

Where the  
***ACTION*** is!!!



Positions arrived at from studies of the...

**League of Women Voters**  
of Ventura County

# **MISSION**

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, A NON-  
PARTISAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION,  
ENCOURAGES THE INFORMED AND ACTIVE  
PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS IN GOVERNMENT  
AND INFLUENCES PUBLIC POLICY THROUGH  
EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY.**

"Where the Action Is" was revised in 1993 to make the local positions of the League of Women Voters of Ventura County more understandable to beginners and to bring its format into closer conformity with those of the LWV-California and the LWV-US position booklets.

In simplifying "Where the Action Is," the editors have striven to remain faithful to the intent of the original position documents. We hope we have succeeded.

Edited by Wini Hirsch, coordinator, in conjunction with other members of the LWV-Ventura County were Roma Armbrust, Dorothy Blake, Kathryn St. Clair Fellows, Nancy Grasmehr, Jean Harris, Jeanne Harvey, Ruth Hibbard, Lynn Menaugh, Loretta Morrissey, Marie Offerman, Mary Ann Rector, Janice Stewart, Leila Sciutto, Betty Taylor, Peggy York, and with the Government Director of the LWV-California, Rita Barschak.

Positions on Libraries under Special Districts and Juvenile Justice, after our position on Criminal Justice, were added in 1995. A position on the Ventura County Health Care Agency was added in 1998.

In 2005-2006, Pat Murray, Nell McCombs and Ruth Hibbard reviewed and edited the booklet after approval at the June 2005 Annual Meeting for such an action. The booklet was updated again in 2008 to reflect actions taken and the adoption of an updated position on Land Use Planning.

*Updated September 2008*

# Table of Contents

LEAGUE PRINCIPLES .....	i
INTRODUCTION .....	ii

## COUNTY-WIDE POSITIONS

<b>GOVERNMENT .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Financing Local Government .....	1
Support measures to promote the sound financing of regular governmental services and of major capital improvements. (1966, 1974-77)	
Local Government .....	3
Support measures to further good government. (1960, 1962-63)	
Regional Governance .....	5
Support measures to assure that Ventura County's existing governmental entities (cities, towns, county) be required to participate in some form of regional governance to deal with problems associated with growth management, the regional governing body being able to mandate regulatory decisions. (1991-92)	
Services and Special Districts .....	6
Support sound planning for services. (1960-62, 1963-64, 1966-67, 1971, 1973)	
Support public libraries as a basic service of government with adequate funding by local, state and federal governments. (1995 by concurrence)	
<b>NATURAL RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Planning, Conservation, Recreation .....	8
Promote measures for sound planning and conservation practices. Support measures to ensure that Ventura County Government provides adequate parks and recreation. (1960-62, 1963-64, 1966-67, 1971, 1983-85, 1991, 2007)	
Transportation .....	11
Support measures to maintain adequate transportation as a public service with the fewest possible adverse environmental effects. (1970-71)	
Waste Management (Non-Hazardous) .....	13
Support measures to dispose of solid waste by methods which are economically and environmentally sound. (1976-77, updated c.1982-84)	
Waste Management (Hazardous Waste/Toxic Substances) .....	15
Support measures to ensure the strict regulation of all aspects of hazardous waste/toxic substances (usage, manufacture, transportation, emergencies, storage, disposal). (1982)	

<b>SOCIAL POLICY .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Corrections System .....	16
Support measures to achieve a more effective corrections system. (1971 -74, updated. 1977-78 and 1989)	
Juvenile Justice .....	18
Support measures to achieve an effective juvenile justice system. (1994-95)	
Education .....	20
Support the need for a four-year upper and lower division university that offers bachelor and masters degrees in proficiency needed in Ventura County. (1989)	
Homelessness .....	21
Support measures to ensure planning to prevent homelessness, to provide effective, coordinated services and to ensure availability of replacement low cost housing prior to demolition. (1990-91)	
Housing .....	23
Support measures to increase the supply of low and moderate income housing without undue jeopardy to the environmental balance, health and safety of the community. (1991-2, 1980-82, 1985-1986)	
Ventura County Health Care Agency .....	25
Support the Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) as the essential element of the Ventura County Health Care Agency (HCA) which effectively maximizes the efficiency of the other units of that agency. (1998)	
<b>CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF COUNTY STUDIES .....</b>	<b>27</b>

# League Principles

The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States and:

- that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation of its citizens;
- that every citizen should be protected in his or her right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination;
- that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government;
- that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems which affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy, and adopt domestic policies which facilitate the solution of international problems;
- that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that the development of international organizations and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

# Introduction

*This positions booklet, "Where the Action Is," states the positions of the League of Women Voters of Ventura County. All local league positions must be consistent with state and national positions.*

## WHY DOES LEAGUE NEED POSITIONS?

League positions are the basis for political action in pursuit of league goals in Government, Natural Resources, and Social Policy.

## HOW ARE VENTURA COUNTY POSITIONS DETERMINED?

They result from member study of local issues followed by the substantial agreement, or consensus, developed as a result of the study.

A position, once adopted, may not be altered or expanded except by an update approved at the Annual Meeting or except as a result of an emergency update. An update is a study of limited scope, undertaken in the light of new information, changed circumstances, and/or conflict with another position, with the possibility that a position change may result. An update, therefore, might contract, expand, withdraw, or otherwise change a position. Any new position so derived must receive board approval and be adopted by members at the Annual Meeting.

## HOW DOES A LOCAL LEAGUE TAKE ACTION?

Leaguers must understand the definition of local action. The League of Women Voters of Ventura County can act on its own local positions before local decision makers within the boundary limits of Ventura county. But it cannot do so before a state senator, even if he represents the county area, because it is a state, not a local office.

# **County-wide Positions**



## GOVERNMENT

## FINANCING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### POSITION IN BRIEF: FINANCING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SUPPORT MEASURES TO PROMOTE THE SOUND FINANCING OF  
REGULAR GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES AND OF MAJOR CAPITAL  
IMPROVEMENTS (1966, 1974-77)

#### BACKGROUND OF POSITION

A 1966 "Evaluation of the Local Tax Structure" was followed by a 1974-77 LWV-California study on assessment practices/property tax. The study involved a recapitulation and an acceptance of the LWV-California positions on state and local finances. The specifics of this position are to be found in the POSITIONS FOLDER published by the LWV-California and therefore will not be included in this booklet. The 1974-77 study showed that the property tax is the major source of revenue for most local governments and that it was increasingly criticized as burdensome, inequitable and difficult to administer. Leaguers concluded after studying the strengths and weaknesses of the property tax\* that it should be continued but made equitable and less burdensome.

(cont'd on next page)

PLEASE NOTE! Independent action by the LWV of Ventura County (or any local league) on tax issues is limited because the state League formulates the positions on taxes. Therefore, if a local league wishes to take action within its own boundaries, it must obtain permission from the state board of LWVC if the action has to do with money that goes to the state or comes back from the state. It must also obtain permission from the state board if any other governmental jurisdiction is involved. It could only take action on finances if the tax has nothing to do with state money or if no other jurisdiction is involved.

