



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MONTANA

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization whose membership is open to men and women.

2/3/2005
Testimony in Favor of SB 152
Linda Gryczan

The League of Women Voters has made funding a quality education a top priority and members all over the state are following this issue closely.

The League believes that a basic education must offer all students a curriculum supported by technology, libraries, and teaching staff, and provide individualized instruction. A basic education will produce graduates with critical thinking, reading, writing, and math, and also knowledge of science, the humanities, the arts, and government, to enable them to become productive workers and active citizens.

League members have studied the bills that attempt to define a quality education and SB 152 best matches our position.

The League further supports implementing the Constitutional mandate in Article 10, Sec. 1 (2) of the Montana Constitution, known as Indian Education for All. The League considers Indian Education for All, an essential component of basic education.

We urge your support of SB 152.

WHERE WE STAND

The League of Women Voters

of Montana . . .

. . . encourages informed and active participation of citizens in our government by promoting voter education and voter registration. The League is a non-partisan political organization of women and men that does not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.

The Montana League takes stands only on issues on which it has a position based on a consensus or concurrence of members. These positions may be based on studies done by the National League or Montana League.

The following outline provides a summary of Montana League positions on key public policy issues. For more information about specific issues, positions, and membership, please contact:

**Please also visit the
League of Women Voters' Website:**

WWW.MONTANA.LWV.ORG

MONTANA GOVERNMENT

The Montana Constitution

We support a Constitution limited to fundamental law.

Declaration of Rights

We support protecting the right of citizens to a healthful environment, to privacy, and to freedom from discrimination.

The Executive

We support:

- equalization of authority and responsibility of the Governor.
- alignment of executive agencies by function.
- use of bi-partisan advisory councils of qualified citizens.
- extension of merit principle in employment, including equal employment opportunity and adherence to human rights doctrine.
- maintenance of a traditional system of checks and balances.

The Legislature

We support:

- a partisan legislative body with single member districts based on population.
- annual sessions, and special sessions as needed.

The Judiciary

We support:

- a unified court system.
- merit selection of judges.
- equalized financing of courts.

State-Local Government Relations

We support:

- a flexible and comprehensive framework of State law pertaining to local governments.
- alternatives for local financing.
- community and city-county land use planning.

State Finance

We support:

- a broad-based tax system that is equitable, provides adequate revenue, and is effectively administered and enforced.
- maintenance of the permanent Coal Trust Fund, allowing appropriation of interest and income by the Legislature, requiring supermajority of 3/4 of each house to approve withdrawing principal.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Child Care

We support a system of high quality, affordable, developmentally-appropriate child care.

Education

We support:

- *efficient and equitable financing of public education, with the State funding its share of the cost.*
- *a basic education that produces graduates with critical thinking, reading, writing, and mathematical skills.*

Privatization of Government Functions

We support the use of definite criteria to be used in deciding whether or not to privatize government functions and the provision of safeguards for citizens in contracts with private providers if a decision is made to privatize government functions.

Libraries

We support:

- *the principle that, as repositories of knowledge and information, libraries are an important resource for informing citizens.*
- *adequate funding to purchase books and materials, pay staff, and maintain buildings.*

Mental Health and Care of Developmentally Disabled

We support community and regional programs and centralized care where needed, with adequate, guaranteed funding.

Criminal Justice System

We support protection of society from criminal behaviors, while providing services to enable prisoners to become law-abiding citizens.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Air

We support quality air standards to protect human health and safety, to ensure the integrity of ecosystems, and to facilitate the enjoyment of the natural attractions of this state.

Energy

We support:

- *protection of Montana's natural resources.*
- *a balanced approach to energy problems.*
- *cooperation with other states and Canada.*

Land Use

We support:

- *comprehensive planning and stewardship of land.*
- *protection of state natural resources through tax incentives and stringent State standards.*

Water

We support:

- *the wise use of Montana's water resources.*
- *protection of water quality and water supplies against potential depletion and/or pollution.*
- *protection of existing water rights and uses, instream flows, and reservations for future needs.*

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS OF MONTANA**

**WHERE
WE
STAND**



