

2020 Program Planning Survey

Response ID:245 Data

1. 2020 Program Planning Survey

1. Please provide your information below. If you do not know your League ID please click [here](#) to find it.

	Your Information
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League Name	LWV of Amherst
League ID	MA200

2. 2020 Program Planning

2. Do you support the proposed program focus, *Making Democracy Work*®?

Yes

3. Would you like to recommend another program item, in addition to or instead of the Campaign for Making Democracy Work®?

Yes

4. Please provide a statement (300 words or less) describing the scope of your proposal, including a description of the issue area, its importance in advancing the League's mission and the resources needed to carry out the proposal.

LWV of Amherst (MA) asks LWVUS to create a new "Climate Emergency" program for 2020-2022.

It is essential that the League take strong and visible action on the Climate Emergency. We must stand with the young people who understand this crucial issue. Our emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion demands that we address an issue which disproportionately affects people of color and people who are poor. And climate disruption will have devastating effects on the US economy, individuals and all levels of government, posing a serious threat to our civil liberties and freedoms.

"Making Democracy Work" means supporting solutions to the climate crisis that are responsive to equity and justice. Tragically, those least responsible for climate change suffer the greatest consequences of environmental degradation and pollution. Democracy works when all have a voice and are assured of a safe, sustainable, and healthy environment.

Climate Emergency must be included as a core part of the national League's 2020-2022 program. Many state and local Leagues are already working on climate issues, so the resources required of LWVUS will be minimal. But climate action is a national issue, and we need national League recognition, coordination and leadership. Adding "Climate Emergency" as a separate program acknowledges the need for urgent action at every level of the League. The League must be a significant and visible force in addressing the climate crisis—or there won't be a next 100 years.

5. Which areas of the 2018-2020 national program priorities within the Campaign for Making Democracy Work® has your League worked on during the current biennium? Select all that apply.

Voting Rights

Improving Elections

Redistricting

6. Please share the details of your work on the 2018-2020 national program priorities within the Campaign for Making Democracy Work® (300 words or less).

We registered voters. We worked with our Town Clerk to expand voter registration and cosponsored training on the collection of petition signatures. We offered presentations on democracy and elections at member meetings (open to the public) and provided election-night coverage on local access television. We participated in LWVMA's ballot question study, which deepened our understanding of many of these issues. Finally, this biennium brought a major change in our town's government, leading to a large increase in our citizen education efforts. These included the usual candidate and issue forums, voter guides and letters to the editor, and also a new weekly program on local access television to familiarize the voters with the faces and issues of the transition.

7. Which LWVUS positions does your League use to act at the state and local level? Check all that apply.

Citizen's Right to Vote
Apportionment
Redistricting
Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation
Individual Liberties
Public Policy on Reproductive Choices
Natural Resources
Resource Management
Environmental Protection and Pollution Control
Air Quality
Energy
Land Use
Water Resources
Waste Management
Public Participation
Equal Rights
Education, Employment and Housing
Health Care
Immigration
Meeting Basic Human Needs
Housing Supply

Comments: We tend to cite local positions when available (e.g. on affordable housing) but only because they lend specificity that national positions can not provide.

8. Please provide anything else you would like to share on Program Planning. Please keep your responses to 300 words or less. For more detail on LWVUS positions, see the Resources section.

Multiple releases of questions with changing numbers was confusing. It was not clear how many free-text response boxes would be available: one? two? or, as it turns out, five. We do not know when information about the pilot concurrence became available on the LWVUS web site, but we were unaware of this proposal until the final program planning materials became available. Conflicting dates on various web sites.

3. Pilot Concurrence

9. In June 2019, LWVUS authorized a pilot concurrence on electoral systems. The purpose of the pilot was to give Leagues additional time to review and consider this position during their program planning. Was the additional time for review helpful in reviewing and considering the proposed concurrence position on Electoral Systems?

No

10. Please provide a statement (300 words or less) describing potential improvements to the process (if necessary). It's

important in assisting your League adequate review and consideration time, as well as resources LWVUS could provide in the future.

The proposed position statement is well-formulated and addresses an issue that is central to Making Democracy Work. Unfortunately, the process in this pilot concurrence was inadequate.

- The "pros and cons" are sketchy and incoherent. The study committee needed to reach out to Leagues across the country to put together an on-line study committee and prepare better materials.
- This particular proposal may not be appropriate for concurrence. It appears to be based on carefully selected statements, extracted from the positions of several state Leagues and offered without context. We do not know what those Leagues actually studied.
- Publicity from the LWVUS was entirely lacking. Most Leagues did not know about this proposal before receiving Program Planning information.

The length of time available for this review is of concern only because the proposal was not publicized. Even when LWVUS conducts a formal two-year study, local Leagues do not receive study materials until mid-fall before Convention. So three or four months with adequate publicity is enough.

We believe this approach to updating or expanding national League positions has promise. In particular, we applaud the LWVUS Board's willingness to accept a proposal from the grassroots, as an effective alternative to using valuable staff time. We believe that national studies, as well as concurrences, could be prepared efficiently in this manner by on-line communities of members.

Because this issue is so central to Making Democracy Work, we strongly encourage the proposers to put together a working group to strengthen their proposal. And when they have done so, we expect the LWVUS Board to forward the results of their efforts to all Leagues in a timely and well-publicized manner.

4. Thank You!

Confirmation

Mar 05, 2020 17:30:09 Success: Email Sent to: [Invalid question ID: "15". Check your merge code.]

New Send Email

Mar 05, 2020 17:30:09 Success: Email Sent to: aguzman@lww.org,ProgPlan@lww.org