*\*Proposition 13: an initiative, passed in 1978, amending the state constitution. It limited taxes levied on all real property to 1% of "full cash value" as of 1975-76 appraised value; limited increases in appraised value of real property to 2% per year until the property is sold; it requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of the legislature to increase the level of state taxes and prohibits the state from levying a property tax or a property sales transaction tax; it permits local governments to impose special taxes, except on real property, but only by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of qualified electors. (NOTE: In 1982 the Supreme Court ruled that taxes may be levied in accordance with law enacted by the legislature as long as the special tax goes into the General Fund.)*

## GOVERNMENT

## FINANCING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

(BACKGROUND, cont'd)

State law, the study also revealed, specifies that the county assessor is to be elected, but set no qualifications for the office or staff. State law also specifies that all property should be assessed at the same proportion to full market value, but the league learned that many county assessors have assessed different kinds of property at widely varying percentages of market value and that considerable variation exists from county to county in the average assessment of all property. Local members agreed that qualifications for assessor should be determined and that election of assessors should be continued to ensure their independence of the Board of Supervisors.

Large capital improvements, the study showed, are customarily financed through bonding. General obligation bonds are difficult to pass because they ordinarily require  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of the electorate. Revenue bonds, which normally require a majority vote only, were feasible when the capital improvement was a revenue producing facility. More recent methods of capital improvement financing are lease-purchase and joint powers agreements. The latter methods do not require voter approval and tend to be more expensive borrowing methods. Members preferred bonding over the latter because of cost and of voter approval requirement. Members supported reducing the vote requirement because a "no" vote should not count for more than a "yes" vote, making the vote requirement too difficult. Local members diverged from the state league position in that they could not agree on the specific percentage desired.

### ACTION TAKEN ON THIS POSITION

- 2002 President Lillian Goldstein signed ballot argument in favor of Measure T, which revised the County's business tax ordinance. It passed and, according to a letter from Supervisor Bennett, saved the County \$1 million.

## GOVERNMENT

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### POSITION IN BRIEF: LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SUPPORT MEASURES TO FURTHER GOOD GOVERNMENT (1960, 1962-63)

#### SPECIFICS OF POSITION

1. Support non-partisanship in local government.
2. Discourage attempts to weaken the effectiveness of the County Executive Ordinance.
3. Support legislation which permits increased flexibility in California State law governing *general law* counties.

#### BACKGROUND OF POSITION

This position is the result of two studies by LWV-Ventura County: first as part of a planning study (1960) and, secondly, an "Evaluation of the Structure and Function of Ventura County Government." (1962-63)

The studies revealed that the State, as a sovereign body grants certain powers and authority to the counties under *general law*. Under *general law* the counties act as administrative units of the State and perform duties specified by the legislature. *General law* specifies: (a) five supervisors elected by districts whose appointive powers may not be delegated; (b) a specific number of independent elective officers (district attorney, assessor, auditor, sheriff, etc.); and (c) procedures that must be followed in performance of duties delegated to the County (election procedure, property assessment and tax collection, etc.).

The City of Ventura, wanting greater local control, became the county's first and only chartered city. Since 1970, Article 11 of *general law* has allowed counties and cities more flexibility in levying special taxes than they had initially. Ventura County League has retained this position to be able to request permission from LWV-California to support such legislation.

Until 1957, Ventura County supervisors exercised both policy-making and administrative powers as permitted by *general law*. Rapid growth and urbanization rendered this system inadequate. With the aim of reorganizing and modernizing county government, a citizen study committee recommended in 1957 that the supervisors' energies be concentrated on policy making which could be accomplished by the delegation of administrative details to a county executive. The supervisors approved the County Executive Ordinance that same year.

Its implementation was limited in its first years but was fully carried out by 1962. This gave the executive, now called the Chief Executive Officer, authority to review and make recommendations on budget and expenditures; supervise personnel and purchasing; make studies on governmental matters as directed by the supervisors as needed or as the executive should find necessary. In general, the office was to exercise all the functions of a county manager but with no appointive power because by *general law* that function could not be delegated. This ordinance increased a supervisor's time to attend to policy making and is considered by leaguers as vital to effective county government.

(cont'd on next page)

(BACKGROUND, cont'd)

May, 2001, the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance #4235 amending the previous ordinance. This ordinance established the title and position of County Executive Officer, to be appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and laid out his powers and responsibilities. It states that the CEO is the administrative officer of the Board of Supervisors and exercises administrative supervision and control of the affairs of the County and those districts under the jurisdiction of the Board. Among the duties and responsibilities are the following: supervise and direct preparation of the budget and submit a recommended budget to the Board for its review and public hearing; act as appointing authority for most county agencies/department heads; for others, such as the Agricultural Commissioner, the Board must concur; implement through line management and day-to-day supervision, the policy and direction set by the Board.

### ACTION TAKEN ON THIS POSITION

- 2005 Organized a forum at which the county executive and the directors of four county departments spoke on the current budget situation.
- 2005 Testified opposing amendments to Ventura City Council Campaign Finance ordinance. Submitted written statements on two occasions.
- 2004 Held a luncheon meeting with a panel discussion on County financial matters. 2003
- 2003 Sponsored a meeting at which CEO Johnston discussed budget fundamentals.
- 2003 Testified in support of Ventura County Campaign Finance Reform Ordinance. Included campaign funding limits and creation of a commission to review issues about financing campaigns of county elected officials.

Non-partisanship has been considered by League members to be a most important element in local government because local issues rarely relate to party platforms or principles and because "machine politics" are less likely to develop.

## **GOVERNMENT**

## **REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**

### **POSITION IN BRIEF: REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**

SUPPORT MEASURES TO ASSURE THAT VENTURA COUNTY'S EXISTING GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES (CITIES, TOWNS, COUNTY) BE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN SOME FORM OF REGIONAL GOVERNANCE TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH GROWTH MANAGEMENT, THE REGIONAL GOVERNING BODY BEING ABLE TO MANDATE REGULATORY DECISIONS (1991-92)

### **SPECIFICS OF POSITION**

These specifics support the position:

1. Place the major emphasis of regional governance on growth management issues, which include: transportation, air quality, open space/agriculture protection, water conservation/delivery, economic development/affordable housing, solid/hazardous waste, health/welfare, recreation/parks/coastal preservation.
2. Revise tax revenue systems to eliminate competition for commercial development between jurisdictions within the county.
3. Elect regional governance officials.
4. Establish mechanisms to arbitrate conflicts (between governmental bodies, citizens and governments) in order to expedite environmental planning and action.
5. Keep land-use management decisions at the local government level.

### **BACKGROUND OF POSITION**

"Implications of Regional Governance for Ventura County" was studied during 1991-92. Consensus was reached by tabulating answers to a questionnaire. In addition to the positions achieved through consensus, it was agreed that compliance should be based on both incentives and sanctions, but mechanisms should be established to arbitrate conflicts. It was recognized that the role of the state government would be significant: setting guidelines and uniform regulations with funds as incentives or withholding of funds as sanctions, giving financial assistance, dispensing funds. Comments emphasized a dislike of establishing another layer of government and concern over loss of local control of land use.

