

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In his January 2013 State of the State, Governor Cuomo announced his 10-point Women's Equality Act (WEA), which included provisions to combat human trafficking. The League, already in support of nearly all of the other WEA measures, was eager to take a position on human trafficking. In March 2013, the state board recommended an immediate post-convention concurrence with LWV of Ohio's Human Trafficking position. 2013 Convention delegates approved asking local leagues to vote on the concurrence. In June 2013, the question was put to local leagues. All local leagues who responded agreed to concur with the position, consensus was reached, and the geographic distribution requirements for concurrence were met. Accordingly, the League adopted the following position on human trafficking in 2013.

**Human Trafficking
Statement of Position
As announced by the State Board in 2013**

Human forced labor and sex trafficking should be stopped through legislation and changes in public policy. Those who have been commercially sexually exploited or coerced into slave labor, or who are minors, should be considered as victims of human trafficking. Victims of human trafficking should be provided with services to facilitate integration into the community.

Recent League Activity

During the 2013 legislative session, LWVNY joined the NY Women's Equality Coalition to lobby for passage of Governor Cuomo's Women's Equality Agenda/Act (WEA). The WEA included provisions that would offer better protection to survivors of human trafficking, especially minors, by treating survivors as victims and increasing penalties to punish offenders by:

- Creating an affirmative defense to a prostitution charge that the individual was a trafficking victim;
- Increasing penalties across the board for human trafficking and labor trafficking;
- Creating new offenses, in increasing degrees, of aggravated patronizing a minor; and
- Creating a civil action for victims of trafficking against their perpetrators.

The League lobbied extensively for passage of the WEA, but it did not pass during the 2013 legislative session. For a complete narrative on the League's advocacy on WEA, please see the *Women's Issues* section