

A LOCAL LEAGUE STUDY

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS HAS A TRADITION OF ISSUE STUDY THAT LEADS TO ADVOCACY FOR THAT ISSUE. THE LEAGUE PROCESS FOR STUDY HAS LONG BEEN RECOGNIZED FOR ITS EXCELLENCE. THE FOUNDATION FOR LEAGUE ACTION IS THE EFFORT TO STUDY THE ISSUE IN AN UNBIASED MANNER, COME TO CONSENSUS OR CONCURRENCE ON THIS ISSUE AND ADOPT IT AS ONE OF THE LEAGUE PROGRAM POSITIONS.

THIS GUIDE TO LOCAL LEAGUE STUDY IS FOR LOCAL LEAGUE LEADERS TO USE TO ASSIST THEM IN THE PROCESS FROM PROGRAM PLANNING TO POSITION ADOPTION.

CHOOSING A STUDY TOPIC

Each year time should be set aside for a Program Planning meeting usually in winter. This meeting of the membership is for discussion of issues that the League may want to study. The members make their study suggestions for consideration at the next local League annual meeting.

The state or national Leagues send out Program Planning information each year. This is in preparation for their conventions which occur during even years for national and odd years for the state. It is easy to combine planning for a local study and the state or national program recommendations at the same meeting. It is important to keep the discussions separate in order to clarify the three levels of program. It would be useful to have someone in your League who is familiar with Program and Action chair the meeting. Here are some points to consider in preparation for the Program Planning meeting:

Program suggestions can come from a variety of sources:

- 1) Interests of individual members
- 2) Program committees
- 3) Local board members
- 4) Previous studies and updates
- 5) Community and/or Media issues
- 6) Other Leagues

Background materials:

- 1) LWVUS Impact on Issues
- 2) LWVM Where We Stand
- 3) Local League positions
- 4) LWVM Bylaws - Program
- 5) LWVUS In League (explanation of program)
- 6) Articles that explore an issue of interest

Note: Be careful to avoid duplication of past studies unless an update is required. If the issue is already covered by a current position, the local League can consider an action approach.

Considerations when choosing program

- 1) Is this issue **politically relevant**? Does it need government action? Will it have long term impact? Will there be member and community support and interest?
- 2) Can the League be **effective** on this issue? Is there a unique role for the League? Does it fall within the League Principles? Can the League be visible on this issue?

3) Is this issue **timely**? Is the issue moving in the political arena? Are there opportunities for League advocacy and/or education?

4) Is this a **manageable issue** for the League? Are there sufficient members and resources to make a difference? Is the member interest strong enough to sustain League activity? Are there potential allies for coalitions in the community?

Suggestions for Program Planning meeting:

1) Explain Program Planning process to the members. Emphasize the importance of each member's participation in the discussion and selection.

2) Use the rules for a good discussion meeting: a discussion leader to lead and stimulate discussion; a recorder to keep track of what is decided; visual aids (blackboard or easel with pad); and attendees have an understanding of the rules as well as an opportunity to fully participate.

3) Review with the members all the considerations (see above) that they should use when choosing program and making their decision. A copy of current positions would be useful for each attendee to assist them in the discussion.

4) A program planning meeting is the preferred way of discussing and decision making because it actively involves members in the process. If it is not possible for the League to have a meeting or contact the members who could not attend, then consider a tear off in the bulletin or a telephone poll of the membership. Remember, if the League does not have a meeting, then it could be difficult to assess if there is a strong interest in the study topic and whether there are members who would like to participate in the study process.

When the members have chosen a study topic(s), it is useful to take time to begin to outline the focus and scope of the proposed study. If more than one program suggestion is proposed at the Program Planning meeting, then it is possible to list the choices for selection by members at the annual meeting. This will have to be done by the board for annual meeting if it is not written at Program Planning meeting. In any case, the board will recommend the proposed program item(s) to the annual meeting attendees.

The Focus and Scope of the Proposed Study:

Focus is the statement of the main topic for study.

Simplicity is key in wording a local study item.

- **The intent should be clearly stated with concise and direct wording.**

THIS: A study of housing alternatives in Happyville for the elderly.

NOT: A study of housing.

- **Wording should be general enough to allow flexibility as the study proceeds.**

THIS: A study of combining elementary school A with school B.

NOT: A study to determine if there is sufficient space and teachers in Elementary school A for current and future students or if it should be combined with school B or if a new school should be built?

- **Avoid implied conclusions and negative wording.**

THIS: A study of the structure of town government.