**NO ACTION** had been taken on this position at the time of the 2005-06 editing.

## GOVERNMENT

## SERVICES AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

### POSITION IN BRIEF: SERVICES AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

SUPPORT SOUND PLANNING FOR SERVICES (1960-62, 1963-64, 1966-67, 1971, 1973)

#### SPECIFICS OF POSITION

##### Special Districts:

1. Support planning for services on the broadest practical basis, including agencies for parks and recreation, water, waste disposal, and air pollution control.
  - a. Maximum accountability of agency to constituents.
  - b. Equitable sharing of costs relative to benefit.
  - c. Boundary size appropriate to the service, i.e., drainage, air basin, etc.
2. Support reducing the number of special districts through dissolution or consolidation. Regular review to determine if special districts are equitably and effectively serving a need and do not duplicate services.
3. Encourage the statutory purposes and responsibilities of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

##### Libraries:

Support public libraries as a basic service of government with adequate funding by local, state and federal governments. Support free access by all persons to public library service as a means for lifelong education and learning, and as a major source of knowledge and information necessary for informed, active participation in a democratic society.

- a. Recognition of the essential service of free public libraries in a democratic society and government's basic obligation to provide the service with adequate funding.
- b. Recognition that basic library services include:
  - (1) Provision of services for all users including children, young adults and handicapped persons.
  - (2) Open hours on weekday mornings, afternoons and evenings, and on Saturday.
  - (3) Professional staff for children, young adults, reference, and administration.
  - (4) Provision of books, periodicals, documents, California and local history items, large print materials, computer based indexing and an accurate and easily used catalogue system.
- c. Support the use of all available funding for public libraries:
  - (1) Recognition by local governments that they have the prime responsibility to finance public libraries.
  - (2) Increased state and federal aid for public libraries.
  - (3) Support increased local tax revenues.
  - (4) Continued and increased private funding to expand library facilities and supplement services.
  - (5) Opposition to charging fees for basic library services.

## GOVERNMENT

## SERVICES AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

(SPECIFICS OF POSITION, Libraries, cont'd)

- d. Support measures designed to increase the efficiency and economy of public library operations:
  - (1) Consolidation of library functions or systems to achieve cost effectiveness, maintenance and improvement of services, accessibility and responsiveness.
  - (2) Consideration of fees for special library services.
  - (3) Use of volunteers to supplement paid staff.
- e. Support improvement of existing facilities or construction of new ones to make provision of essential services easier and to increase accessibility. Recognition that library facilities should be accessible to the public, should have adequate light, heating, study space, seating, storage space, work rooms for staff, access for handicapped persons, parking, and should be clean and properly maintained.

### BACKGROUND OF POSITION

First studied in 1960-62, this position has been reconsidered along with related studies through the years and was adopted as a program item in 1973 for special review. Consensus following that review did not change the position materially, but the League members expressed concern for more local control, stating that special districts were sometimes the only available method to provide needed services. League members supported land-use planning as the most appropriate tool to control growth and development but did not oppose defensive special districts to reinforce control.

LAFCO's statutory purposes include "the discouragement of urban sprawl and the encouragement of orderly governmental boundaries based upon local circumstances and conditions." The commission is responsible for working closely with counties, cities, and special districts. It is the procedural guide for annexations, detachments, consolidations, dissolutions and reorganizations.

Such boundary commissions were created by the State of California in 1963 and exist in each County of California. In addition to being quasi-legislative agencies they are also planning agencies with responsibility for determining Spheres of Influence. A "sphere of influence" is the probable ultimate physical boundary and service area of a local governmental agency.

In 1994 the Ventura area of the league became increasingly concerned with cuts in funds to the county library system. These cuts were due, in part, to shortages in the county's general fund. Leaguers came to concurrence with the Marin County study. The objective of the position taken by Marin's League was "Recognition of the essential service of free public libraries in a democratic society and government's basic obligation to provide the service with adequate funding." In order for funds to be adequate they should be obtained from any available source, but the position stated that local government had the prime responsibility.

### ACTION TAKEN ON THIS POSITION

- 1996 Supported annual parcel tax of \$35 per parcel exclusively for the Ojai Library. The City of Ojai and the Board of Supervisors were successful and levied this tax on residents of the Ojai Valley
- 1995 League made statements to VC Board of Supervisors in support of County library system..

**League of Women Voters**  
**of Ventura County**

## **NATURAL RESOURCES PLANNING, CONSERVATION, RECREATION POSITION IN BRIEF: LAND USE PLANNING**

PROMOTE EFFICIENT LAND USE PLANNING THAT BALANCES ECONOMIC GROWTH, AGRICULTURE, HOUSING, PUBLIC SERVICES, EMPLOYMENT AND CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING ADEQUATE PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES. (1960-62, 1963-64, 1966-67, 1971, 1983-85, 1991, 2007)

### **SPECIFICS OF POSITION**

1. Support land use planning consistent with the County's natural features, encouraging a healthful environment and conservation of natural resources such as clean air, water, prime agricultural land, and our coastal environment.
2. Encourage a viable balance of economic, social and environmental factors for all communities.
3. Encourage land uses necessary for economic growth and compatible with industries that support a healthful and aesthetic environment, such as agriculture, horticulture, health care, technology and biomedical endeavors, education, and recreation, among others.
4. Support planning that promotes orderly development, including appropriate redevelopment of urban areas, discourages step-out development, and encourages infilling of existing communities, along with greater densities, flexible zoning, mixed-use housing and parking requirements when appropriate, and improved connection with public transit.
5. Support planning that provides for housing to meet the needs of all segments of the community.
6. Maintain identity and delineations of communities.
7. Preserve adequate open space, the coastline, wetlands, historical and cultural landmarks and aesthetic features, including appropriate public access..
8. Support local governments in funding public services and improvements with the widest array of funding sources.
9. Support local governments in providing adequate space and facilities for active and passive recreation opportunities, including public parks, that are affordable to the general public.
10. Encourage the periodic updating of general plans to recognize the changing needs of the community and support effective and timely implementation.
11. Support land use planning decisions that are based on careful study and consideration of physical, economic, social and environmental factors.
12. Encourage cooperative planning among all levels of governmental agencies, including federal, state, regional, county and city, and with private enterprise, particularly with regard to regional issues such as population, transportation, water resources, public safety and similar concerns.
13. Promote and support opportunities for citizens to effectively participate in formulating land use plans and in land use planning decisions.
14. Support local government controls that provide visually pleasing communities through effective zoning, signage controls, and similar measures.

## NATURAL RESOURCES PLANNING, CONSERVATION, RECREATION

### BACKGROUND OF POSITION

This position is the result of combining appropriate and related portions of early studies into one overall position. This was accomplished in 1983 when the league affirmed its position in support of orderly development. The position was reviewed and updated in 2007. In that review, the focus was to refine the position to better address the balancing act that has clearly become necessary between the financial needs of the cities and county and the needs of the residents here for jobs and housing with our long standing goal of conserving our unique and healthful environment. In addition, language was broadened and made more general, in order to facilitate application of the position to specific situations.

Concern was expressed in early studies over the continued disappearance of agriculture as an industry and the depletion of oil reserves, both of which threatened to erode the tax base. Members agreed that Ventura County has a potential as a recreation area and that development of recreation as a major industry could provide a relatively high tax yield as well as protect aesthetic surroundings.

Protection of the coastline for recreational use has had continued emphasis, as has the maintenance of open, rural or park-like atmosphere of local communities.

Should recreation become a threat to conservation, League would give priority to conservation.

