

Dear LWV Ohio Members,

The LWV Ohio Board is delighted to announce that we have a new position on Primary Election Systems that was reached by study and consensus.

New LWV Ohio Primary Election System Position:

LWVO supports open primary election systems that narrow the field of candidates for the general election and permit all registered voters, regardless of political party membership, to participate.

In general, League members believe that nonpartisan primaries are more appropriate at the more administrative county and local government levels, while partisan primaries are more appropriate for state and national policy-making offices.

Any proposal to restructure primary elections in Ohio should have as its goals, in order of importance, to increase voter participation, to lead to more competitive general elections, to enfranchise the largest number of registered voters and to lessen partisan polarization.

League members overwhelmingly support replacing Ohio's current primary election system with a more open alternative, in which any registered voter may choose to vote any party's ballot without having to be a member of that party. To meet this goal, statutes permitting or requiring challenges and declarations of party allegiance should be eliminated. Local and county governments that employ nonpartisan, "top-two" primaries already meet this goal.

We are indebted to the tireless work of the Primary Election Systems (PES) Study Committee, especially co-chairs Lynda Mayer of LWV Greater Cleveland and Dianne Herman of LWV Greater Dayton, in carrying out the study and preparing study materials and consensus questions.

The LWV Ohio Board met on March 17-18, 2017, to review local League PES consensus questionnaire responses and the proposed new position prepared by the PES co-chairs and LWVO Board Advocacy & Education Committee.

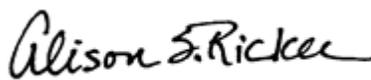
This new position automatically becomes part of LWV Ohio's adopted issue positions. Delegates to the upcoming state convention do not need to vote on the new PES position. However, delegates will get the opportunity to vote on retaining all of our current positions, including this new one.

We also wanted to share with you that one of the committees of the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission is reviewing the section of the state constitution on primary elections and has invited LWVO to share our views, so we will have the opportunity to put our new PES position to use right away!

Yours in League,



Mary Kirtz van Nortwick
Co- President



Alison Ricker
Co-President