



PO Box 18187
Portland ME 04112

 (207) 622-0256

 info@DemocracyMaine.org

POLICY ON RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ENTITIES

3/6/25 — Readopted by Democracy Maine and LWVME

PURPOSE: It is the purpose of this policy to promote relationships with other entities that share interest in and commitment to values that are consistent with those of the League of Women Voters of Maine (LWVME) and Democracy Maine (DM) (the organizations). These relationships may involve supporting the activities of other entities or becoming members in coalition with other entities.

When considering whether to support the activities of another organization or to join a coalition, staff will be guided by the questions below. Staff will report to the Program Committee upon deciding to support the activities of another organization or to join a coalition. The Program Committee has the authority to approve or revise staff decisions, and will report any such approval or revision to the boards of the organizations. The Program Committee may also elect to refer such decisions to the boards of the organizations for final resolution. If the program or activity relates to a question of federal policy and meets other criteria for LWVME/DM participation, LWVME will seek approval from LWVUS. The boards hold final authority over any decision whether or not to support activities of another organization or to join a coalition.

The questions to consider when asked to support the activities of another entity or to become a member of a coalition are:

- Is the activity consistent with existing positions and policies of the organizations? Is the coalition non-partisan and not endorsing any parties/candidates?
- Do the aims of the coalition mesh with the priorities of the organizations? The answer should be yes, recognizing that some coalitions may deal with many issues, some of which are not part of the programs of the organizations. But the major

thrust of the coalition's work and mission should align with part of the programs of the organizations.

- Are resource demands compatible with efforts to achieve current priority goals?
- Does the coalition/partnership contribute to the strength of the organizations by positioning them as leaders in civic engagement and/or policy areas, by building visibility, stimulating membership growth, or attracting long-term funding resources?
- Are the expressed interests, goals, policies, and practices of other members or proposed members in harmony with the positions of the organizations? This can have a variety of answers. It's an important consideration because it helps us evaluate old alliances and forge new ones.
- Will coalition activity be more effective than the organizations acting alone? While coalition activity by no means precludes the organizations from acting alone, coalition membership should enhance the ability of the organizations to achieve the ultimate goal.
- Will the organizations be visible members of the coalition? Do we have expertise to provide? Preferably yes. But there are exceptions in cases where the organizations may intentionally deliberately enter a coalition on a more limited basis in order to gain information about an issue which is not presently a top priority of the organizations.
- Do the organizations have previous history and/or knowledge of and confidence in the leadership of the sponsoring entity/coalition leadership?
- Is there a clear decision-making process in the coalition/partnership, including when the organizations' names will be used in the work of the coalition/partnership?
 - If the coalition is taking public action in a matter where the position of the organizations is contrary to the position of the coalition, the organizations may request that the coalition make a statement that the organizations do not endorse the position of the coalition on this particular action.
 - Where the organizations have taken no position, the organizations may request that the coalition make a statement to indicate that the organizations do not have a position on the matter.
 - Where appropriate, a public statement of the dissent or lack of position by the organizations may be issued.
- If DM is being asked to join, are the activities co-sponsored or promoted by DM consistent with its tax-exempt status and with the charitable purposes as enumerated in the DM bylaws?

Useful Links:

[LWVME Board Members](#)

[MCCE Board Members](#)

[Board Policies](#)

- May also consider: Will the absence of the organizations be conspicuous? Is there an opportunity to provide solidarity or mutual support to other issue-based entities?

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