

Advocating at the Local League Level
June 22, 2021

I. Effective Advocacy:

Giving the right message to the right person at the right time

1. Right Message

- Includes researched talking points
Example, “Making voting more convenient”
not
“Making voting easier”
- Is consistent
The League speaks with one voice at each level of League.
Only the League president or designee speaks for the League

2. Right Person is appropriate to League and government level

- Local Leagues may talk to local officials about local issues
- Local Leagues may **not** talk to state officials unless they have permission from LWVMI or receive an Action Alert
- Local Leagues may **not** talk to federal officials unless they have permission from LWVMI and LWVUS or receive an Action Alert

3. Right time is determined by appropriate League Board.

II. Two Ways to Advocate at the Local League Level

1. Responding to Action Alerts sent by LWVMI or LWVUS

- Action alert ask individual members to contact their state or federal official as a League member.
- No additional permission needed

- Letter or message usually suggested

2. Action initiated at the local League level

- Local League Board chooses to advocate on an issue before a local unit of government such as city council, planning commission, school board, township or county board of supervisors
- Advocacy must be supported by an appropriate local, state or national League position (See lwvmi.org or LWVUS “Impact on Issues”, available from Amazon.com)
- No permission is needed from state or national League
- Local League Board authorizes President (or her/his designee) to speak on a local issue to local officials
Example: Testifying at City Council re proposed development in the city

III. Local Advocacy Committees

1. Local League Board may establish local Advocacy Committee

2. Advocacy Committee:

- Gathers information on local issues using Observer Corp reports on local government meetings
- Considers interests of their local League members
- Reviews appropriate local, state and national positions
- Recommends action to local League Board: for example, writing a letter, giving testimony at public meeting
- Prepares letter or written testimony for President to approve