NOT: A study of the ineffectiveness and lack of coordination in the current form of town government.

- **Wording may reflect a broad study.**

EXAMPLE: A study of services provided to the elderly.

This allows study of a variety of services without limiting it to a specific service.

- **Wording may be limited to a particular aspect of an issue.**

EXAMPLE: A study of the town manager form of government.

SCOPE explains the extent and limits of the study, the areas that the League wants to explore and, sometimes, the emphasis on a particular aspect of the study. The scope is not a list of planned activities or meetings.

THIS:

FOCUS: A study of utilities in Happyville.

SCOPE: A study of the administration, cost and availability of utilities in Happyville, in particular the public water system.

NOT THIS:

FOCUS: A study of Happyville park system.

SCOPE: The study committee will interview the chairman of parks and recreation, invite a speaker from the nature center to talk to members and talk to others interested in parks.

The local League board reviews the proposed study item to be sure that it fits all the criteria and there is not a League position (local, state or national) that already addresses the study proposal. If the board finds that there is already sufficient position on the topic then they may discuss an action proposal for annual meeting. The board then approves the final wording for the focus and scope which will be voted upon at the annual meeting. This is the "recommended" study item. It may be amended by the members at the annual meeting.

ADOPTING A LOCAL STUDY

The recommended study item is presented to the members in accordance with the local League bylaws. At the Annual Meeting, the recommended program with the study item(s) is proposed, discussed and voted upon. The proposed study item after it is adopted becomes the local study.

CONDUCTING THE STUDY

THE STUDY CHAIRPERSON

After the adoption of the local study, the board needs to find a local study chairperson or director. The title is not as important as locating the right person for the job. Sometimes the right person has already surfaced at annual meeting in the form of an enthusiastic advocate for the issue who urged adoption of the local study. Remember, the most vocal person may make a better committee member than the chairperson. It is vital that the person who directs the study maintains balance. If this is the case, the board can appoint the study chair right away and initiate the work of beginning the study.

It is a good idea to appoint the local study chair to the board. This will provide an opportunity for the board to be current on the progress of the study throughout the year. It also allows them to become more informed on the study issue, make suggestions for keeping the members updated, and prepare them for their approval of the consensus questions. It is important to note that a study is a priority for the League. It needs total board support and recognition that it can energize their members and has the potential to enhance membership recruitment, visibility and community support. The board should oversee any public announcements or press releases on the study to protect the League's reputation for impartial analysis.

The person considering the position should be aware that the job includes some basic qualifications and responsibilities:

- strong organizational skills to lead the study process through planning, research, consensus preparation and presentation.
- creates and coordinates a timeline and calendar for study
- chairs study committee meetings
- in cooperation with the study committee, organizes direction of study, job assignments, research, information dissemination, member meetings on study issue, creation of consensus questions and presentation.
- maintains files with resource information, correspondence, articles, etc.
- ability to work well with a variety of people in order to recruit study committee members, communicate with board members as study progresses.
- coordinates the details of the study with the board Program Director.
- gets suggestions from the Membership Director for study committee members.
- supplies articles and resource information to bulletin/newsletter editor and Public Relations Director.
- works with other board members as need arises, e.g. Treasurer on expenses, etc.

The local study chairperson should be an individual who enjoys the study process which includes creativity, excitement about an issue, team work and the satisfaction of a job well done.

THE STUDY COMMITTEE

RECRUITMENT:

The recruitment of the committee members is the joint responsibility of the board and the study chair. A study appeals to a wide variety of League members: newly recruited and long standing. Look for members who are knowledgeable and/or have an interest in the topic but with a range of opinions on it. All sides of the issues will need to be examined by the committee. Articles in bulletin/newsletter on topic with appeals for volunteers can be useful. Personal contact with a potential study committee member helps to make them feel needed as well as inform them of the requirements of being on the committee.

Some Leagues are interested in recruiting from the community with the hope that they will join the League as they get more involved. This should be discussed by the board. The positive points are that it can not only bring in people with expertise but can involve other organizations who are following the issue. The negative points are interest by issue zealots who want to influence the study process and people who do not understand the League study process and nonpartisanship. If the board decides to recruit from the public, people can be located through press releases on the formation of the study and word of mouth from League members.

COMPOSITION:

The size of the study committee is dependent on the focus and scope of the study. If there will be a large amount of research and preparation required, then this should be taken into consideration.

