

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEHIGH COUNTY
POSITIONS ON LOCAL ISSUES**

At the annual meeting every year, members vote on adopting our positions on local issues. This year, no changes are recommended in any positions.

1. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT CONSENSUS (adopted December 1972; amended 1982, 1992)

Support source reduction, re-use and recycling of scrap and waste materials:

- a. Support expansion of local recycling programs;
- b. Agree that waste separation is essential;
- c. Strongly support projects for collection, storage and transportation of articles such as bottles, cans, paper, and other recyclables, and urge expansion of these projects;
- d. Alternatives to sanitary landfills should be encouraged. Consideration is recommended for alternate methods of solid waste management. Support recovery of energy or other useful products from solid wastes through such methods as composting, bio-conversion, pyrolysis, and incineration.

2. LOCAL WATER CONSENSUS (adopted May 1973; amended 1982, 1986, 1991, 1992, 1993, 2002, 1996, 2006, 2009)

The 1973 study indicated the ready availability of water makes the area vulnerable to uncontrolled growth, endangering our natural resources and quality of life. All decisions regarding water use should take into account both immediate and long-range environmental effects. The quantity and quality of groundwater should be protected.

Recommendations:

1. Preservation of watershed areas is a basic consideration in land use policies.
 - a. Preservation of South Mountain and all recharge areas;
 - b. Adequate protection measures along streams;
 - c. Protection of wetlands and flood plains.
2. Existing laws in Lehigh County governing water quality should be adequately enforced. Therefore, we urge:
 - a. That the Lehigh County area require compliance with industrial waste ordinances;
 - b. All local municipalities strictly enforce flood-plain zoning and best management practices (BMPs) on stormwater management;
 - c. All municipalities and agencies to strictly enforce the Stormwater Management Act and use BMPs;
 - d. Citizen inspection to supplement government inspection;
 - e. Prompt action by local government and agencies in response to citizen complaints about pollution.
3. If protective long-range planning is adopted and our water resources are not overtaxed, it should be possible to avoid future projects that may have negative environmental effects.

We urge:

- a. Conservation of water resources and maximum protection of all creeks in Lehigh County and their tributaries;
- b. Mandatory accountability on all sewer and water allocations;
- c. Closer cooperation among municipalities and all governmental agencies delegated with responsibility to protect water resources;
- d. Local governments and responsible agencies to seek greater citizen participation in all planning;

- e. Continued diligence in monitoring activities of the Delaware River Basin Commission concerning impacts on the Lehigh River and its tributaries, and opposition to any basin transfers of water.
- f. Practice of smart-growth concepts to revitalize inner cities and preserve open space.
- g. Encourage educational programs that support watershed protection.

3. TRANSPORTATION NEEDS IN THE LEHIGH VALLEY CONSENSUS (adopted July 1982; amended 1986, 1988, 1993, 1996, 2006)

We support a commitment to safety and convenience in transportation at the local, state, and regional levels. We recommend that transportation services and systems be integrated. Impacts on energy and resources conservation, land use, health, and social and economic well-being should be considered in transportation decisions. We support a viable urban and inter-urban mass transit system. We recommend that public transportation services be integrated. Regional planning is required, including tax incentives and disincentives.

We retain concerns about negative economic and environmental effects that result from the construction of highway corridors.

Since Route 22 is an essential east-west route through the Lehigh Valley, we urge the upgrading and maintaining of Route 22, arterial and local road systems and infrastructure.

We support accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians for transportation as well as for recreation. Further recommendations are:

- A flexible system for transportation for the handicapped or disabled.
- Encouraging businesses to subsidize fares and carpooling rather than building larger parking lots.
- Possible development of light rail line east and west through the valley, or other such innovative plans.
- Education in the use of local public transportation.

4. TAX BASE SHARING CONSENSUS (adopted April 1986)

The League of Women Voters of Lehigh County believes it is desirable to preserve traditional historic and cultural values in the Lehigh Valley, while accommodating economic growth.

In the absence of regional government, we favor tax base sharing as a means of sharing the economic benefits of metropolitan area growth among many municipalities so their fiscal disparities can be reduced.

A tax base sharing system would share among all municipalities a portion of the taxes generated by new economic growth, because this kind of development is an activity dependent on the attributes of the region rather than any one municipality.

We believe that a tax base sharing system must offer benefits to all participating municipalities, as an incentive to enter into a compact. The benefits of an effective program should include:

1. Greater cooperation among municipalities in attracting new development.
2. Encouragement of good regional planning and increased sensitivity to appropriate uses of the land.
3. Potential for maintaining and improving the viability of the urban core.
4. Improved regional services.

We favor linking tax base sharing to the provision of services which are regional in nature. Such services may include water, wastewater, transportation, health, and cultural opportunities. Because of considerations of location and differing needs, all linked services need not necessarily be provided to all region members.