 Support of the LWVUS position on climate change with emphasis on encouraging local governments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to inevitable climate change.
 8. 6/2013 Examine and investigate the Erie County budget and budget process for the purpose of taking action consistent with League positions and priorities. Prepare substantive programs regarding the budget with the goal of educating the committee, League members and the general public.
 9. 6/2015 Support (action for) establishment of a living wage policy by government and for-profit businesses that receive tax incentives and/or other public funds:
 - a. A living wage should provide sufficient income without government assistance, for food, clothing, housing, energy, transportation, health care, education, child care, and a small amount of discretionary income.
 - b. Erie and Niagara Counties should set minimum standards for a living wage for county employees.
 - c. Additionally, laws should be enacted that enable communities to establish living wage ordinances for local government employees and private enterprises that receive public tax money.*The LWVB/N opposes legislation that prohibits such local action.*

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Continuing Responsibilities 2015-2016

1. 6/2014 Continue education campaign on sprawl, with emphasis on the impact of subsidies to sprawling development and the lack of financial incentives for redevelopment in already developed areas.
2. 6/2014 6/2010 Continuation of the 6/2004 studies to examine the situation that exists in the two Erie County jails involving the incarcerated population and their children. Recommendations will be devised to improve the outcome for this population, including but not limited to alternatives to incarceration, discharge planning, service provision in jail as well as upon release and other similar measures.
3. 6/2013 Support reduction of the use of pesticides and support the permanent passage of Pesticide Neighborhood Notification (PNN) in Niagara County.
4. 6/2013 Review the Erie County ethics code
5. 6/2012 Support of a change in the way the Erie County sales tax is distributed. Specifically, support of a formula that includes consideration of a municipality's
 - a. Population
 - b. Percentage of residents at or below the poverty level
 - c. Amount of tax-exempt property
 - d. Relative fiscal capacity
 - e. The value of urban centers
6. Support of the consolidation of the registration of vital records (birth and death records) into a single Erie County district in order to obtain a system that:
 - a. Is efficient and economical,
 - b. Provides accurate records,
 - c. Holds records confidential and secure,
 - d. Affords convenient access to the public and
 - e. Ensures that the revenue derived would benefit all taxpayers in the county equitably.
7. Support of an Erie County Charter with a strong executive form of government in which:
 - a. The lines of responsibility are clearly fixed;
 - b. The governmental organization and administration contribute to economy and efficiency;
 - c. The county legislature shall consist of 17 or fewer uneven number of single member districts apportioned equally according to population:

LWVBN Amherst Unit Program 2015-2016

1. Support measures for environmentally sound water, air and land management in the Town of Amherst.
 - a. Support the Town of Amherst's Adopt-A-Highway program.
 - b. Support the Town of Amherst Recycling program.
2. Review of town government organization: the roles of board and committees, under what authority and how members are selected, in order to increase the number of appointments of women.