It will be helpful for the committee to divide the work into smaller "one-time" job assignments such as investigating a particular aspect of the study, clipping articles on the topic, participating in one interview, etc.

THE TIMELINE

The study chairperson should, after consultation with the board, set up a timeline for completion of the study. The board should set the consensus deadline. In most cases, the study will need to be completed before the deadline for preparations for the next annual meeting.

There may be League or public activities and events that need to be brought into consideration when scheduling meetings and the date for the consensus meeting. These activities may just affect the calendar but they may also have an effect on the issue. You may want to have a position statement on the issue ready for a budget meeting, referendum, etc.

When planning with the study committee, it is easiest to work backwards from the consensus deadline that the board has chosen. Include time for research, interviews, informational meetings, and committee meetings and reporting deadlines. It is important that the plans and tasks of the committee be clearly arranged at the first meeting. The chairperson should always have an outline of the committee's responsibilities, set the agenda for the meetings and encourage members to finish their tasks, keep files and write reports accordingly. It is a team effort throughout the study process with the chairperson being the captain.

THE RESEARCH

There are many options for gathering the information on the pros and cons of the study issue. The most common are printed materials and field research. If the committee has a unique study issue, then it may prompt the committee to do some creative research and information dissemination.

Avoid duplication of effort whenever possible. If some other League or group has gathered extensive information, check with them and use it as part of your research. In this age of Internet and constant media exposure, there are always new and more efficient ways of finding the information that you seek.

PRINTED MATERIAL:

- Current laws, ordinances & codes applicable locally.
- Publications: League, organizations, agencies, books, newspapers and periodicals.
- Studies by other local Leagues.
- Budgets & minutes from appropriate government departments and/or agencies.
- Pamphlets, bibliographies & fact sheets from conferences or forums on the issue.

FIELD RESEARCH:

- Interviews with individuals knowledgeable about or experienced with the issue.

Tips for an interview:

1. Be prepared with the purpose (what information you seek and why you want to talk to this person) and have appropriate, organized questions.
2. Make the appointment and identify yourself as a League member and state your purpose for meeting. Confirm the appointment the day before.
3. Arrive promptly, be friendly and attentive, keep to the point, remain neutral (no personal opinions), keep notes, ask for sources of information, fact sheets, and if you can quote the person you are interviewing, and end at the agreed upon time.
You may request more time at a later date, if needed.
4. Review notes and write a report, and provide the committee with copies and send a thank you note.
 - Invite an expert to come and speak to the committee.
 - Set up a tour of an appropriate site or facility to expand the committee and the membership's understanding of the issue.
 - Questionnaires, polls, and surveys can be useful. Be careful to keep them objective and have an unbiased analysis when they are completed.

The printed material and information gathered from field research should be organized as the study outline directs. A complete file should be maintained with copies of all the pertinent information and reports. This file will assist the study committee when choosing what information to include in the bulletin/newsletter and informational meetings. The members of the committee should be familiar with the contents of the study file to make preparation for the consensus meeting presentation easier.

MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

The study committee should involve the members at different stages throughout the study process. The members will want to come to the consensus meeting well informed on the issue.

A meeting that covers all or part of the issue being studied is well received by members. An invited speaker or panel can give the members an opportunity to become more familiar with the issue. It is possible to utilize a multi-media approach and have a viewing of slides, movies or videos that look at the issue.

As noted before, invite members to accompany the study committee on a "go-see" tour.

Bulletin/newsletter articles gleaned from the research would keep the members' interest in the study. There may be enough information researched to publish a fact sheet or pamphlet for the community. This should be done with the board approval. Newspaper articles can be submitted to accompany a public meeting or tour.

COMING TO CONSENSUS

THE CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

The definition of consensus is collective opinion. The League has used this method of arriving at a position for many years. Consensus is not simple majority, nor unanimity but a general agreement of the members present at the meeting. Minority opinion is noted but does not dictate the consensus responses.

The study committee formulates and the board approves the consensus questions. The consensus questions must be approved by the board before they are printed in the bulletin/newsletter or mailed to the membership. The consensus questions should be distributed to the members at least two weeks in advance of the consensus meeting. One of the key factors to making the consensus discussion go smoothly are well written consensus questions. The intent is to elicit agreement on broad general concepts. It is important that the questions have the following traits:

- Short and simple questions. Use easy to understand language, avoid technical vocabulary. Non-experts should be able to answer them.
- Keep the questions within the range of the Focus and Scope of the study. If necessary, prioritize the items within your scope for consensus.
- Questions should be unbiased, nonassumptive, and clear in regard to what is being asked. Looking for principles that can be used for Action later.
- Questions should be open-ended to expand discussion. Answers to the questions should come from the discussion of the question. No multiple choice, True or False or "Yes or No" questions.
EXAMPLE: What types of elderly social activities should be implemented in Happyville?
- Do not have too many questions. Keep track of time available for questions after study committee presentation. The consensus meeting should not drag on too long.

