VOTER SERVICES

*To increase voter turnout and voter education by providing enhanced nonpartisan Voter Services to include, but not limited to, voter registration, information on ballot issues, candidates, and other voting issues and the use of various media including VOTE411. (2014)

Because of the Broward League’s commitment to voter services, it was decided to add this to our Program to outline exactly what we would do to fulfill that promise. Thus we will commit to conduct Voter registration and have a voter information table at every event we attend, research and explain all ballot issues on the ballot, and fully utilize Vote411 and other social media.

*Action to eliminate voter suppression and to support voter registration of returning citizens.

Added “action to Restore Voting Rights to People with past felony convictions” in 2017 and worked diligently on Citizens Initiative for Amendment 4 to get it added to the 2018 ballot and on passage of that amendment. Once passed, the wording was changed in 2019 to work on registering those voters.

*Support National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. (2019, per LWVFL and LWVUS positions.)

The US Constitution allows State Legislatures to determine the method for choosing the electoral college electors. After enough states totaling 270 electoral votes agree, the election of the President would be determined by the total national popular vote.

BROWARD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

*Support of the Broward County Charter (1974)

The League began its study of Broward County Government in the mid-1960s. In September 1974, we developed criteria for county government, and advocated for a Charter for Broward County. The study consensus included support for a professional appointed administrator who would implement and execute policies of the Commission; support of modern fiscal and personnel management; support of charter review every five years by an impartial representative group with proposed changes subject to referendum; support of recall, referendum and initiative; support for limiting county commissioners’ tenure to two consecutive terms; and support for increasing the size of the commission to seven or nine members. While not all of the League’s positions were included in the proposed Charter, enough were included in the proposal.
to allow League support. We actively lobbied and worked for successful passage by the voters in 1975.

*Support of Charter Changes to provide for an elected county executive, appointed county administrator, single member districts and an increase in the number of commission seats based on future needs. (1984)*

In 1983, LWVBC began a review of the structure of Broward County Government and the existing charter. The committee met frequently to study and survey over 50 other counties of similar size in the nation, to interview officials, and academicians, to hold workshops, and to discuss pros and cons of the various possible forms of government. Consensus was reached in November 1984 on the following package:

- **Creation of a county-wide elected executive/mayor for Broward County. (Executive would not serve on the commission.)**
- **Retention of a professional administrator to be appointed by the executive.**
- **A change to single-member commission districts. Members would be elected by only the voters in his/her district. (Note: In 1981, LWVFL adopted a position supporting single-member districts for the Florida Legislature.)**
- **Increase in the size of the commission.**

**Reasons:** Rapid growth, a diverse population, and economic interests make the traditional commission/administrator structure less capable of dealing with complex issues in a timely manner.

1. One person — the executive — accountable and responsive to all the voters is needed; one person to speak officially for the county, separating legislative and administrative functions, providing strong political leadership, building consensus for short and long term planning.
2. A professional administrator answerable only to the executive is needed to handle the day-to-day operation and management of county departments.
3. Single member districts provide better representation of under-represented political and ethnic minorities, provide a balance to county-wide elected executive, and are often mandated by courts whenever countywide election of commissioners is challenged.
4. The county is too large for only seven commissioners. [now nine]

Attempts have been made to increase public awareness and understanding of the issues. In 1987, the Charter Review Commission was appointed by the Broward County Commission and League lobbied hard, joining with other groups to have the above package incorporated in the Review Commission report. League efforts failed by one vote. The next Charter Review Commission was appointed in June of 1994. It, too, failed to allow single member districts with an elected executive on the ballot, in spite of strong League lobbying. The 1999 Florida Legislature, on the urging of the Broward Delegation, placed a charter amendment on the March 2000 ballot to form single member districts with an elected mayor, retaining an appointed county administrator. The Broward Commission also placed an amendment on the ballot creating nine single-member districts. Only the Commission amendment passed,
effective with the November 2000 election. In 2016 a Charter Review Commission was appointed and while there was vigorous discussion about an elected County Mayor, the topic never reached the ballot.

