



ELECTION LAW REVIEW AND UPDATE *CONSENSUS QUESTIONS*

ADOPTED BY LWVPA STATE CONVENTION, JUNE 7, 2015

**Deadline for Local Leagues to submit consensus question responses:
March 1, 2017.**

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF PENNSYLVANIA ELECTION LAW REVIEW AND UPDATE

I. Voter Registration Consensus Questions

1. LWVPA supports enabling voters to provide missing registration information on Election Day and to vote on a provisional ballot.
1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

2. LWVPA supports youth pre-registration.
1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

3. LWVPA supports allowing 17-year-olds who will be 18 years old on or before a general election to register and vote for candidates in the primary election.
1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

4. LWVPA supports automatic voter registration and universal automatic registration as long as concerns over mistakenly registering non-citizens and others who are ineligible to vote are adequately addressed.
1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

5. LWVPA supports all programs, especially those run by LWVPA chapters, that offer voter registration and absentee ballot applications to eligible jail inmates and to inmates upon their release from jail.
1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

II. Election Day Procedures Consensus Questions

1. LWVPA believes poll watchers who challenge a voter's eligibility at the polls should be required to write out their challenge and sign an affidavit (with and Elections Officer as witness) that the challenge is truthful and in good faith.
1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

2. LWVPA believes poll watchers should: (Choose 1)
 - a. Be required to reside in the election district where they are serving_____
 - b. Be required to reside in the county where the election district they are serving is located_____
 - c. Can be from anywhere in the state regardless of the location of the election district they are serving___
 - d. None of the above_____

3. LWVPA believes that both Poll Workers and Poll Watchers should be required to take training authorized by the state.

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1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

4. LWVPA believes that the election code should allow nonpartisan organizations to appoint poll watchers when those organizations actively support or oppose a ballot issue.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

5. LWVPA supports measures to make voting more accessible by providing any registered voter with alternatives to casting a ballot in person on the day of a Primary or Election.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

6. LWVPA supports Vote by mail
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

7. LWVPA supports simplifying the processes for casting an Emergency Absentee Ballot, including eliminating the need to have the application notarized.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___
2.

8. LWVPA supports utilizing the internet to transmit applications for absentee ballots and blank ballots for all voters.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

9. LWVPA believes that because of security concerns, at this time the return of voter absentee ballots should be by hand or via US mail.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

10. Regarding straight party voting, LWVPA believes that Pennsylvania should retain its current system.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

11. LWVPA believes that provisions in the Election Code that facilitate absentee ballot application and voting by residents of public institutions should be extended to residents of local, state and federal penal institutions who are qualified to vote.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

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III. Alternative Election Systems Study Guide Consensus Questions

There are three sets of questions: General, Single-winner, and Multiple-winner Elections.

General

1. It is important to use the simplest possible method of voting.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

2. It is important that voters understand how votes are tabulated.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

3. It is important to avoid a complex tabulation process in choosing a voting system.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

4. It is important for a voting process to help preserve the predominance of two major parties.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

5. An ideal voting system would encourage civility in election campaigns.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

Single-winner Elections

6. When three or more people seek election to a single-seat office like governor, the current system allows the election of one of them with less than 50 percent of the vote (a plurality rather than a majority). Lack of majority support reduces the perceived legitimacy of a plurality winner.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

7. In multiple-candidate races, candidates who do not themselves win can be spoilers in that votes cast for them change who does win. An ideal electoral system would reduce the likelihood that a candidate who does not win could change the outcome.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

8. LWVPA should support an electoral system that encourages electors to vote for their true favorite (sincere voting) rather than for someone whom they believe has a better chance of defeating the candidate that they like least (strategic voting)

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

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9. LWVPA should support an electoral system that guarantees that the winner will receive a majority (not just a plurality) of votes

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

10. LWVPA should support an electoral system that guarantees the choice of a winner after just one round of voting, rather than allow the possibility of a second, runoff election on a future date.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

11. A two-round system (i.e., a runoff, on a future date) would encourage more civility in campaigns than the present system.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

