

STATE FINANCES

STATE FINANCE POSITION OF THE LWVUS

This section contains action taken by LWVNYS under this LWVUS position.

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive. (LWVUS Impact On Issues, 2005-2006, p.2)

STATE FINANCE POSITIONS IN BRIEF NYS

Support:

- Reforms for greater equity in education financing for both pupils and taxpayers.
- Raising funds to provide New York's children with a sound basic education through increases in the New York State personal income tax, implemented in a progressive fashion.
- Replacement of existing residential property tax relief programs, in which relief goes to all regardless of need, with programs based on need, with annual cost of living adjustments.
- A uniform equitable assessment and property tax system.
- Measures to provide for openness and accountability in the operation of the public authority system.
- A timely and responsive state budget.
- Funding of public higher education and the existing formula for financing the community college system, 1/3 tuition, 1/3 state aid, and 1/3 county support

Oppose:

- In principle, the use of public funds to support non-public schools, K-12.
- Any increase in the maximum number of charter schools without amendment of the Charter School Act to incorporate changes outlined above.

State Finances shall include the following subtopics:

1. State Income Taxes
2. State Share of Education Funding and Types of Taxes to be Used
3. History of Current Position; Previous Statewide Studies
4. Tuition Tax Credits, Vouchers and Charter Schools
5. The Current Positions (see "boxed" text below)
 - a. Financing Education K-12 (see 2)
 - b. Financing Public Higher Education
 - c. Property Tax

The State Finances section is based on the LWVUS position on Representative Government to "Promote an open government system that is representative, accountable and responsive." (LWVUS Impact On Issues, 2006-2008, page 6).

LWVNYS has adopted state positions on Financing Education K-12, Charter Schools, Financing Public Higher Education, Property Tax, Public Authorities, and the State Budget Process. These positions may be summarized as follows:

I. FINANCING EDUCATION (K-12)

a. Support

- i. Reforms for greater equity in education financing for both pupils and taxpayers.
- ii. Taking education out of the political arena by adoption of a foundation approach to education finance.
- iii. Recognition of savings by replacement of the STAR program with a meaningful needs-based circuit breaker program with annual cost of living adjustment.
- iv. Stability of education finance by creation of a dedicated education reserve to make up shortfalls in times of economic downturn.
- v. Raising funds to provide New York's children with a sound basic education through increases in the New York State personal income tax, implemented in a progressive fashion.

b. Oppose in principle, the use of public funds to support non-public schools, K-12.

II. CHARTER SCHOOLS

a. Support

- i. Amendment of the Charter School Act to limit the negative financial impact of charter schools on their home districts.
- ii. Making charters more accountable for student results.
- iii. Mechanisms to facilitate sharing of successful charter education strategies with traditional public schools.

b. Oppose any increase in the maximum number of charter schools without amendment of the Charter School Act to incorporate changes outlined above.

III. FINANCING PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Support funding of public higher education and the existing formula for financing the community college system, 1/3 tuition, 1/3 state aid, and 1/3 county support.

IV. PROPERTY TAX

a. Support a uniform equitable assessment and property tax system.

b. Replacement of existing residential property tax relief programs, in which relief goes to all regardless of need, with programs based on need, with annual cost of living adjustments.

V. PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

Support measures to provide for openness and accountability in the operation of the public authority system.

VI. STATE BUDGET PROCESS

Support a timely and responsive state budget.