



## **Lobbying in Support of League Positions**

(Adopted November 2, 2009)

(Reviewed October 7, 2013)

After League members have reached consensus on issues, the next step is to advocate or lobby for legislation..

### **Definitions: Advocacy vs. Lobbying** [Source: League Basics, p. 20]

**Advocacy:** is a broader concept than lobbying. While lobbying can be part of an advocacy strategy, advocacy does not necessarily include lobbying. Advocacy activities, on the other hand, can sometimes be funded with tax-deductible monies. This is the case even when only one side of an issue is presented, as long as no call to action on a particular piece of legislation is issued. Such activities can include: (1) developing public policy briefs that analyze issues and provide detailed information and recommendations for addressing them through specific reforms and (2) providing forums for discussing issues and educating policy makers and the public.

**Lobbying:** is an attempt to influence specific legislation, both legislation that has already been introduced in a legislative body and specific legislative proposals that the League or others may either oppose or support. Lobbying includes action that transmits a point of view on a specific piece of legislation to elected officials or their staffs, as well as action urging the public to contact their legislators about a specific piece of legislation. Lobbying activities must be funded through general operating funds (501(c) 4).

### **Procedure for Local League Lobbying**

If local League members are going to lobby during the NM legislative session, then:

1. members must register with the Secretary of State as lobbyists for their local Leagues.
2. the Lobbyist Authorization Form must be signed by the local President
3. the LWVNM Legislative Action Chair and Committee need to be notified.

Local League members may lobby their locally elected NM state legislators about local or regional issues based on local positions. Opportunities for such action are at a Legislative Breakfast, an annual event scheduled by the local League, prearranged scheduled interviews with individual NM legislators, voter services activities, and other actions such as emailing and telephoning.

Any action by local Leagues at the NM State Legislature based on state or national positions must be done in cooperation with the LWVNM Legislative Action Chair and Committee.

Local League members who lobby at the NM State Legislature on behalf of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico must be authorized to do so by the LWVNM President and the Legislative Action Chair. They must have their lobbyist Authorization Form signed by the LWVNM President.

If legislative action at the local level is based on:

- a national position, the local League President must request authorization from LWVUS to use the national position by having the LWVNM President and the Legislative Action Chair forward the request to national.
- a state position, authorization must be received from the LWVNM President and Legislative Action Chair.

### **Individual lobbying or advocacy action**

Local League members may lobby as individuals on any issue. League members will not identify themselves as representing the League or acting on League positions unless they have been authorized as above. Members who are authorized League lobbyists or who are otherwise well known to NM legislators as LWV representatives should avoid lobbying on non-League issues.

Attachment: LWVNM Policy on Advocacy

**League of Women Voters of New Mexico**

**POLICY ON ADVOCACY**

(Adopted January 12, 2008)

**A. Authorization**

Board authorization is required for action at the state level.

The Action Committee is authorized to support or oppose proposed state legislation based upon established League positions. The Committee needs to keep the president fully informed.

If action is required between board meetings and without previous board guidance on a particular subject, consultation between the president, vice president, and appropriate board members is necessary and sufficient. Such action should be reported at the next board meeting.

**B. Member Action**

League members who lobby at the state legislature on behalf of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico must be authorized to do so by the president and the Action Chair. LWVNM lobbyists must register as state lobbyists with the NM Secretary of State. The president must sign the Authorization Form.

**C. Local League Action**

Any action by local Leagues at the State Legislature based on state or national positions must be done in cooperation with the Legislative Action Chair and Committee. Local Leagues may lobby the state legislature on local or regional issues based on local positions after obtaining permission from the Action Chair and state President. Members who are lobbying only on local issues must register as lobbyist for their local Leagues. The local League president must sign the Authorization Form.

**D. Individual Action**

This policy is not intended to prevent League members from lobbying as an individual on any issue. However, League members will not identify themselves as representing the League or acting on League positions unless they have been authorized as above. Members who are authorized League lobbyists or who are otherwise well known to legislators as LWV representatives should avoid lobbying on non-League issues.