

LWV Cuyahoga Area CONSENSUS: “ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT”

The League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area believes that:

I. A government ethics policy should:

- Apply broadly to elected and appointed officials, employees, members and employees of boards and commissions, contractors, vendors and lobbyists.
- Prohibit conflicts of interest, use of position for personal gain, corruption in the awarding of contracts, nepotism and favoritism.
- Discipline those who falsely file or fail to file required disclosures or who fail to report wrongdoing.
- Foster transparency through financial disclosure by key elected and appointed officials, contractor and lobbyist registries, and online public posting of disclosures and registries.
- Instill individual commitment through ongoing training and education, signed compliance statements, and “plainspeak” publication of the ethics policy.
- Encourage ethical conduct among covered persons through obligatory reporting of possible violations and protection against retaliation.
- Contain a complaint process which honors privacy and anonymity, and which protects from retaliation and unfounded charges.

II. An ethics policy should have an effective enforcement mechanism that is:

- Independent of political pressure
- Both reactive and investigatory
- authorized by the strongest process permissible by law: charter, ordinance, resolution or administrative rules.
- protective of due process rights for the accused
- explicit in its range of penalties

III. The League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area supports ethics enforcement by a single entity, preferably an independent ethics board, with guaranteed funding and qualified, professional legal staff.