THE CONSENSUS MEETING

A good consensus meeting is a well prepared meeting. The meeting consists of a presentation by the study committee with member discussion and formulation of responses to the consensus questions led by a discussion leader and noted by a recorder.

PRESENTATION:

The study committee is responsible for compiling and editing the data they have collected into a balanced and objective presentation. It should be presented with equal emphasis on all sides and viewpoints concerning the issue. The most relevant information should be selected for this presentation at the consensus meeting.

Much of this study information should have been shared with the membership before the consensus meeting as pointed out in the section on Member Involvement. Too much information handed out at the consensus meeting can cause confusion and interrupt the flow of the consensus discussion. The use of visual aids, such as graphs, charts, maps, etc., is encouraged to keep the presentation stimulating. This enables the presentation to be short and to the point to allow more time for consideration of the consensus questions.

The study committee with the discussion leader should develop a discussion outline in keeping with the presentation and the consensus questions. The discussion outline includes a short explanation of the purpose of the meeting, presentation of the pertinent information, discussion of the consensus questions and summary of the meeting and if consensus was reached.

A briefing meeting should be scheduled as a rehearsal for the study committee's presentation. This provides the committee an opportunity to refine their presentation in regard to clarity of material, timing and use of visual aids. The discussion leader and recorder should be present. This is an excellent time for them to familiarize themselves with the issue and the consensus questions.

THE DISCUSSION LEADER

It is essential to have a good discussion leader for the consensus meeting. The result of the consensus discussion depends not only on the study committee's contribution but the effectiveness of the discussion leader. Key points for the discussion leader to keep in mind are:

- Remind those present that only League members can participate.
- Establish an atmosphere where the members feel comfortable expressing even unpopular views.
- Guide the group through discussion without argument or debate. Do not let an individual dominate the conversation.
- Utilize inclusive language, for example, "We have heard from Mary, now does anyone disagree or have anything to add? What do you think, Jane?"
- Listen carefully to discern member agreement. Recapitulate tentative areas of agreement for clarification. "What I hear you saying is that you are willing to support a new school building if there is money available? Am I correct?"
- Keep the group focused on the consensus questions. "That is an interesting anecdote, we seem to have covered this point and should move on to the next question."
- Be perceptive. Watch for any obstacles to discussion, where more information is needed, if the discussion is becoming bogged down, and when there is no consensus on a particular point. "We seem to have come to an impasse, the discussion does not seem to be swaying anyone. There is no consensus on this point, let's move on."

The briefing meeting will help the discussion leader become familiar with the issue, clarify any part of the consensus questions that may need it, and be prepared with the discussion outline for the meeting.

If there is to be more than one consensus meeting, it is very useful to have the same discussion leader. This will help the consensus be more integrated and valid.

The discussion leader should be present at the wrap up meeting to help the study committee write the consensus statement.

THE RECORDER

The recorder is another key person for the consensus meeting. The notes that are recorded will be vital for the study committee to use in writing the consensus statement. Also, the board may use them to access if the members have arrived at a consensus.

The recorder should note the following:

- responses to the consensus questions
- Areas of agreement and disagreement
- minority views and their strength
- areas in which the group was undecided or needed more information
- the number of participants

The recorder would also benefit from attending the briefing meeting.

The recorder could be asked to review her notes for the group at the end of the meeting. There may be a point that the recorder wishes to clarify with the group and this should be done when necessary.

The study committee may want the recorder to attend the wrap up meeting to assist in the writing of the consensus statement.

THE CONSENSUS DISCUSSION

There are some guidelines to use to have a constructive consensus discussion which will lead to a strong consensus. The consensus/group discussion as stated in the LWVUS publication In League, "is the technique most often used in the League for reaching member agreement. It is a process whereby members participate in a group discussion of an issue. The 'consensus' reached by members through group discussion is not a simple majority, nor is it unanimity; rather it is the overall 'sense of the group' as expressed through the exchange of ideas and opinions, whether in a membership meeting or a series of membership or unit meetings."