### ACTION TAKEN ON LAND USE PLANNING POSITION

- 2007-8 Appeared before the City Council in support of Citrus Place housing development in the City of Ventura.. Appeared in support of providing adequate affordable housing in Camarillo before the city Planning Commission when considering updates to the General Plan's Housing Element..
- 2006 Submitted written comments to the State Lands Commission on the revised draft EIR for the proposed Cabrillo Port offshore of Oxnard.
- 2005 Submitted written comments to appropriate government agencies on the draft EIR and EIS for the proposed Cabrillo Port, expressing concern about its potential for adverse effect on Ormond Beach, the safety of the proposed facility and other environmental effects.
- 2005 Sent letter to League of Women Voters, California, citing concerns about proposed Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facility, especially the lack of overall assessment and planning for new LNG facilities in the State of California and the lack of planning for siting such facilities.
- 2005 Co-sponsored and coordinated an informational meeting for members and public in Ventura County, on a proposed LNG offshore facility in Cabrillo Port.
- 2004 Supported Measure B, an open space sales tax of  $\frac{1}{4}\%$ .
- 2002 Requested a study session by Ventura County on the County General Plan Update that would be open to the public.
- 2001 Sponsored a workshop on open space district.
- 2000 Opposed proposed elementary school site "Emerson Avenue SE-3" in a green belt surrounded by agricultural land. A prime concern was pesticide contamination  
Opposed measure to build on agriculture land in Ventura.  
Supported SOAR Measure J in Fillmore and I in Santa Paula protecting agriculture and open space lands. (Letters to newspapers, supervisors)

(cont'd)

- Supported before the Board of Supervisors establishment of a green belt zone between Fillmore and the Los Angeles County line.  
Spoke to Board of Supervisors' Measure A Committee supporting the Open Space District plan.  
Sponsored open space district informational workshop. Co-sponsored Smart Growth conference.
- 1998 Supported Ventura County SOAR initiative by letters to newspapers, radio interview, and in brochure produced by campaign.
- 1997 Presented appeal to VC Board of Supervisors to oppose building golf driving range in Tierra Rejada green belt.  
Wrote letter to Newhall Land & Development objecting to development straddling Santa Clara River.
- 1996 Supported city councils' hearing report of Hansen Trust Study.  
Opposed Olivas Park Extension without complete EIR.
- 1996 Supported denial of variance to change agriculture land zoning for Oxnard School District to build a school as growth inducing and inappropriate location for a school.  
Presented report on 3-year study of Ormond Beach.  
Co-sponsored Ormond Beach development plan to conserve wetlands.
- 1994 Opposed dropping 40-acre minimum zoning for agriculture.  
Supported long-range planning for the coast in letter to governor.  
Objected to increase in fees required to file an appeal of a Planning Commission decision on the basis of denying right to file appeal to those who could not afford higher fees.  
Supported Board of Supervisors' establishment of green belt between Oxnard and Ventura.
- 1993 Supported green belt, open space at Oxnard City Council.  
Endorsed signature gathering for initiative supporting wetlands preservation at Ormond.
- 1993 Objected to County of Ventura changing zoning for agricultural land in Las Posas Valley to allow 150 rural estate lots because of environmental concerns and precedent it would set.
- 1992 Urged Ventura City Council to deny change of land use from agricultural to recreation (Aggeler Property) in order to support agriculture and save proposed green belt.  
Asked LAFCO to be the agent to stimulate green belt agreements for agricultural land between Oxnard, Ventura and Ventura County.  
Opposed approval of development at western edge of Oxnard as not within Oxnard sphere of influence, not proposed for development until 2000 and doesn't have adequate sewer/water lines.  
Objected to the City of Oxnard, the action taken by Baldwin Company to grade, drain and store potted plants on Ormond Beach, when this was not permitted. (Eventually, Baldwin completely restored the wetlands, as we urged, and sold the land.)  
Objected to the Oxnard City Council, the Oxnard High School relocation because of current agricultural use, and the change in the city's planning document.  
Commended the Board of Supervisors, the Agricultural Land Trust Advisory Committee and staff for research, discussions, and directions presented in its report for preservation of agricultural lands.  
Supported concept of private non-profit trust to preserve agricultural lands. (League had a representative.)  
Through Ormond Beach Observers, objected to a proposal for Hueneme Beach Recreational Vehicle Resort because it would endanger protected species and their fragile ecosystem.  
Questioned Ventura City Council regarding its liability in case death or suffering resulted from any future flooding of Ventura Beach RV Park (Hubbard Property). See archives for pre-1992.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

## TRANSPORTATION

### POSITION IN BRIEF: TRANSPORTATION

SUPPORT MEASURES TO MAINTAIN ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION AS A PUBLIC SERVICE WITH THE LEAST POSSIBLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS (1 970-71)

#### SPECIFICS OF POSITION

These specifics support the position:

1. Coordination of planning to improve and vary regional transportation facilities and modes of transportation.
2. Exploration and encouragement of alternatives to the use of the automobile.
3. Broad-based financing, both public and private.

#### BACKGROUND OF POSITION

“Transportation” was adopted as a study in 1970-71. The study considered transportation needs, existing systems, solutions to transportation problems and financing. Beyond that, and of paramount concern, was the early alleviation of air pollution: transportation systems should be judged by their effect on public health as well as safety and a smooth flow of traffic. Members concluded that transportation of people should be considered a public service and that Ventura County should join a special district - empowered to assume responsibility for total transportation planning.

This transportation district should establish the need for various modes of transportation, including bicycle and walking facilities. It should plan for and implement them into a total system which would meet human needs and not create or perpetuate “ghettos” of inequality of opportunity. Financing should come from a broad tax base (sales, highway user tax, subsidies) in addition to reasonable fares.

Important criteria for testing present and future proposals for transportation solutions include these factors:

1. Impact on environment:
  - early alleviation of air pollution
  - noise pollution controls
  - influence on population density
2. Effect on the individual:
  - convenience to destination (reliability, speed, safety)
  - reasonable fares

*(cont'd on next page)*

*\*Subsequent to this study, the Southern California Area (SCAT) Transit was formed.*

## NATURAL RESOURCES

## TRANSPORTATION

(BACKGROUND, cont'd.)

3. Total planning by a transportation district:
  - education of the public for knowledge and acceptance of benefits
  - coordination of modes within the district and with connecting districts
  - economic feasibility
  - best use of land
  - best use of existing facilities, including the railroad
  - early alleviation of transportation problems
  - efficiency and flexibility
  - constant evaluation and research

### ACTION TAKEN ON TRANSPORTATION POSITIONS

- 2004 Wrote letter to County Board of Supervisors recommending a larger allocation of new funds in the sales tax proposal for public transit.
- 2004 Held a Forum on Measure A, a transportation sales tax.
- 1990 Supported Measure A which proposed a 1/4 cent county sales tax to fund local transportation improvements.
- 1988 Addressed the Transportation Policy Planning Committee on the unmet need for intercity transportation, particularly for the elderly and handicapped.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES WASTE MANAGEMENT (NON-HAZARDOUS)**

### **POSITION IN BRIEF: WASTE MANAGEMENT (NON-HAZARDOUS)**

**SUPPORT MEASURES TO DISPOSE OF SOLID WASTE BY METHODS WHICH ARE ECONOMICALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND (1975-77, UPDATED 1982-84)**

#### **SPECIFICS OF POSITION**

These specifics support the position:

1. Continuous education regarding the volume of solid waste.
2. Reduction of solid waste by development and implementation of economically and environmentally sound methods for reclamation of materials with energy produced as a by-product.
3. More equitable charges for collection and disposal of solid waste based upon volume produced and actual cost of services.
4. Criteria for siting sanitary landfills that include the balancing of all environmental factors.
5. The same regulations for sanitary landfills, whether operated by public or private enterprise.