* Review position on Broward County Charter changes. (2020)

The Charter has been in existence since 1975 and has been amended many times. This review will allow us to understand those changes including what future needs are.

* Support home rule by municipalities and counties in the administration of local issues. (Per LWVFL position) (2018)

The Florida Legislature frequently passes measures that undermine local home rule. LWVBC wanted to indicate our support of home rule and the Broward County Charter.

* Monitor redistricting process in Broward County. (2019)

Broward County Commission appointed a Charter Review Committee in 2015. Several long time League issues were discussed, supported by League members in committee discussions, placed on the 2018 ballot and passed. One placed the Fair District Standards for Redistricting now in the FL Constitution in the Broward County Charter, and one identified an independent Florida College/University to draw the lines following those standards in the Charter. Redistricting will take place following the publication of the results of the 2020 Census and the League will monitor the process.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (FORMERLY NATURAL RESOURCES)

*Support of Acquisition, Development and Management of Public Park Lands, Greenways and Open Spaces

The study of Parks and Recreation with particular reference to acquisition and maintenance of more land for this purpose was begun in January 1970. The need for preservation of green space as county development increased was a major factor in the Broward League study. In January 1971, League members voted for “support of acquisition and development of land for parks and recreation”. The words “greenways and open spaces” were added at the 2000 annual meeting.

*Support of Criteria for any Commercialization In Public Parks

In the 1980’s, for-profit corporations began proposing large, commercial projects to be constructed on public park lands. The study on privatization of public parks was begun in 1988 with consensus completed in December 1989. Privatization is the concept of a governmental agency using a private contractor to perform traditional services, possibly at a cost savings to the public, or to provide a service that would not otherwise be available. It is a public/private partnership that is used in many areas of the country. The study was not concerned with services such as cleaning or food services, but with commercialization such as Ski-Rixen at Quiet Waters.
Park and Butterfly World at Tradewinds Park. Additional money would be made available to the Park System from fees paid by the for-profit enterprise; projects would be available to parks that Parks and Recreation Division could not afford to initiate; projects might provide unique, unusual interest centers, bringing more people to the parks and broadening park use; more tourists might be attracted and there would be more publicity for the parks. However, protection of park resources might become less important; company policy would dictate management of the enterprise and fees might be lower than needed to compensate for loss of park land. Cost of doing business is less inside a public park thus infringing on similar businesses outside the park; there might be destruction of wildlife habitats, loss of wildlife and open green space.

After reviewing the pros and cons, the LWVBC reached the following position, listing criteria for any commercialization:

- Private, for-profit businesses should, at times, be allowed in public parks. The Broward County Division of Parks and Recreation should develop written, specific criteria to accept or reject proposals for further consideration. The League of Women Voters of Broward County will consider the following in evaluating the suitability of a commercial enterprise in a public park:

1. *The type of park in which the business is being proposed, i.e. active park, passive park, environmentally sensitive park, etc.*
2. *The type of land that would be used within the park under consideration, i.e. environmentally sensitive, disturbed; unique habitat, wildlife habitat, etc.*
3. *Could the proposed business be successfully operated outside of the park?*
4. *Would this project be compatible with current facilities and use within the park?*
5. *The environmental impact on the park and the surroundings, i.e. noise level created by the business, effect on wildlife and plant life, impact on groundwater and air quality, impact on neighborhood traffic, lights, litter, etc.*
6. *The amount of land area proposed for the project including its support facilities in relation to the size of the park.*
7. *Opinions of nearby residents.*
8. *Cultural, recreational and educational advantages to the County.*
9. *Broad public use — is it affordable and available for all economic classes?*
10. *Intention of the donors of the land, if applicable.*
11. *Does the project preclude use by the public for part of the year?*
12. *Will the developers pay their fair share of development costs within the negotiations, i.e. roads, lights, sewers, water, surface drainage, etc.*
13. *Negotiations between the proposed business and Broward County should be conducted in the “Sunshine” with adequate notice to the public and opportunity to observe all aspects of the negotiation process.*
14. *The proposed project should have been researched and recommended by the Parks Division staff before acceptance by the County Commission.*