The consensus cannot be narrow and restricting because it is difficult to predict exactly what opportunities for action will present themselves. The discussion leader during the discussion process finds the areas of substantial member agreement. Although members do not have to have unanimous agreement, the presence of a sizable dissenting minority means there is no consensus. A consensus does not imply that the area of agreement is in favor of something, a consensus can be in opposition to something. The group can also reach a partial consensus on certain aspects of the issue. They can also come to the conclusion that there is "no opinion" due to insufficient information. It is necessary to have full discussion of the areas of disagreement so that the participants feel satisfied that all viewpoints have been heard.

The members attending the consensus discussion need to be reminded that they are asked to voice their opinions as citizens not as experts. This "citizen decision" is essential for the spirit of consensus to thrive in the meeting.

Non members can be present but cannot participate in the discussion. The study committee in conjunction with the board should decide if they will have a separate consensus taken outside of the consensus meeting. There are several reasons to consider this option: (1) the study committee can be perceived by members as

the "experts" and their opinions could be viewed as overly influential, (2) it may be difficult for members to separate facts from opinions when stated by the study committee during discussion, and (3) if there is more than one consensus meeting, the committee's participation in one, but not others may skew the consensus. This should not disenfranchise the committee, they should participate in the discussion to provide information, points of clarification and describe consequences of different decisions. If the board feels that the study committee can participate in the consensus, perhaps due to the size of League, then this should be made clear to the members at the meeting.

There is no quorum for a consensus meeting as long as the study committee and the board provided the membership with ample issue information before the meeting and a chance to participate. The scheduling of more than one meeting may help encourage more members to attend. A strong participation lends strength to the consensus; however, members who are not interested in the issue or are absent should not influence the consensus of the participating members.

A good consensus meeting encompasses a common base of knowledge, the equal opportunity to discuss the issue, and an atmosphere of trust.

THE POSITION STATEMENT

THE WRAP UP MEETING

The study committee formulates the position statement. It is easier and more effective to have a wrap up meeting with the study committee members, the discussion leader and the recorder. This meeting should prepare a consensus report as well as the position statement. This meeting should occur as soon as possible after the consensus meeting.

The consensus report should contain important research, the chairperson's study file, and the position statement. This report can be extremely useful to the board for: referral when wanting to update the position, sharing with other Leagues, and as a tool for an action campaign.

The position should articulate the broad areas of substantial agreement that emerged from the members at the consensus meeting. The actual formulation of the position is an interpretive process, qualitative as well as quantitative. The full range of discussion should be considered in writing the statement but no minority views are written in the position.

The position statement needs to reflect what a local government can do in order to have the study properly result in local action. The position statement should be broad enough to allow the League to initiate, support or oppose a variety of proposals over a period of time.

The following example of wording for a position statement comes from LWVUS Committee Guide: Planning Program from Choice through Action.

Following the study of libraries, members have agreed that:

- a new building is needed in a central location;
- services - either small neighborhood branches or book mobiles - are needed to bring books to areas too far away from the central library;
- there should be better cooperation between the library and the school, the jail, the hospitals and other institutions;
- and the book collection should be increased.

The brief position could read:

SUPPORT OF A NEW CENTRAL LIBRARY WHICH PROVIDES FOR EXPANDED SERVICES.

The statement of position would include both the details and the rationale.

The members of the LWV of Brookfield believe that a new centrally located library building is needed in Brookfield. In order to serve all the citizens, books must be available to all. Therefore, there should be small neighborhood branch facilities or bookmobiles so that access to library books and services is within walking distance of residents. The book collection should be expanded to meet at least the criteria established for a city the size of Brookfield.

In order to provide reading material for all people in Brookfield, the library should arrange to lend books on an adequate basis to the schools, and to people homebound or in hospitals, jails and institutions so that no one able to read is denied access to books from the public library.

Both the rationale - that the public library is for everyone and its books should be accessible to all - and some of the specifics are included. Yet the wording does not set the number of books, the specific places that branches or the main library should be, nor the exact methods of serving institutions. The board has room to maneuver, to act in support of, or opposition to, any specific proposals.

THE BOARD APPROVAL

The local board has the responsibility for determining if consensus exists, acting upon the recommendation of the study committee. The study committee presents the board with the consensus report and the recommended position statement.

It is important that the board members have attended the consensus meeting. The board should keep in mind these considerations:

- (1) what the board members felt was said;
- (2) the strength of the majority and minority opinions;
- (3) that all points of view were discussed;
- (4) areas undecided or where the group needed additional information to make a decision;
- (5) whether all members were given an opportunity to participate;
- (6) the number of participants.

