



## The League of Women Voters of Martin County

### **2017 Legislative Priorities**

*The League of Women Voters of Florida is a grassroots organization, and as such, we focus on the issues that our members care the most about. Each year, our membership is polled to see which issues are most important to them. Each local league submits priorities, and after tabulating each local league's submissions, the top five areas become our priorities for the legislative Session. The following statements represent the consensus reached across the State of Florida regarding this year's most critical concerns.*

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#### **1. Education**

- Restore district authorization to levy 2.0 mills for capital outlay funding for school facilities construction and renovation.
- Increase operational funding to pre-2008 levels so that districts may increase the school day and curriculum choices.
- Revise the sole focus of the state accountability system from test scores to measures that more accurately reflect districts' progress in raising student achievement, meet the needs of diverse students and improve access to high quality academic and career programs for all students.
- Improve fiscal and operational oversight of charter schools by increasing transparency in student admission and retention data, ensuring the independence of charter boards from charter management companies and providing guidelines to reduce self-dealing opportunities in real estate transactions and other charter services.
- Eliminate the growth of corporate-tax credit scholarships to private schools and require private schools currently receiving these scholarships to participate in the state accountability system.

#### **2. Election Law**

- Support the automatic restoration of voting rights for former felony offenders, including support for a constitutional amendment to achieve same.
- Support legislation to reduce from 29 days to 19 days the time voter registration books must be closed before each election.
- Support legislation to restrict the ability of an elector to file as a write-in candidate, the goal being to minimize what has become a problem, as "ghost candidates" file in order to close primary elections.
- Monitor and support the progress of online voter registration implementation to ensure that it meets its 2017 deadline, and adopt legislation for Florida to join the at least 26 other states that are members of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC).
- Support legislation necessary for Florida to join the at least 10 other states that are members of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC), so that Florida's Presidential Electors would be required to award all their votes to the candidate who wins the overall popular vote in the 50 states and District of Columbia.
- Ensure the adoption by Florida of the National Voter Registration Act ("Motor-Voter" law) requirement that every citizen be automatically provided voter registration update services when

she/he applies for, renews or changes her/his address on a driver's license or state-issued identification card.

### **3. Gun Safety**

- Support proposals that would expand background checks in Florida, thereby closing the gun show and Internet loopholes.
- Support proposals that would impose a statewide ban on semi-automatic assault weapons and large capacity magazines.
- Oppose any proposals that would make it legal for those with concealed weapons permits to carry firearms on Florida's public college and university campuses.
- Oppose any proposals that would make it legal for those with concealed weapons permits to carry openly firearms in public places.
- Oppose any proposals that would permit Floridians to carry concealed weapons without a permit.
- Oppose any proposals that would expand the current "Stand Your Ground" law.
- Oppose any proposals that would permit Florida School Boards or School Superintendents to designate employees or others to carry concealed firearms, for security purposes, on school grounds at K-12 schools.

### **4. Health Care**

- Correct the Florida KidCare program's coverage so it will provide insurance to children ages 0 to 1-year old who are not eligible for Medicaid.
- Develop legislation to accept 2017 Medicaid expansion dollars for Florida, without being bound for future years, or develop a budget for a comprehensive plan to provide health insurance for working.
- Amend Florida's Public Health statute, Chapter 390, to remove the provision providing that a physician must delay at least 24 hours before terminating, with a pregnant woman's voluntary and informed written consent, her pregnancy.

### **5. Natural Resources**

- Support sustainable energy solutions for Florida, including adoption of renewable energy standards and legislation promoting the expansion of solar energy.
- Support efforts to improve water quality of both surface water and aquifers through legislation to reduce pollution and excessive withdrawals, including prohibiting "fracking" statewide.
- Support full funding of the Florida Forever land acquisition program and proper implementation of the Water and Land Legacy Conservation Amendment

(Amendment 1) adopted in 2014.

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*For additional information, please contact:*

*Linda Grand, President  
3084 Wimbledon Terrace, Palm City, FL 34990  
P: 772-349-1264  
E: LEnzGrand@gmail.com*

*Donna Dupuy, Legislative Director  
P.O. Box 1789, Stuart FL 34995  
P: 772-286-0156  
E: donna@donnadupuy.com*