#### **BACKGROUND OF POSITION**

This study was adopted and carried through in 1976-77 under the title of "Evaluation of Methods for Solid Waste Treatment." Much of the study concentrated upon actions and functions of the Ventura Regional County Sanitation District inasmuch as it was the agency working to develop a plan for solid waste management by January 1, 1976, as mandated by the State of California.

The role of private enterprise was researched and discussed by members. Collection by private operators under contract to a city or the county was felt to be desirable. Separation at the source was approved. It was agreed in 1976 that reclamation at the landfill was more economic and practical but that all practical methods leading to reduction of volume of waste should be encouraged. Reclamation should be practiced on a wide scale.

In rating selections of landfill sites, members' first priorities were environmentally sound controls of litter, odors, noise, dust, leaching and other health hazards, and acceptability to the public. The landfill's appearance should be compatible visually with surrounding land uses and it should become usable when it ceases to be a landfill.

Economic feasibility was second in priority and included considerations of haul distance, cost of land and future use when filled. Other considerations: life expectancy of the landfill; remoteness but with accessibility; traffic patterns on site; mobility on site under all weather considerations.

(cont'd on next page)

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

(BACKGROUND, cont'd)

Geographic concerns were also expressed: geology and earthquake faults, contamination of water supplies, climate, and problems of silting on a river. (See also LWV-California POSITIONS FOLDER for air quality positions.)

## **WASTE MANAGEMENT (NON-HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES)**

### **ACTION TAKEN ON WASTE MANAGEMENT (NON-HAZARDOUS) POSITION**

- 1996 Made statement of approval on Toland Road Landfill.
- 1994 Completed Solid Waste Community Project (using \$2500 grant) "Turn the Tide."
- 1991-92 Canvassed new neighborhoods door-to-door to introduce Ventura City's recycling program.  
Formulated with the City of Ventura a waste reduction campaign: environmental shopping tours, library displays, booths and displays at parks, fairs, etc.  
  
Supported recommendations made in the environmental impact report on the proposed Weldon Canyon landfill which would help mitigate problems.  
  
Supported creation of Ventura County Waste Management Authority.
- 1990-91 Canvassed door-to-door to introduce Ventura City's recycling program.
- 1990 Supported efforts of City of San Buenaventura to obtain grant money from the state of California to extend recycling service to multiple-unit dwellings.
- 1989 Requested the City of Port Hueneme to cooperate with City of Oxnard and the Ventura Regional Sanitation District to develop a recycling program.  
  
Complimented the City of Simi Valley for starting a curbside recycling program.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

## **WASTE MANAGEMENT**

### **(HAZARDOUS WASTE/TOXIC SUBSTANCES)**

#### **POSITION IN BRIEF: WASTE MANAGEMENT (HAZARDOUS WASTE/TOXIC SUBSTANCES)**

SUPPORT MEASURES TO ENSURE THE STRICT REGULATION OF ALL ASPECTS OF HAZARDOUS WASTE/TOXIC SUBSTANCES (USAGE, MANUFACTURE, TRANSPORTATION, EMERGENCIES, STORAGE AND DISPOSAL) (1982)

#### **SPECIFICS OF POSITION**

These specifics support the position:

1. Participation and review at all governmental levels in establishing regulations and criteria, and opportunity for effective public participation.
2. Public access to information and continuous public education about hazardous waste/toxic substances.
3. Clear, coordinated regulations and procedures, and incentives to encourage proper handling.
4. Financial responsibility and liability imposed on producers, transporters, and disposers of hazardous waste/toxic substances.

#### **BACKGROUND OF POSITION**

The Hazardous Waste/Toxic Substances position was adopted at Annual Meeting, 1982, following an earlier special one-day workshop and general meeting where consensus was reached.

#### **ACTION TAKEN ON HAZARDOUS WASTE/TOXIC SUBSTANCES POSITION**

- 1989 Participated in the organization of a hazardous waste collection day for the City of Ventura. League members guided traffic and conducted a survey.
- 1988 Sponsored an open meeting on use, storage, transportation, disposal of hazardous materials.
- 1987 Participated in organization of a Household Hazardous Collection Day for City of Ventura.

## **SOCIAL POLICY**

## **CORRECTIONS SYSTEM**

### **POSITION IN BRIEF: CORRECTIONS SYSTEM**

**SUPPORT MEASURES TO ACHIEVE A MORE EFFECTIVE  
CORRECTIONS SYSTEM (1971-74, updated 1977-78 and 1989)**

#### **SPECIFICS OF POSITION**

These specifics support the position:

1. Appropriate sentencing.
  - a) Protection and safety of the public
    - Removal of dangerous offenders from the community
    - Use of incarceration, loss of privilege, etc., as a punishment when appropriate
    - Use of the least restrictive confinement programs which are in keeping with safety in order to minimize cost to taxpayer
  - b) Protection and equal consideration of defendant/offenders' basic needs and rights regardless of age, sex, or race.\*
2. Rehabilitation and resocialization to achieve a lower recidivism rate.
  - a) Use of evaluation and diagnostic programs in connection with rehabilitation programs
  - b) Assistance to offenders to maintain community and family ties, and assisting reintegration into community (probation, employment, referral to rehabilitation programs, etc.).
  - c) Continued development and expansion of alternatives to jail such as work furlough, work release (community service projects, home detention, electronic surveillance, and similar programs to maximize the use of tax dollars).
  - d) Continued development of diversion treatment programs for offenders such as substance abusers (drug and alcohol), the mentally ill, and those accused of domestic violence/abuse.
3. Accountability on the part of the offender to the victim and society by compulsory restitution of money and/or community service.
4. Programs to educate the public as to its responsibilities in the reduction of crime.
5. Professionalism in the corrections system:
  - a) Well-trained, adequately compensated staffing.
  - b) Interagency cooperation and adequate funding of criminal justice programs, equipment, and facilities
  - c) Scientific research regarding the corrections process with emphasis on professional statistics (jail population, sentencing, recidivism rate, rehabilitation programs, cost- effectiveness).
  - d) Standardized record keeping

*\*The LWV of the United States at its national convention amended its SOCIAL POLICY POSITION to include "all persons, regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability. (June, 1992)*

## **SOCIAL POLICY**

## **CORRECTIONS SYSTEMS**

### **BACKGROUND OF POSITION**

Impetus for the adoption of a local study (1971) on the Administration of Criminal Justice in Ventura County was the designation of Ventura County by the State of California as the site of a criminal justice laboratory.

The following year (1972) the league adopted a corrections position. In 1977-78 members adopted an "Update of the Ventura County Corrections Facilities for Adult Prisoners," and, in 1989, another update on the corrections position.

Corrections has been defined as the complex of state, local and private agencies and institutions which deal with offenders. It includes the official court, probation, parole, jail and prison authorities as well as quasi-official and private institutions for community treatment. Authorities in the field hold that the physical plant has a great influence upon correction programs.

