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CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

10/26/2024— Amended and re-adopted by League of Women Voters of Maine and Democracy Maine

PURPOSE - It is the purpose of this policy to promote disclosure of all conflicts of interest and other matters which may affect the decisions and actions of the League of Women Voters of Maine (LWVME) and Democracy Maine.

DEFINITIONS:

Conflict of interest is a direct or indirect financial or personal interest of a board member or trustee in any transaction in which any one of the organizations is participating.

Financial interest exists if the board member directly, indirectly or through a business or immediate family relationship, has an ownership, investment or employment interest in an entity doing business with any one of the organizations; or has a compensation agreement or material financial relationship with any entity or individual doing business with any one of the organizations.

Personal interest - a board member has a personal interest when an independent observer would reasonably question whether the board member's actions or decisions are determined primarily by consideration of personal benefit, financial or otherwise.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST - Each board member has a duty to place the interests of the organizations foremost in any dealings with the organizations. It is the responsibility of each board member or trustee to disclose on a timely basis any matters which may give rise to a conflict of interest, give the appearance of a conflict of interest, or which may otherwise prevent the board member from performing their duties in accordance with this policy.

If a board member becomes aware that they have a personal or financial interest in a transaction of any of the organizations covered by this policy, they must make full disclosure of such interest before any discussion of the proposed transaction and recuse themselves from the discussion and the vote on the matter.

When a board member believes that they may have a potential conflict of interest on a matter before the board or when the board becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest, the matter shall be referred to the Governance Committee to determine if a conflict of interest exists. The board member may briefly state their position on the potential conflict and answer any questions from the Governance Committee. If it is determined by the Governance Committee that a conflict of interest exists, the board member shall recuse themselves from any further discussion and vote on the matter.

WAIVER – A board member may request a waiver to permit the member to participate in the discussion and vote on a matter in which the Governance Committee has determined that a conflict of interest exists. The request for a waiver will be made to the board of whichever organization is considering the matter. The board will determine by majority vote if the waiver should be granted following receipt of all material facts regarding the personal or financial interest that is the subject of the conflict of interest. The board member requesting the waiver shall recuse themselves from the discussion and vote on the waiver. The board may grant a partial waiver permitting the member to participate in the discussion or a full waiver permitting the member to participate in the discussion and vote on the matter.

SECURING APPOINTMENTS – The board may encourage and assist board members and other members to secure appointments to other non-profit or governmental boards, commissions, and committees. Unless clearly designated, appointees are not official representatives of the organizations. If the seat is designated to represent one of the

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organizations covered by this policy, the president shall appoint a representative after each Convention.

SERVING ON BOARDS – Board members may serve on other boards. The titles they hold within the organizations covered by this policy may be listed for identification purposes only. However, if a serious conflict arises or if a Board member identifies that they may have a potential conflict between service on the two boards, it shall be brought to the attention of the Governance Committee to determine next steps for consideration of what action should be taken, if any is necessary.

LOBBYING – Board members acting as representatives of the organizations shall not lobby for a position in opposition to or in conflict with a League of Women Voters of the U.S. (LWVUS), LWVME or Democracy Maine position. Board members have the right, acting as individuals, to lobby privately on any side of any issue. Any officer of any of the organizations in doing so must make it clear they are not representing the organizations.

COMPENSATION – Board members may not accept stipends or grants for projects while sitting on the policy-making board that is responsible for the administration of the grant. Board members may continue to serve in an off-board capacity. Board members may not receive compensation for serving as board members or be employed in any capacity by the organizations while serving in such positions.

HONORARIA – Board members may not accept honoraria on their own behalf but may accept donations to the organizations in lieu of an honorarium when speaking as representatives of one or more of the organizations. This paragraph does not preclude board members from accepting reimbursement for travel, accommodations and hospitality when representing one or more of the organizations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE – Annually, board members will review the Conflict of Interest Policy and sign a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.

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