

LEAGUE STUDIES AND THE PROGRAM CYCLE

Program: *Program* is the League term for issues that members have chosen for study and action. At local *program* planning meetings, members propose topics for local, regional, state and national *program*. The proposals are submitted to the appropriate board level for approval. The board then presents a recommended *program* for adoption by members at the local annual meeting or by delegates to state, regional or national conventions. The recommended *program* is the sum total of the League's positions on issues and may include proposals for study on new issues or updating previous positions.

Study: Once an issue is chosen, a research committee gathers information for local study committees to read, consider and discuss—that is, to do a *study*. Local study committees may supplement the information as needed with interviews of local officials, residents or professionals and by further fact-finding through reading and research.

Consensus: The study research committee also fashions *consensus* questions for discussion by the local membership at large. Through examination of facts and discussion, a substantial agreement is reached by the members. Once members reach *consensus* on their responses, the appropriate board forms a *position* based on the consensus.

Position: A *position* is a statement of member agreement based on *consensus* and approved by the appropriate board. If the study is local, the position will be developed and submitted to the members for approval at their annual meeting. If the study is a county, state or national study, local consensus statements are forwarded to the appropriate board, which will gather and combine consensus statements from other local Leagues to form a position. This position will be presented for approval to the delegates at county, state or national conventions.

Action: Once a position has been adopted, the League can take action on issues and legislation that relate directly to the position. *Action* is a continuous process of working toward goals stated in positions established by member agreement. *Action* may include lobbying public officials through letters or other direct contacts, testifying at public hearings, organizing public forums and contacting media to inform voters. It is the responsibility of the appropriate board to plan and direct League *action*.

New Issues: In the course of taking action, through observers' reports or member interest, new issues may be encountered on which the League does not yet have a position. Then the process starts all over again on a new topic.



Program Planning and State and National Biennial Conventions: During December or January of every year local Leagues are asked to go through a process of reviewing all current *positions* (national and local *positions* one year and state *positions* the alternate year) for the purpose of recommending whether to propose a new study or update or discard older positions. The recommendations are forwarded to the appropriate board and on the recommendation of the given board will be presented at the state or national conventions for discussion and voting.