*Monitor and support the Conservation of Water and Water Resource Areas, including the Everglades Restoration. (1991) Oppose oil drilling, including fracking, off shore and in the Everglades. (added 2019)*
Adopted at the Annual Meeting in April 1991, this study was begun because of water quality and quantity problems in South Florida. The study, specific to our locality, followed the already existent LWVUS positions. There was also a concurrent LWVFL study of “Fresh water resources in Florida and public policies that relate to their conservation and availability for environmental, urban, mining and public supply, agricultural and industrial needs.” Those studies resulted in specific policies for regulating water usage, wetland protection and mitigation. Please see the LWVFL Study and Action

*Support development and implementation of a regional climate change action plan for Southeast Florida including emphasis on encouraging use of Solar and other alternative energy sources. (2012)


Recycling has long been an issue for League in Broward County. A recycling study was done in 1991 resulting in League support for setting goals and developing programs for recycling and source reduction of solid waste.

1991 Position Statement: The League of Women Voters of Broward County supports setting ambitious goals for recycling and source reduction and developing programs to achieve those goals. The League supports:

- Public education that provides an understanding of the solid waste disposal problems our community faces and the costs and benefits of methods of disposal, particularly, the environmental benefits of recycling and source reduction.
- Governmental efforts to develop the necessary transfer facilities, recycling plants, and markets to sustain successful recycling programs.
- Governmental and private efforts to reduce packaging and to manufacture products that are easily recycled and contain fewer hazardous materials.
- Governmental and private efforts to purchase products made from recycled materials to develop and support markets for such goods.

In 2018, another recycling study was done resulting in many specific recommendations for local government to deal with volume and contamination. Members have been involved in governmental response to this issue for many years. The complete study results follow the “in a nutshell suggestions”.

1. We need a much more extensive program to educate the public how to recycle.
2. Consider moving away from single stream recycling as that is known to increase contamination rates. Palm Beach County does better - there are two bins.
3. Join with other cities to create a regional authority like the old Resource Recovery Board to tackle recycling. Part of this larger government effort should be developing government owned facilities to process recyclables to avoid the monopoly we have now.
4. Institute both penalties and incentives to recycle and recycle right. Compliance must be monitored.
5. Require that a percentage of local government purchasing be of recycled products to boost the market.
6. Impose a ban on plastic straws and plastic bags offered by businesses as many other states and cities have done to greatly reduce unrecyclable waste that is a danger to our waterways and wildlife.

**2018 Position Statement: RECYCLING RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITIES**

**Contamination**
Contamination of recycle bins is the major cause of our failing residential recycling program. The recyclables are not marketable, cities are losing money on recyclable sales, landfills are growing, litter is on the rise and we are falling further behind in the state goal of 75% recycling by 2020. To address contamination, cities should:
- Expand considerable public education efforts including mailings, social media, website information, posters and written materials at official sites and public events, an app or tech initiative to provide information, and targeted information to new residents and businesses.
- Enact a local ordinance to impose penalties for non-compliance.
- Establish a meaningful incentive program for compliance.
- Monitor compliance with random, frequent checks of recycle bins including the ability of the hauler to visualize bins with non-recyclables.
- Be sure contamination reports from the haulers are easily understandable, go to the appropriate city officials, and are reviewed and reported to the elected officials.

**Purchasing Requirements**
- Mandate that government departments purchase a minimum percentage of recycled products. There should also be requirements of minimum packaging.

**New Construction**
- Require new multi-family and commercial developments to have adequate space for recycling bins.

**Special Events**
- Sponsor specific recycling collection events throughout the year for hazardous waste, electronics, battery and other special products.
- Provide adequate recycle bins at all special events and permanently in parks.

