

# **PROGRAM POSITIONS 2016-2017**

## **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF COLLIN COUNTY**

*The League of Women Voters of Collin County (LWV-CC) supports the following positions, adopted after study and consensus:*

### ***Representative Government***

#### **VOTE CENTERS IN COLLIN COUNTY (2013)**

The LWV-CC supports the use of Vote Centers (Election Day centralized voting) for national, state, and local elections to facilitate voter convenience and flexibility. Collin County should provide enough voting locations, equipment, and personnel, including IT support, to ensure that voters can vote in various parts of the county without excessive wait times.

### ***Natural Resources***

#### **FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT (1977)**

The LWV-CC supports a strict interpretation of the flood plain ordinance and limiting the issuance of special use permits and variances, as well as providing an adequate method to seek out violations and employ all legal tools to correct them.

#### **PARKS AND OPEN SPACE IN COLLIN COUNTY (1977; REV. 1987, 1997, 2001, 2005)**

The LWV-CC supports a strong program in the acquisition of open space in Collin County and its towns and cities to assure that adequate land will be set-aside for the purposes of recreation, conservation, and preservation.

### ***Social Policy***

#### **ECONOMIC GROWTH (1981; REV. 1997)**

The LWV-CC believes that Plano and other towns in the county should promote controlled economic growth in order to expand the tax base so that the quality of life can be maintained at a reasonable cost to taxpayers. Control criteria should be developed by local governments with public participation in the planning and decision making process.

#### **HEALTH CARE IN COLLIN COUNTY (1986, REV. 1995, 2001, 2005, 2012)**

The LWV-CC believes that a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all Collin County residents. There should be public input in the process of defining and providing public health services, which should include those recommended by the State of Texas for Public Health Regions 2 and 3. We recommend that the Collin County Commissioners Court create and maintain a countywide information system that provides at a minimum:

- Clear definitions of eligibility requirements for obtaining public health care services, which are easily understood, obtainable, and kept up-to-date;
- Coordination of services sufficient to meet the demographic (age, race, gender, socioeconomic level) and geographic (urban, suburban, rural) needs of Collin County residents; and
- Information regarding availability of public health services which includes types of service, location (street address and city), days and time of service delivery, and required paperwork necessary to obtain service.

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The LWV-CC believes that persons of families meeting the income definitions of Indigent or Medicaid should have access to:

- Laboratory and X-ray services
- Emergency outpatient and inpatient hospital services
- Mental health care services
- Skilled nursing facility services
- Care provided by physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners

The LWV-CC continues to support the educational and advocacy work being undertaken by other organizations, including the Healthcare Committee of Collin County (HCCC), Dallas Area Interfaith (DAI) and the Homeless Coalition. The LWV-CC will be counted as a supporter/advocate of efforts as long as those efforts are contained within an acceptable parameter of LWV- CC objectives.

#### **HOMELESSNESS IN COLLIN COUNTY (2015)**

The League of Women Voters of Collin County believes that a basic level of services should be available to Collin County residents who are homeless. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development identifies persons as homeless if they do not have a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence – e.g., may be sleeping in a car, sofa surfing, or doubled up with another family.

The basic level of services should include:

- Emergency shelter for night visits or short-term stays
- Transitional housing for longer stays, with access to services including medical care, emergency dental care, job placement and transportation, treatment of drug abuse and severe mental health issues, and school-related services for children
- Affordable housing to prevent homelessness.

Services should be funded and provided by all levels of government in cooperation with non-governmental organizations. Services should be coordinated among the various agencies and organizations to best serve the needs of the homeless.

#### **MASS TRANSPORTATION (ADOPTED 1979 BY CONCURRENCE WITH LWV-DALLAS; REV. 2001)**

We recognize that mass transportation, as an essential public service, should be subsidized from public funds as necessary to provide a satisfactory level of service for all residents. We support:

- Funding of the Regional Transportation Authority by general use of sales tax (up to 1%),
- Development of a balanced system to provide for alternate and coordinated forms of transportation, rapid and convenient systems, and improvement and preservation of environmental quality,
- Inclusion of citizen education and participation early and during the entire planning process through better and more consistent communication between government and its constituents.

This system should have the power to carry out its transportation functions through the action of a board of directors. The composition of the board should be part private citizens and part elected officials chosen to provide equitable representation of the participating cities and counties. It should have the responsibility to seek citizen input and review any activity on a continuous basis.

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#### **PUBLIC EDUCATION** (1982; REV. 1995, 2005)

The LWV-CC supports effective school guidance and counseling programs. Essential elements of an effective guidance and counseling program include, but are not limited to:

- Services for students of all ages and stages of development;
- A comprehensive program designed to address the academic, personal, social, and career development of all students;
- The availability of informational materials for non-English-speaking students and parents, wherever practical;
- Resources to help guidance counselors address student needs and increase the time available for student/counselor interaction.

The LWV-CC supports school health service programs with sufficient staff and facilities to provide health education and address health problems that influence the ability of students to learn. The school health service should provide:

- Nurse/student ratios that take into account the health status of the student population and the recommendations of the National Association of School Nurses.
- Support staff to assist nurses with clerical tasks and routine screening procedures.