

## NONPARTISAN POLICY STATEMENT

### LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

- I. The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham established and maintains its nonpartisan policy for the very purpose of furthering its political effectiveness. The record on nonpartisanship with regard to candidates and parties is one of our best tools for effective partisanship on issues.
- II. The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham follows the broad policy of nonpartisanship laid down by the National League. This policy is briefly:
  - a. The League neither supports nor opposes any political candidate or any political party
  - b. It takes a position on issues only.
  - c. It arrives at a position on an issue from membership consensus based on study and discussion.
- III. Adherence to this policy is primarily the responsibility of the Board of Directors. The executive officers plus one off-board member, to be appointed by the Board, shall act as a permanent committee. The duty of this committee will be (1) to advise the Board on matters of policy on the partisan activity of the League Board members and/or committee chairpersons and (2) to review the nonpartisanship policy statement of LWVGB annually prior to the first nominating committee meeting of the year. In interpreting this policy, all board members are responsible for maintaining the purpose for which the nonpartisanship policy has been established. A copy of the Nonpartisanship Policy Statement shall be given, by the nominating committee, to each person who agrees to serve on the slate of officers and directors.
- V. Board members and officers of LWVGB may, if they choose, participate in the following partisan activities:
  - a. affiliating with a political party
  - b. making a financial contribution to a candidate
  - c. attending party fundraising events, party political meetings and coffee and informal gatherings.

In these situations, the Board members should make it clear the she/he does not represent the LWVGB.

- V. The League President, Voters Service and Action Chair may not participate in the following partisan activities in support of specific candidates:
  - a. signing a political advertisement
  - b. displaying or distributing campaign materials, i.e. marked sample ballots, post cards, posters and bumper stickers
  - c. sponsoring or cosponsoring any meetings, coffee or informal gathering
  - d. canvassing by telephone using personal identification
  - e. working at campaign headquarters
  - f. serving as an officer or on the board of a political party or political organization

Other board members may engage in partisan activity upon approval of the board of directors of the league. These activities should be of a 'backstage' nature and should never include high visibility activities such as written endorsements or speeches on behalf of the candidate. The member should separate these activities from the League board duties. A member may be denied such activity by the board if that member is closely identified with the

League within the community.

In addition, Board members and officers of LWVGB may not serve as an officer or board member of an organization whose primary purpose is contrary to all League program. The political activities of a spouse or relative will be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of the Board member.

- VI. If a League Board member decides to run for office she/he shall resign from the board before announcing her/his candidacy. The resignation shall be made public by the LWVGB president through the local news media. When a League Board member is asked to accept an appointment to an official board, the Policy committee shall determine if there is any conflict and need for resignation. After a resignation for political activity, the political committee shall determine the length of time that the member remains off the Board, considering the importance of the political activity and publicity surrounding it, subject to the approval of the Board.
- VII. Non-Board League members are encouraged to participate fully in the party of their choice.
- VIII. All League members are urged to assist in keeping reports and discussions, at League meetings, nonpartisan.
- IX. All League initiated interviews will be conducted with at least two LWVGB members present. All letters written by a committee chairperson, in the name of the LWVGB stating League position, shall also be signed by the President.

Approved by LWV of Alabama, July, 1976

Adopted by LWVGB, August, 1976

Reviewed by LWVGB, June, 1982

Re-adopted, May, 1984

Re-adopted, June, 1985

Re-adopted, April 1986

Re-adopted, June, 1988

Reviewed by LWVGB, July, 2002

Re-adopted June, 2003

Reviewed by LWVGB, June, 2004

**Re-adopted September 2005**

## **Recommended Policies for Adoption**

### **Dissemination of Membership Directory and Mailing Lists**

The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham (LWVGB) Membership Directory and mailing lists shall not be given to other organizations or individuals without the permission of the LWVGB Executive Committee.

**Adopted 6-14-03**

### **Exclusionary Establishments**

The LWVGB shall hold no meetings or social events at any establishment that maintains exclusionary membership policies or practices.

**Adopted 6-14-03**

### **Diversity Policy**

The LWVGB, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief in the commitment to diversity and pluralism.

The LWVGB recognizes that diverse perspectives are necessary for responsible and effective decision making in democratic organizations.

The LWVGB affirms its commitment to remove barriers to participation in any League activity on the behalf of age, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or national origin, and to actively seek to be inclusive.

**Adopted 6-14-03**