Over the years, members have continued to believe in the need to identify and remove dangerous offenders from the community, in the need for rehabilitative programs (academic and vocational education, counseling, mental health services, half-way houses) and in the need for alternatives to incarceration (work furlough, community service projects, home detention, electronic surveillance, etc.). Much of the methodology included in the early position has been incorporated into present day philosophy of and practice by the county's correction system.

New specifics of the position were included as a result of the 1989 update because league members felt that more emphasis should be directed to the plight of the victim and accountability on the part the offender and because types of crime had changed over the years. The percentage of drug/alcohol related offenses had increased, more females were in the corrections system, more crime was white collar and gang related, also more violent.

### **ACTION TAKEN ON CORRECTIONS SYSTEMS POSITION**

1992 Sponsored three "meet Your Judges" public forums.

## **SOCIAL POLICY    CORRECTIONS SYSTEM: JUVENILE**

### **JUSTICE JUSTICE SUPPORT MEASURES TO ACHIEVE AN EFFECTIVE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM (1994-95)**

#### **SPECIFICS OF POSITION**

These specifics support the position:

1. Emphasis on diversion and rehabilitation consistent with public safety.
  - a) Recognition of the need to treat juveniles differently from adults because juvenile cognitive, developmental and behavioral maturity is in the formative stage.
  - b) Accountability:
    - Restitution
    - Penalties for failure to honor terms of contracts with Probation Office, School Attendance Review Board, or other agencies.
    - Participation in victim reconciliation programs.
2. Early intervention and diversion programs.

Examples:

  - Child and domestic abuse counseling.
  - Parenting classes.
  - Community involvement: tutors, mentors, recreational programs.
  - Day treatment centers.
  - At-risk profiles as a diagnostic tool.
3. Adequate physical facilities.
  - a) Replacement of outmoded buildings
  - b) Expansion of facilities.
  - c) Provision for separation of distinct populations.
    - Those awaiting court hearing.
    - First-time offenders.
    - Repeat or serious offenders.
  - d) Establishment of residential youth camps.
  - e) Expansion of court facilities.
4. Post-detention facilities to bridge release from correctional facilities and re-entry into the community.

Day-treatment centers providing:

  - a) Education.
  - b) Social services such as counseling and substance abuse programs.
  - c) Life skills and vocational classes.

(SPECIFICS OF POSITION, 5. cont'd)

- 5 Adequate statistical data to:
  - a) Measure effectiveness of programs.
  - b) Analyze recidivism rate.
  - c) Develop standard reporting system for public information.
  - d) Develop an at-risk assessment profile.
  - e) Furnish clear financial reports to the public which reflect revenue sources and expenditures for juvenile justice.

**ACTION TAKEN ON JUVENILE JUSTICE POSITION**

2004 Toured new Juvenile Justice facility for the County just before it opened.

2000 Appeared before Board of Supervisors in support of new Juvenile Justice complex.

Opposed Proposition 21 on state ballot, changing age when juveniles can be tried as adults and other changes in juvenile treatment.

## SOCIAL POLICY

## EDUCATION

### POSITION IN BRIEF: EDUCATION

SUPPORT THE NEED FOR A FOUR-YEAR UPPER AND LOWER DIVISION UNIVERSITY THAT OFFERS BACHELOR AND MASTERS DEGREES IN PROFICIENCY NEEDED IN VENTURA COUNTY (1989)

**California State University Channel Islands opened in 2000 as the County's public four-year upper and lower division university offering bachelors and masters degrees in areas of proficiency needed in Ventura County.**

#### BACKGROUND OF POSITION

The purpose of this 1989 League study was to determine the need for a full-scale university in Ventura County. The California State University system was proposing to increase the services offered by CSU-Northridge by establishing and building a four-year university in the western portion of Ventura County. The existing services in Ventura were limited and were housed in rented office space.

The study affirmed that there were many in Ventura County who could meet state university requirements but who could not afford the cost of education elsewhere or whose education would be delayed by the existing shortage of facilities. There were others whose values or finances required them to stay with their families.

League members agreed that a university would provide the basis for long-term economic, social and cultural growth in the community, that it would educate a labor force to meet local needs and offer cultural enhancement.

League members further agreed that they wanted to support controls which would mitigate adverse effects on the environment. They supported increasing the services of the CSU-Northridge branch in Ventura immediately, moving toward a four-year county-based state university and considering the possibility that doctoral programs may be needed in the future.

#### ACTION TAKEN ON EDUCATION POSITION

- 2004 Toured new campus of California State University Channel Islands.
- 1998 Toured campus under construction of California State University Channel Islands.
- 1991 Requested resolutions from local city councils to support development of a state university at any of the three sites under consideration.
- 1990 Commended California State University systems, Environmental Impact Planning Associates and members of CSU Ventura Site EIR Committee for efforts to locate suitable sites for a public university in Ventura County.  
Notified Chancellor of California State University of League consensus on need for higher education in Ventura County; supported information in a comprehensive EIR on several University sites ; urged better communications between the university system and the public.

## **SOCIAL POLICY**

## **HOMELESSNESS**

### **POSITION IN BRIEF: HOMELESSNESS**

**SUPPORT MEASURES TO ENSURE PLANNING TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS, TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE, COORDINATED SERVICES AND TO ENSURE AVAILABILITY OF REPLACEMENT LOW COST HOUSING PRIOR TO DEMOLITION (1 990-91)**

### **SPECIFICS OF POSITION**

These specifics support the position:

1. Planning for measures which prevent homelessness.
  - a) Such planning requires short, intermediate and long-term coordination to address the needs of the homeless.
  - b) Such planning should be mandated and adequately financed for and by all levels of government.
  - c) Such planning should include active, informed citizens.
  - d) Such planning by cities and county are important in the following areas:
    - to assure local participation and control
    - to link funding sources with services
    - to coordinate and oversee local public and private services
    - to lobby state and federal government for funding
    - to cut red tape, bureaucratic stumbling blocks and avoidable costs.
  - e) Such planning should avoid demolition of low cost housing until replacement housing is available. State and local laws requiring such replacement should be enforced. Citizens must be vigilant. Cost estimates should include all reasonable and usual cost to public agencies and individuals.
  
2. Planning for services to address the needs of homeless persons.
  - a) Such planning should be mandated and adequately financed for and by all levels of government.
  - b) Such planning should address the needs of each homeless person as an individual and should go beyond food and shelter and into counseling, training, education, mental and physical health. Services should be effective and economical. Homeless persons should have available the aid of an ombudsman.
  - c) Such planning should include active, informed citizens. Networking between the public and private sector should be dynamic.
    - Government should assume responsibility, especially in finances.
    - The private sector should be involved in direct services and daily contacts, such as distribution of food and clothing, publicity about problems of homeless people, dissemination of resource information and availability of shelter.
    - Both public and private participation are needed to inform and to reach out to the public.

(cont'd on next page)

## **SOCIAL POLICY**

## **HOMELESSNESS**

### **BACKGROUND OF POSITION**

The growing problem of the homeless led to the 1990/91 local program study item. "Homelessness" is defined in the 1987 McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (Public Law 100-77) to include:

1. an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night time residence; and
2. an individual who has a primary night time residence that is
  - (a) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill;
  - (b) an institution that provides temporary residences for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
  - (c) a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

The focus of the study was kept to the problems and possible solutions to homelessness for local action. The growing problem of homelessness can be attributed to the deteriorating economic situation, to cutbacks in federal and state social service programs and subsidized housing, and to the lack of available low cost housing (e.g. rentals). Other league positions on Land Use Planning, Human Resources and Social Policy allow action in related areas such as housing and social services on local as well as state and national levels. During the study, the LWV-Ventura County joined the Ventura Homeless Coalition and cosponsored with the Coalition a workshop on homelessness.