**Businesses**
- Require businesses to recycle and provide incentives and recognition.

**Grants**
- Seek grants for recycling programs.

**Plastics**
- Provide incentives to businesses to reduce the use of plastics.

**Reduction and Reuse Projects**
- Support programs to reuse products such as refurbishing computers and projects to lend equipment such as tool libraries; to reduce and reuse waste.

**Create Economies of Scale for Regional Facilities**
- Join together with other cities to share the expense of more comprehensive and advanced recycling programs and facilities to handle and process materials.
COUNTY-WIDE LIBRARY SYSTEM

*Support of the county-wide system.*

In 1971, a study and evaluation of the library structure and services available to the residents of Broward County was begun. Go-see trips to local libraries, as well as to the Tampa/Hillsborough county-wide library system topped the study. According to the American Library Association, city libraries in Broward County were well below standards. Broward County had one of the poorest systems along the Florida east coast. In December 1971, League members determined by consensus that service was not adequate and that formation of a county-wide system was essential. The position approved by the Board stated: “The League of Women Voters of Broward County supports the establishment of a county-wide Library System.” The Broward County Library Lobby was formed in February 1972. Due to strong League lobbying efforts, the County Commission voted to approve the establishment of a county-wide system and the first Director was appointed in early 1974 with a $1.5 million budget. In 1978, a bond issue was proposed to county voters, part of which would fund the county-wide Library system and other needed community services. League studied the bond issue, agreed to support it and worked toward its passage. Also, in April 1974, the Broward League had unanimous consensus to support full funding of public libraries in the Florida Legislative session. Finally in May 1983, through the efforts of the Broward League, the State League adopted the position: “Support of full funding of eligible public library systems as provided in Section 257.17 Florida Statutes.” Leagues have continued to lobby the Legislature to increase state aid to libraries and, by continuing this item on LWVBC’s program we maintain our commitment to our county-wide library system.

*Support of Friends of Library groups. (2017)*

CHILDREN’S ISSUES

*Support of an independent taxing district in Broward County to fund children’s services pursuant to FL statutes 125.901 and monitor Children’s Services Council.*

The study of children’s issues in Broward County has been in place since the formation of LWVBC in 1953. The Broward County Children’s Services Board, initially called the Juvenile Welfare Board, acts in an advisory capacity to the County Commission in the area of identifying needs and recommending County funding of services for children. In 1986, the Florida Legislature enacted Florida Statute Section 125.901 which authorizes each county to create a Children’s Services Council and an independent special taxing district to provide funding for children’s services. LWVF supports this concept and allows each county league to determine if a special taxing district is appropriate for that county and to then work for the referendum to create the district. The membership of the Children’s Services Council, mandated by statute, consists of the Superintendent of Schools, a local school board member selected by the board, the HRS district administrator or designee, a member of the County Commission, the judge assigned to Juvenile Cases, and 5 members appointed by the Governor to serve for 4-year terms. The consensus that a special taxing district is appropriate for Broward County was approved in the fall of 1993, after a two-year study of the Children’s Services Board revealed a
system of inadequacies in the delivery of services to children and their families. The League, along with a coalition of other organizations, worked for many years to build support for this special taxing district. The County Commission placed the issue on the September 2000 ballot and the voters approved the special taxing district for Broward County. Following the required action by the Florida Legislature, the Children’s Services Council was appointed; taxes are now being collected and distributed. The Children’s Services Board, discussed above, continues to operate and receives funding directly from the county budget.

*Advocate and support effective and efficient services for Broward County children. (1995)*

This position focused the many LWVFL and LWVUS Social Policy Positions on action in Broward County. Broward County has a high infant mortality rate, with the rate in the minority community almost three times that in the white community. Many years of prenatal education and other efforts have not eliminated the disparity between black and white infant deaths. In 1996 the LWVBC Children’s Issues Committee spearheaded a campaign with other community organizations and citizens to create a Pediatric Pathology Program in Broward County that would document the specific causes of infant deaths in order to establish a basis for future interventions, and that would then establish an information registry to include factors that are likely contributors to the racial disparity in birth outcomes in black babies. The program would be free to all residents of Broward County. After seven years of concentrated advocacy, a Pediatric Pathology Program was approved by the County Commission on Feb 4, 2003. Autopsies are conducted at Broward General through the Chris Evert Children’s Hospital. Babies are referred from all birthing hospitals in the county. The program is thought to be the first of its kind in the nation. The LWVBC supports efforts to decrease infant mortality and to eliminate disparity in infant deaths between black and white babies.

