

practices of "holding harmless" school districts and apportioning incremental aid by geographic shares perpetuate inequities for both pupils and taxpayers

Reform of the Property Tax System

The League advocates for uniform equitable assessment and property tax systems. The League accepts the necessity of local property taxes, while at the same time opposing overreliance on property taxes. The League favors implementing a property tax circuit breaker based on need, with an annual cost of living adjustment (in lieu of the STAR program) to alleviate the impact of high property taxes on some households.

Opposition to the Education Investment Tax Credit

The League opposes the diversion of funds for the Education Investment Tax Credit or similar initiatives and believes that charitable deductions are a more appropriate means of encouraging philanthropy

in this area. Large tax credits disproportionately reduce the tax obligations of high tax bracket taxpayers and create a two-tiered donor/beneficiary system.

WOMEN'S ISSUES

Fair Pay

The League supports fair pay reforms, including passage of equal-pay-for-job-titles-of-comparable-worth legislation.

Domestic Violence

The League supports measures to reduce the incidence and effects of domestic violence. We also support protections against discrimination for victims of domestic violence and human trafficking.

ERA

The League supports passage of an Equal Rights Amendment for all protected classes.

CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

NYS Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224 • (518) 474-8390
For additional information, please visit the Governor's Web site: www.governor.ny.gov

New York State Senate

c/o Your Senator, Room #, Albany, NY 12247
Senate Operator: (518) 455-2800
Legislative Info: (518) 455-3216
Bill Status Hotline: (518) 455-7545 / (800) 342-9860
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New York State Senator Robert G. Ort

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Albany, New York 12247 • (518) 455-2024
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New York State Assembly

c/o Your Assemblymember, Room#, Albany, NY 12248
Assembly Operator: (518) 455-4100
Public Info: (518) 455-4218
Bill Status Hotline: (518) 455-7545 / (800) 342-9860
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New York State Assemblyman Carl E. Heastie

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New York State Legislature Legislative Session Information

Bill Text, Status, Summaries,
Sponsor Memos, Floor Votes
<http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us>



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2021 League of Women Voters® of New York State

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW YORK STATE

The League of Women Voters of New York State (LWVNY) is a unique, multi-issue, nonpartisan, political organization. It encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through advocacy and education. We can take action under all of our positions, as outlined in LWVNY Impact on Issues (<https://my.lwv.org/new-york-state/legislative-action>). We also often take action under national positions identified in the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) Impact on Issues. This booklet highlights some of the key issues that we anticipate taking significant action on in the 2021 Legislative Session.

TAKE ACTION! IT'S EASY!

To take action on the issues listed in the brochure or any other issue, contact your elected officials and make your voice heard! To find your representatives, log onto the state League website at www.lwvny.org and click on Find Your Elected Official. You can contact your representatives by phone, letter or email. Your involvement can make a critical difference!

To learn more about a particular issue and/or how you can help advance our legislative agenda, you can contact LWVNY office at 518-465-4162, email lwvny@lwvny.org, or contact a member of the LWVNY Issues Committee:

Suzanne Stassevitch, President
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Sally Robinson, VP/ Issues & Advocacy
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For Information on the State Legislature and Pending Legislation

<https://nyassembly.gov/>

<https://nysenate.gov>

<http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menuf.cgi>
(Bill Text, Status, Summaries, Sponsor Memos, Floor Votes)

ELECTION LAW

Expanding Early Voting

The League supports expanding early voting by reducing the maximum number of registered voters per early voting poll site and ensuring state funding for expanded site locations and hours.

State and County Boards of Elections Reform

The League supports fundamental change to achieve improved operations of county and state boards of elections, with an immediate focus on increased transparency and accountability for staffing and procurement at the NYC BOE. The League also supports improving the timeliness and transparency of tabulating and reporting of election results to the public, while ensuring voters are given a chance to cure absentee ballot deficiencies and voter intent is protected.

Restoration of Voting Rights for People on Parole

The League believes that all individuals who are released on parole should have the opportunity to vote.

GOOD GOVERNMENT REFORM

Campaign Finance

The League believes that additional meaningful reform of the current laws is necessary for a successful public financing system. Priorities for reform include further reduction of all contribution limits, including contributions to parties and special "pay-to-play" limits on contributions by lobbyists and those who do business with the state. The League believes that party housekeeping accounts should be banned or significantly reduced and that transfers

of campaign contributions should not be allowed. The personal use of campaign funds by candidates should be banned and campaign fundraising during the legislative session restricted. We believe that there needs to be independent and robust enforcement for all candidates.

Ethics

The League will continue to advocate for the effective implementation and improvements of ethics laws, including replacing the Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE) with a new entity that provides for effective and independent monitoring of state ethics.

FAIR AND INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING

The League supports a fair and independent redistricting process that takes legislators out of the process of drawing the lines and allows for citizen input and transparency and accountability throughout the map making process. The League believes that the commission charged with drawing the lines should be fully funded to cover the cost of staff and operations. The League opposes any efforts to change the current redistricting process which was approved by the voters in 2014 as a constitutional amendment.

HEALTHCARE

The League intends to continue efforts to improve access, cost containment, equity, and safety in healthcare. In order to achieve these goals, the League supports allocation of medical resources to underserved areas, healthy living promotion, disease prevention, school-based health services, women's health issues, long-term care, and adequate financing of the tobacco control program. The League supports a single-payer system as a method for public financing, which would lower administrative costs and promote equity, access, and quality healthcare for all. The League also supports measures for enhancing the safety of patients and staff in acute and long-term care facilities.

Medical Aid in Dying

The League supports the option of medical aid in dying for the terminally ill.

JUDICIAL ISSUES

Streamlining of the Court System

The League supports a unified state court system. The League believes judges should be chosen on the basis of merit and continues to support improvements in the judicial selection process.

Candidates should be proactively encouraged to participate in the current system of Independent Judicial Elections Qualifications Commission. The League supports the adoption of statewide guidelines for law enforcement at all levels to prevent racial and economic profiling.

Support of Adequate Indigents' Defense Services

The League supports a consistent statewide system with oversight by an Independent Public Defense Commission to ensure indigents' defense is more equitable and uniform throughout the state.

Alternatives to Incarceration

The League supports alternatives to incarceration for appropriate offenders. Drug and mental health courts that divert defendants to a more rehabilitative process and ex-offender reentry programs should be monitored and improved where appropriate.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Energy and Climate Change

The League supports legislation, regulation and executive action to protect natural resources, public health, and the economy from impacts of the fossil fuel industry and favors the development of renewable energy to meet emissions goals and slow climate change. We believe that the state should support renewable energy, including relevant qualifying criteria for subsidies. The liabilities, costs and expenses associated with fossil fuel operations should be directed to the industry.

Hazardous Waste

The League supports the proper labeling and disposal of hazardous waste products and a ban on importing drilling and other "hazardous" waste from other states. We promote actions that move New York toward a Zero Waste future.

Agriculture

The League supports policies that protect food production and distribution while diverting food waste from New York's landfills, incinerators and other waste treatment facilities.

STATE FINANCES AND EDUCATION

Greater Equity in Education Financing

Past Campaign for Fiscal Equity court-ordered state aid increases should be funded irrespective of the property tax cap. The League also opposes the use of "geographic shares" as a basis for allocating either operating or capital aid and believes that the past

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