Effective areas for local action in the future could be: monitoring replacement low-cost housing, educating the public, extending voter registration services to the homeless and participating with other agencies in coordinating services. Members approved the idea of an ombudsman for the homeless.

During the study, members were impressed with the dedication of the staff and volunteers of the agencies, organizations and other groups providing services to the homeless. Despite extremely difficult odds and very limited funding, high quality services were being provided in Ventura County by these individuals.

### **ACTION TAKEN ON HOMELESSNESS POSITION**

- 2007 Supported the VCHH Coalition's 10 Year Plan to end homelessness in Ventura County.
- 1992 Urged Ventura County Board of Supervisors to support Community Development Block Grant proposal submitted by Ventura County Homeless Coalition because coordinated planning is necessary to ameliorate the problem.
- 1991 Opposed elimination of the Homeless Assistance Program. State elimination of funds would also result in federal elimination of matching funds.

Contacted member agencies of the Homeless Coalition to suggest that they assist the homeless in registering to vote. Nineteen agencies had voter registration forms and information available at their facilities and activities. An estimated 300 voter registration forms were distributed to individuals in a population census of the homeless in Ventura County and a public education meeting.

## **SOCIAL POLICY**

## **HOUSING**

### **POSITION IN BRIEF: HOUSING**

**SUPPORT MEASURES TO INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING WITHOUT UNDUE JEOPARDY TO**

**THE ENVIRONMENTAL BALANCE, HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE COMMUNITY (1971-72, 1980-82, 1985-1986)**

### **SPECIFICS OF POSITION**

These specifics support the position:

1. Promotion of flexible zoning which encourages innovative methods of achieving affordable housing.
2. Updating building codes.
3. "Scattering" low-cost housing both in the siting of new buildings and in the leasing of existing units.
4. Ensuring that replacement housing is available before demolition of low cost housing. Estimates should include all reasonable and usual costs which will be borne by public agencies and individuals as a result of such demolition and change of habitation. (This is a transfer to HOUSING from HOMELESSNESS consensus.)
5. Vigilance in enforcement of state and local laws in requiring replacement housing.

### **BACKGROUND OF POSITION**

Not until 1985-86 did the LWV-Ventura County take a position which dealt directly with housing. It resulted from a study/update of the relationship with, and consistency among, related housing elements of each city's plan and Ventura County's General Plan. The objective of this update was "to familiarize members with the housing needs in their communities, to review and understand the applications of our positions, including possible conflicts and resolutions." Position specifics (1) and (2) above resulted from this study. Item (3) resulted from a 1971-72 national policy study. The "scattering" of low cost housing was desired as a local specific of the position to help provide equal access to employment, housing and high quality education. Items (4) and (5) resulted from the 1990-91 Homelessness study.

Anti-discrimination statements have long been included in LWV-Ventura County housing statements. At the end of its 1980-81 study on "Housing in Ventura County" and a 1981-82 continuation of the housing study "with attention to preservation of agricultural land," the LWV-Ventura County favored "Support of programs and policies to provide equal opportunity for access to housing, without discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender or sexual orientation." "Age" was added in 1984.

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LWVUS Social Policy Position as amended June, 1992, is to “promote social and economic justice, secure equal rights for all, and combat discrimination and poverty.” This means “all persons regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability.” This national policy allows local Leagues to take actions at a local level on national’s social policy positions without permission by the national League board. See the national positions booklet for a complete explanation of its social policy position.

## ACTION TAKEN ON HOUSING POSITION

- 2008 Supported adequate affordable housing in Camarillo during Planning Commission’s update of General Plan housing element.
- 2006 Supported Citrus Place, a CEDC project, to provide more affordable housing in Ventura.
- 2004 Supported Measure G in Ojai, allowing 50 affordable rental units for seniors.
- 2002 Opposed Measure C in Ojai. It would have required mitigation for increased traffic due to new buildings.  
Supported a development of affordable and market housing in Saticoy. (Not built.)  
Supported a development of affordable and market housing in Mound. (Being built.)
- 2001 Spoke before seven city councils supporting affordable housing. “Too High a Price, League of Women Voters of Ventura County Affordable Housing Study, 2000-01” written and printed by study committee, was presented to governmental officials at the county and city levels. Advocacy statements given at Board of Supervisors meetings.  
Wrote newspaper column supporting more affordable housing in cities.
- 1995 Made statement to Ventura City Council to expedite housing development by CEDC (Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation) for low income people.
- 1992 Became a life-time member of “Networking for Housing” in Ventura County.
- 1991 Urged the Ojai Planning Commission and, later, the Ojai City Council to declare an overriding need for the Montgomery Oaks Affordable Housing Project when the Environmental Impact Report was being considered.

## **SOCIAL POLICY      VENTURA COUNTY HEALTH CARE AGENCY**

### **POSITION IN BRIEF: VENTURA COUNTY HEALTH CARE AGENCY**

SUPPORT THE VENTURA COUNTY MEDICAL CENTER (VCMC) AS THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF THE VENTURA COUNTY HEALTH CARE AGENCY (HCA) WHICH EFFECTIVELY MAXIMIZES THE EFFICIENCY OF THE OTHER UNITS OF THAT AGENCY (1998)

#### **SPECIFICS OF POSITION**

These specifics support the position:

1. Development of a plan for the maintenance and repair of VCMC so that it can continue to be effective in its role in the health care agency.
2. Immediate action to correct the problems\* that imperil VCMC's continued operation, i.e.,
  - dietary unit
  - laboratory
  - utility tunnels

#### **BACKGROUND OF POSITION**

For the 1997/98 local study, League members voted to study health care needs and resources in Ventura County. This study, determined to be too broad, was later focused more narrowly to cover only the Ventura County Health Care Agency. The Health Care Agency consists of the following:

1. The ambulatory care department, which has nine satellite clinics in communities around the county and fourteen campus (near the hospital) clinics and serves as a major source of outpatient health care for the county's indigent population and those who do not have access to private physicians.
2. The behavioral/mental health department, which was transferred out of the HCA system\*\* subsequent to the League study.
3. The medical examiner/coroner, who determines causes of deaths and issues death certificates.
4. The public health department, which runs a variety of programs (forty-five were listed in the 1997 directory of services) and reaches many individuals in the county (close to 300,000 in 1995/96).
5. The Ventura County health care plan, which is a health maintenance organization for county employees, retirees and satellite clinic employees.
6. VCMC, with 152 beds plus 35 newborn beds and all the usual services of an acute care hospital.

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*\*As of late 2005, the deficiencies that were mentioned in Specifics of Position had been corrected.*

*\*\*The behavioral/mental health department has now been moved back to HCA. (2005)*

## **SOCIAL POLICY      VENTURA COUNTY HEALTH CARE AGENCY**

### **(BACKGROUND OF POSITION, cont'd)**

VCMC was of particular interest to the study committee because a county plan for consolidation and modernization of some of its units was defeated by the electorate in March, 1996, after an election in which a great deal of money was spent lobbying against the ballot measure by Community Memorial Hospital which is also located in the City of Ventura. It was also of interest because of the highly regarded family practice residency program which it provides in conjunction with UCLA; because so many counties have closed their county hospitals; and because we wanted to learn more about services to the poor.

