

League of Women Voters of the Lansing Area— Program Positions

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

JUVENILE JUSTICE

LWVLA supports the use of diversion of youths from the juvenile justice system by police and court intake workers. In order to avoid entry into the formal process of the juvenile justice system, diversion should be used whenever possible in an effort to find the best program possible for youths.

- A. The decision that a youth is to be diverted should be made according to a standardized, somewhat formalized procedure following a complete investigation.
- B. Criteria for diversion should be developed by a community coordinating body and should be adopted by all jurisdictions in the Lansing area.
- C. Appropriate diversion for each case should be determined by some type of inter-agency group. A method of accountability for each diversion decision should be developed.

DAY CARE

Local governmental recognition of child care needs and support of those needs are essential in ensuring the future well-being of our children.

EDUCATION

LWVLA supports free public education, the primary purpose of which is to provide full opportunity for all students to develop their individual potential and to prepare them for citizenship in a pluralistic, democratic society.

- A. We support legislation that insures adequate, stable, equitable, and predictable funding for the public schools and adheres to the State Constitution, State laws, and provisions of the Michigan State Board of Education.
- B. We support solid business management and long-term planning based on adequate data collection.
- C. We support public schools and their locally-elected Boards of Education in their efforts to provide equal and appropriate educational opportunities for all students.
- D. We support programs and policies that promote self-respect and provide the necessary preparation for students to live and work in harmony with all people regardless of their ethnic, gender or cultural differences.

E. We support open and public debate on issues of education reform so that all concerned have the opportunity to be heard from and be adequately informed on the issues involved. The LWV believes that deliberate, rational, and informed debate should precede legislation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CITY CHARTER

LWVLA supports city charters which recognize that accountability, efficiency, sensitivity to human needs, representation of all segments of the population, competency and regional awareness and cooperation are all necessary attributes of city government.

A. We believe a city charter should allow for the maximum degree of flexibility for local government.

B. We believe that a city charter should be free of detailed restrictions which can better be handled by ordinance or some other method.

C. We believe that there should be recognition in the charter itself of local commitment to cooperation with other area governmental units to *solve* area wide problems, even to joining a council of governments.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

LWVLA supports cooperation and coordination between local units of government to provide efficient, effective and equitable delivery of services to the tri-county (Clinton, Eaton and Ingham) region.

We support:

A. Local government membership and regular participation in an umbrella multi-jurisdictional, planning and policy-making organization, headed by a board of directors representative of the region.

B. Use by local governments of policies and/or plans adopted by the regional organization as a guide for planning, programming and implementation of services.

C. Coordination of special purpose functional agencies by the regional organization.

D. Policy of open meetings and general citizen access and participation.

E. Financing of projects provided by one or more of the following federal, state and local participating governments and by private funding.

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