The board should not interject new ideas or opinions into the consensus position statement. It is the board's role to be sure that the consensus reflects only what was stated at the consensus meeting. The board needs to feel secure that the consensus position statement is truly representative of the members' agreement so they may act on this position with confidence.

If the board votes for approval of the position statement, then it immediately becomes part of the League's program. Action can be taken by the board from that point on. The board may want to submit a press release that informs the public of the League's new position.

Note: if the League is coming to consensus on a state or national study, the board does not publish their local results since they do not constitute a position yet.

Like all positions, it must be readopted by the members at each annual meeting in order to remain in the program.

SUMMARY

It is important to remember that the study process is a cooperative effort between the local League board and the study committee. It is the board's responsibility to monitor the entire process to ensure that the membership is able to come to consensus in an unbiased and nonpartisan atmosphere.

The key points of the study process are:

- Members chose an issue to study at the Program Planning meeting. Optimally, the members at the meeting should write the Focus and Scope.
- The League board chooses the recommended program items for the annual meeting. If the Focus and Scope have not already been written then they should write it for the annual meeting presentation.
- The members adopt at annual meeting the local program.
- The board finds a local study chairperson.
- The board and the local study chairperson recruit members for the study committee and set the date for consensus meeting. The board decides if the study committee can recruit from outside the current membership.
- The local study chairperson with the study committee sets up the timeline, organizes and gathers research information, shares issue information with the members, maintains an unbiased approach to the study, and prepares for the consensus meeting presentation.
- Members learn about the issue from the study committee through articles in bulletin, information forums, tours, etc. before the consensus meeting.
- The study committee writes the consensus questions and the board approves the questions which are sent to the members at least two weeks before the consensus meeting.
- The study committee with a discussion leader and a recorder develop a discussion outline, perfect their presentation and have a briefing meeting to prepare for the consensus meeting.
- The study committee presents the highlights of their issue research at the consensus meeting. The discussion leader oversees the consensus meeting to ensure there is constructive consensus discussion using the consensus questions. The recorder keeps accurate notes of the consensus meeting discussion.
- There is a wrap up meeting for formulation of the position statement by the study committee, discussion leader and the recorder using the consensus reached by the members.
- The board decides if consensus was reached by the members at the consensus meeting, reviews and approves the position statement, and adopts the position.
- The board may take action on the position immediately after they adopt it as a new local position.
- The members reaffirm all local positions at each annual meeting.

THE CONCURRENCE PROCESS

"Concurrence is the act of agreeing with - or concurring with - a statement or position. A decision making technique used by the League for some time, concurrence can work in several ways. Groups of League members or League boards can concur with (1) recommendations of a resource committee or unit group; (2) decision statements formulated by League boards; or (3) positions reached by another League or Leagues.

" As a general rule, background materials presenting the pros and cons on the issue being considered are provided to Leagues and members in the concurrence process. In area Leagues, an issue relating to one jurisdiction often studied by members living in that jurisdiction, and, after member agreement has been reached by those members the other members are asked to concur with the results." (In League, 10-8)

Not every topic is suitable for study by the concurrence process and this method should not be used to replace the traditional study process. Circumstances that may be considered for concurrence are:

- To clarify, update or reaffirm a present position
- To reach agreement on a regional issue which affects more than one League and where unity is needed for League action.
- To reach a new position on an issue

NOTE: The issue should be simple and clear cut and members have widespread knowledge and interest or the research, study and discussion was done by others and is so thorough that further study is unlikely to produce a different position. If conservation of volunteer time is necessary to arrive at a position,

Leagues may concur with:

- a position arrived at by another League or Leagues
- a position stated by a League resource committee, reflecting widely held views.
- a position of their own of long standing which they wish to reaffirm.

Concurrence is different from consensus in the following ways:

- Members are asked to respond (concur or not concur) to a statement of position reached by another League (local, state or national) or prepared for them by a committee.
- The statement is judged exactly as it is written and may not be amplified or made subject to conditions. It is not a question.
- The resource committee prepares the statement and any background materials stating the pros and cons of the position. The position, if lengthy, may be divided into sections to be concurred with, as long as the position is not altered.
- The board assesses how well informed the members are on the issue and decides how it is to be presented to the members, e.g. unit meetings, general meeting, bulletin/newsletter articles or a combination. It is possible to decide that the membership is sufficiently informed to need only the statement at the meeting.

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