In reviewing the 1996/97 Grand Jury Report, we found that the county would lose a great deal in state and federal funding if the hospital were to close. We were told that the smaller counties with fewer hospital patients are the ones which have closed their hospitals. We reviewed HCA publications which stated that VCMC serves more Medi-Cal and indigent patients than all other hospitals in the county combined—really serving as a safety net for the poor. We agreed that the HCA had been very forward looking when it started its de-emphasis of inpatient care and reached out to the communities by opening satellite clinics. This also decreased expensive emergency room visits. A league tour of facilities, the Grand Jury Report, and interviews all pointed to the necessity for an upgrading of the laboratory, the dietary facilities, and the utility tunnels so that the hospital will be able to retain its certification. The Grand Jury Report from 1996/97 contains recommendations for action on the same items as are in our consensus, but the problems remain. Our conclusions were that the hospital is an important resource for the community, especially for its services to the poor, and that its continued operation must be ensured.

### **ACTION TAKEN ON HEALTH CARE AGENCY**

- 2006 Met with new hospital administrator and the head of the Behavioral Health Department, to discuss their plans for mental health facilities and the proposal to demolish the existing building serving mental health.
- 2005 Toured the hospital and members were shown the new laboratory, cafeteria and kitchen facilities.
- 2001 Wrote Board of Supervisors asking postponement of an agreement between the county and private hospitals regarding distribution of \$900,000 of the county's Master Settlement Agreement revenues so that we could discuss our concerns more fully with staff.
- 2000 Actively supported coalition opposing Measure O. Signed ballot measure opposing. Presented opposition arguments to Ojai and Ventura City Councils. Measure O would have diverted \$261 million in tobacco settlement money from county to private hospitals.
- 1998 Spoke to Board of Supervisors urging action be taken to correct deficiencies at the Medical Center.
- 1996 Held a forum educating voters on Measure M, a plan to expand medical facilities at VC Medical Center. The league had no position at that time so no action was taken pro or con on the measure.

## CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF COUNTY STUDIES

- 2005-2007 Updated position on Planning, Conservation, Recreation and adopted revised Land Use Planning position
- 2003-2005 Re-formed unit in Santa Paula studied their community. "Know Your Community, A Study of the Santa Paula Area," was printed January 2005.
- 2003-2005 Ventura County Budget study.
- 2000-2001 Affordable Housing Study—no new position; see publication, available at [www.ez2.net/LWV/aff\\_hous.htm](http://www.ez2.net/LWV/aff_hous.htm) : "Too High a Price: League of Women Voters of Ventura County Affordable Housing Study 2000-01."
- 1999-2000 Welfare Reform: the Implementation of CalWORKS in Ventura County—no new position. See publication, available at [www.ez2.net/lwv/CalWORKS](http://www.ez2.net/lwv/CalWORKS): "Welfare Reform: Progress and Problems - A Study of CalWORKS in Ventura County, California, 1998-2000."
- 1998 Ventura County Health Care Agency.
- 1997 Sustainability (A continuing study of the balance of social, economic and environmental forces in the county—no new position.)
- 1995 Services and Special Districts: Libraries (Adopted by concurrence.)
- 1993-95 Corrections System: Juvenile Justice.
- 1992-93 Linkages: Ventura County and the World, a public education project.
- 1991-92 Implications of Regional Governance for Ventura County.
- 1991 Recreation: after adoption position was incorporated into the position on Planning, Conservation (see Planning, Conservation, Recreation).
- 1990-91 Homeless in Ventura County.
- 1989-90 The Need for Higher Education in Ventura County: an emergency study.  
More Effective Use of the Corrections System, an update.
- 1986-88 Know Your Community: an update leading to the publication of guides to the governments of Ojai and the Ojai Valley, Thousand Oaks and the Conejo Valley.
- 1985-86 Local Option — Housing Survey, Conejo School District Budget.
- 1983-85 Property Administration Agency: incorporated in 1991 into the position on Planning, Conservation, and Recreation.
- 1982-83 Property Administration Agency: an incomplete study postponed to 1983-85.
- 1982-84 "The Government of Ventura County" updated and published.  
Waste Management position updated. Expanded study of management of non-hazardous waste to include hazardous waste/toxic substances.
- 1981-82 Continued Housing Study with Attention to Preservation of Agricultural Land.  
Housing in Ventura County, local addendum to Human Resources Position
- 1979-80 Structure and Function of County Government.
- 1978-79 Local Option, Conejo School District Budget, Oxnard City Charter Study, Santa Paula Growth Management. Positions were later dropped when they became outdated.

**(CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY, cont'd)**

- 1977-78 Ventura County Corrections: Facilities for Adult Prisoners, an update.
- 1976-77 Study of Community College District Election Boundary — Ballot Proposal, Future of Local Government in Ventura County, an incomplete study.
- 1976-77 “Know Your Town,” Thousand Oaks.
- 1975-76 Evaluation of Methods for Solid Waste Treatment: including study of facilities, sites, combustion for fuel. Updated 1982-84.
- 1974-75 Local Action Agenda: Effective Understanding and Implementation of Local Transportation Position of the LWV.
- 1973-74 Legal Treatment of Juveniles in Ventura County. (Position dropped when it became outdated.)  
“Know Your Town,” Ojai.  
Study of Special Districts and Services.
- 1972-73 Corrections in Ventura County.
- 1971-72 Administration of Justice in Ventura County. (Position dropped when it became outdated.)  
Evaluation of Simi Valley General Plan. (Position dropped when it became outdated.)  
Evaluation of the Relationship between Planning Decisions and Environmental and Economic Factors and Evaluation of the Amendment to the General Plan: Downtown Ventura. (see Housing Position.)
- 1970-71 Transportation in Ventura County.  
Desegregation, Welfare, Hunger in Ventura County.
- 1969-70 County Mental Health Services. (Position dropped when it became outdated.)
- 1968-69 Ventura County Coastline.
- 1967-68 Each city studied its own interest area.
- 1966-67 County and City Planning. Incorporation of Simi Valley. (Position dropped when it became outdated.)
- 1965-66 Financing Local Government. Updated, through a state study, in 1975-76.
- 1964-65 City Government. Each member city updated a “Know Your Town” study.
- 1963-64 Recreation in Ventura County.
- 1962-63 An Evaluation of County Government.
- 1960-62 Planning in Ventura County.
- 1959 Would-be league members completed a “Know Your County” study required for acceptance into the League of Women Voters of United States. Accomplished by league units in Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and Ojai. They also completed “Know Your Town” studies. Later, as units were being formed in Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, and Santa Paula, they completed “Know Your Town” studies.

A new study must be undertaken if a unit dissolves and wishes to again become a part of the league. Units may update their community studies if agreed to at the Annual Meeting. All local units re-studied their cities in 1964-65. An update of the county was published in 1982 as "The Government of Ventura County." Ojai redid its city study in 1987, Thousand Oaks in 1988. Santa Paula became reactivated and completed a "Know Your Town" booklet in 2004.

The LWV-Ventura County was approved by the state and national boards as a local league in March, 1960. It adopted its first government study in April of that same year.