The following was added at the April 2005 Annual Meeting: *Monitor the implementation and functioning of the privatization of the foster care system.* In May 2000, The Governor signed the Legislative Bill authorizing the removal of foster care services from the responsibilities of the Department of Children and Families and privatizing those services. Privatization statewide is moving slowly, with Broward one of the first counties to have a program in place. LWVFL and LWVUS Social Policy positions on foster care would be used to follow the progress and effectiveness of the new program. The item was dropped from LWVBC program in 2019.

*Monitor detention centers and support actions that encourage diversion and deflection programs in the Juvenile Justice System. (added 2018, Per LWVFL position)*

LWVBC has an active committee monitoring and encouraging use of diversion and deflection programs.

**EDUCATION**

*Support accountability for capital expenditures) (2020)*

A study of methods to control the impact of growth in Broward County Schools was adopted at the 1993 Annual Meeting because of the tremendous problems in the Broward school system
caused by the addition of about 10,000 new students each year. After the study, consensus was taken and the final position adopted at the Annual Meeting in 1994: Support for concurrency, for accountability for capital expenditures, for local solutions which involve the school’s entire community and for public/private partnerships. (1994) The full position statement follows. (Note: All school systems in Florida are county-wide.)

- The League of Women Voters of Broward County continues to support a strong Growth Management Act, and believes that concurrent requirements for schools are consistent with this position. The League feels that real estate developers, working with the County Commission, local municipalities and the School Board of Broward County, must assume a fiscal contribution in housing school children attracted by development. Government entities charged with the health, safety and welfare of students should continue as the final authority in all student housing decisions. The LWVBC acknowledges the need to provide significant additional housing for students entering the school district. Through building, remodeling, upgrading schools, temporary units, public space and an emphasis on efficient and excellent use of space through the participation of the entire community, the League believes the challenge of the growth crisis can be met.

- The League supports accountability for capital expenditures through increased openness and vigilance to public disclosure by the School Board of Broward County. The League believes that public awareness is best achieved through the use of traditional funding methods, and therefore supports those methods to raise money for capital construction which are highly visible, and allow for public input through process. The LWVBC supports general obligation bonds as proper instrument for funding capital needs of the School Board of Broward County. Sales taxes, seen as regressive, are less favored. Impact Fees are a reasonable means of raising capital. Transaction taxes on resale of real estate are also a viable source of capital, although commercial contributions should be carefully assessed to reflect the contribution of business to growth, and the fiscal health of the community. Increasing the ability of the school board to raise millage can be considered as a tool, but should be pursued in a manner that increases public awareness.

- The LWVBC believes good program solutions can be achieved for individual schools with complete integration of the community into the planning process, access to information for decision-makers, and the full support of the resources of the School Board of Broward County. Possible solutions meeting these criteria can include year-round education, flexible scheduling, and alternative programs. Double sessions is regarded as a poor solution which must be implemented with care and attention to contemporary situations, and only as a temporary alternative to provision of adequate facilities for the traditional school day. Alternative programs within the district which have demonstrated educational benefit and which do not appropriate money from capital funds should be exploited for any growth resolving benefits received from their implementation. Dual Use of public and private buildings is perceived as a good solution which can increase community partnerships, resources to the School District and enhance the vitality of communities. In supporting Dual Use, and alternative programs of local benefit, the LWVBC favors the concept of waivers from the State Department of Education School Building Code for Broward County in the effort to provide excellent educational housing for the students of the district. The League believes the School Board
of Broward County and State Department of Education can cooperate to assure safety in these creative solutions to the growth crisis in Broward County.