12. An Instant runoff electoral system would encourage more civility in campaigns than the present system

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

13. LWVPA should support a two-round runoff system for elections in which three or more candidates are seeking a single office.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

14. LWVPA should support an instant-runoff (in which voters rank their preferences) for elections in which three or more candidates are seeking a single office.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

15. LWVPA should support a *Borda count* as an alternative for elections in which three or more candidates are seeking a single office. (See p. 4, above)

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

16. LWVPA should support *approval voting* as an alternative for elections in which three or more candidates are seeking a single office. (See p. 5, above)

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

17. LWVPA should support *range voting* as an alternative for elections in which three or more candidates are seeking a single office. (See p. 5, above)

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

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Legislatures and Other Multiple Winner Elections

18. In a legislature or council elected on a partisan basis, a fair electoral system would allow the party with a majority of votes across the whole system to win a majority of seats

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

19. An ideal election system would level the playing field for women or other demographic groups that have consistently been under-represented.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

20. Minority parties that receive a significant share of votes should win a corresponding share of seats.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

21. An electoral system should reduce the possibility of and/or payoff for deliberate gerrymandering of district lines.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

22. It is important for an electoral system to encourage competition in all legislative districts?

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

23. It is important for an electoral system to avoid making candidates from the same party compete against each other in the general election as much as (or even more than) they compete against candidates from other parties. (See p. 13, above)

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

24. Which of the following alternatives to the existing single-member district plurality system should the League support for elections to the Pennsylvania General Assembly? You may select more than one if you wish.

Limited voting (p. 13)

Cumulative Voting (p. 13)

Single Transferable Vote (p. 11)

Mixed-Member Proportional (p. 9)

No Change

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25. Which of the following alternatives to current systems should the League support for elections to local bodies, such as county commissioners or municipal councils? You may select more than one if you wish.

- Limited voting (p. 13)
- Cumulative Voting (p. 13)
- Single Transferable Vote (p. 11)
- Mixed-Member Proportional (p. 9)
- No Change

26. The League should support the right of local governments, including school boards, to choose a League-supported alternative election system for their own elections.

1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

IV. Primary Elections Consensus Questions

Issue review

There are six options for primaries.

- i. In a closed primary (current Pennsylvania practice), voters may cast a ballot only for the political party of affiliation.
 - ii. In an open primary, voters may select the party ballot of their choice for voting, regardless of political party affiliation.
 - iii. In a semi-open primary, affiliated voters must vote in the primary of their registration. Unaffiliated voters may vote in either primary, but must publically announce their choice before voting and they may only vote in that party primary.
 - iv. In a semi-closed primary, the parties shall decide whether to allow unaffiliated voters to vote in their primary.
 - v. In a top two primary, voters receive ballots with all candidates for office, and they may vote for whomever they wish, without regard to party preference. Subsequently, the two candidates receiving the most votes appear on the ballot for the general election.
 - vi. In a top four primary, voters receive ballots with all candidates for office, and they may vote for whomever they wish, without regard to party preference. Subsequently, in a top four primary, the four candidates receiving the most votes are on the ballot for the general election.
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1. LWVPA believes that changing the primary structure would increase voter participation.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

2. LWVPA believes that changing the primary system could reduce political polarization.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

3. LWVPA should take a position on open or closed primaries.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

4. Please rank support for the following six primary options, with 5 indicating the strongest support and 0 indicating opposition or the least support.
 - a. LWVPA should support adoption of open primaries.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

 - b. LWVPA should support adoption of semi open primaries.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___
 - 2.

 - c. LWVPA should support the current practice of closed primaries.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

 - d. LWVPA should support adoption of semi-closed primaries.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

 - e. LWVPA should support adoption of top two primaries.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

 - f. LWVPA should support adoption of top four primaries.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

5. LWVPA should adopt a different primary system for presidential vs. state/local races?
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___

6. LWVPA believes that if primaries remain closed, they should not be publicly funded.
 1. Strongly disagree___ 2. Disagree___ 3. Neutral/no consensus___ 4. Agree ___ 5. Strongly agree___