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ISSUE FORUM POLICY

10/28/2023 – Readopted by LWVME and LWVME Education Fund

The League of Women Voters of Maine and League of Women Voters of Maine Education Fund sponsor neutral educational forums on ballot questions and other issues of interest to local communities and the state.

The forums are designed to meet three goals:

1. to educate the public about the issues,
2. to provide an opportunity for voters to hear proponents and opponents discuss the issues face-to-face, and
3. to stimulate public interest and participation in the elections.

After careful consideration, the League of Women Voters of Maine and League of Women Voters of Maine Education Fund have adopted the following policy for conducting issue forums.

1. LWVME/Education Fund will not sponsor neutral issue forums featuring both proponents and opponents on any question where the League has an advocacy position on the question. In this case, the League may sponsor programs promoting its position only.
2. When organizing an issue forum, the LWVME/Education Fund should invite groups working on behalf of or in opposition to the question or issue to designate representatives for the forum. If any group does not designate a representative, the LWVME/Education Fund may designate an alternative participant who is qualified to represent that side in the campaign or issue. This could mean that participants are affiliated with a political action committee formed to work on the

question, or it could be that participants are representatives of long-standing organizations that have taken a position on the question.

3. If one or more of the invited participants declines to attend, so that one side of the issue or ballot question is not represented at all, the forum should not be scheduled.
4. If one or more of the confirmed participants cancels , they may designate a substitute or replacement to represent their views, subject to LWVME/Education Fund approval.
5. If one or more of the confirmed participants fails to appear or cancels on the day of the forum without designating a replacement, the remaining participant(s) may present their views and take questions from the audience.
6. The LWVME/Education Fund may designate a qualified moderator or facilitator who is not affiliated with any side in the campaign.
7. Any participant who is a candidate for elected office is prohibited from participating in an issue forum.

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