At the Annual Meeting, 4/25/2020, that position was reduced to “support for accountability for capital expenditures.” The policy of concurrency was eliminated by the Florida Legislature, yearly growth is considerably reduced, and many charter schools have been established. A review of the changing educational needs of Broward County Students was adopted.

* Review changing educational needs of Broward County students. (2020)

*Action in support of Accountability for Charter Schools. (Per LWVFL position)

*Support for traditional public schools. (2018)

**WOMEN’S ISSUES (2017)**

*Support equal opportunity, equal pay for equal work, and all equal rights for women.*

In 2017, Women’s Issues were identified as separate from Human Issues to strengthen our specific support.

*Actively support pro-choice policies and reproductive freedom. (2017)*

LWVBC has a long history of studying and supporting women’s issues. We were one of the founding members of the Pro-Choice Coalition. At various times women’s issues and human issues were combined; recent decisions have listed them separately.

**HUMAN ISSUES**

The study of global population stabilization and sustainability of resources was formalized at the Annual Meeting in April 1995. The Women’s Issues committee had been meeting for many years studying various women’s issues. This action was to recognize this commitment. In 1997, it was changed to read “global, national and state population stabilization.” In 1998, the title of the study was changed from Women’s Issues to Human Issues. At the April 2019 Annual Meeting this line was deleted. The committee had studied a variety of issues but no consensus was conducted or reached specifically under this study. Consensus on many of the issues raised was reached in other parts of State and National Program.

The phrase “Support equal opportunity and all equal rights for women” was added at the April 2005 Annual Meeting to strengthen our unwavering support for equal rights at all levels of government. This has been separated again into Women’s Issues.

* Support equal rights for all under state and federal law regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability. (per LWVUS) (2020)
This phrase has been added to Human Issues to strengthen local support for all equal rights.

*Support the safe rescue and rehabilitation of victim of human trafficking and the education of the public about this issue. (per LWVUS) (2015)

After a member meeting on this issue we realized the local relevance of the issue and added it to our position statements.

*Promote a health care system for the US that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all US residents, includes behavioral health and controls health care costs. (per LWVUS positions). Support Medicaid expansion for FL. (2018, reworded in 2019)

*Support affordable housing programs and projects. (2018 Per LWVUS positions)

Because of this position, LWVBC supported the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, as proposed by the last County Charter Review Commission, and placed on the 2018 Ballot. It passed overwhelmingly and has been added to the Broward County Charter.

*Support programs that aim to protect and support victims of abuse and sexual harassment. (2018 Per LWVUS positions)

GUN SAFETY (Per LWVFL and LWVUS positions) 2017

*Actively support governmental efforts to promote gun safety legislation and programs.

*Support efforts to educate Broward residents on gun safety issues.

*Actively support the “Lock It Up Program” (2019) and other safe storage programs. (2020)

Our support for gun safety issues has been longstanding but became top priority after the mass shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School. This is our unique project for the free distribution of gun locks and to emphasize the impact of safe storage on suicide prevention.

HANDGUN MANAGEMENT (Added for historical interest)

Begun as a study in Broward County in 1982, consensus was reached in January 1984 for, “Support of regulations concerning the purchase, ownership and use of handguns that balanced as nearly as possible individual constitutional rights with the general interest and welfare of the community.” In 1984, a resolution was passed by Broward County voters (which League supported) to allow the County Commission to establish a maximum ten-day waiting period for the purchase of handguns. In 1988, Broward County approached other leagues in Florida to concur with our position. Concurrence was reached at the 1989 LWVFL Convention. In 1990,
the League lobbied actively to secure passage of the Florida Constitutional Amendment to require a three-day waiting period for handgun purchase. It was overwhelmingly approved. During the 1991 Florida Legislative session, enabling legislation was passed and became law in October 1991, over-riding Broward County ordinances. In 1990, the LWVUS at National Convention voted to concur with the Illinois League position (which was very similar to LWVF position):

*Position in brief: Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons. (See LWVUS – Impact on Issues for more information.)*

April 2020