

Affordable Housing Study Consensus Questions Study of Affordable Housing in Virginia

Reason for Study of Affordable Housing: This LWV-VA Affordable Housing Study was initiated by the LWV-Richmond Metropolitan Area, in response revelations in Mathew Desmond’s Pulitzer prize-winning book, “Evicted” that the City of Richmond had the second highest eviction rate in the nation and nine other Virginia large and small cities were among the top 10 highest. A new, State-wide study of affordable housing was approved at the LWV-VA Convention in June 2019. Safe, affordable housing is health issue, and economic issue, and an environmental issue, as well as a moral and equity issue.

The focus of this State-wide study of affordable housing is very low and extremely low-income households who are primarily renters. In addition to characterizing the state of affordable housing in Virginia, the study:

- Outlines resource options available at the state and local levels to increase the supply of affordable housing and preserve the existing affordable housing stock;
- Identifies the most important barriers that stand in the way of development of this type of housing; and
- Brings to light laws and regulations that make it difficult for very low and extremely low-income households to find and maintain their housing.

The study is guided by the applicable LWVUS principles:

From the League of Women Voters U.S. “Principles,” *Impact on Issues 2018-2020: A Guide to Public Policy Positions*, (page 6):

The League of Women Voters believes responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy, and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.

Please respond to the following questions concerning Affordable Housing. Use additional pieces of paper as needed for your responses. Please note that examples are included with the questions. They are just examples and not intended to limit your answers, you may add any other responses that you wish.

Affordable Housing Study Consensus Questions

1. The state and localities should utilize the following existing funding mechanism to preserve and create affordable housing:

- Virginia Housing Trust Fund
- Homelessness grants
- Permanent Supportive Housing through DBHDS
- Eviction diversion/prevention programs

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

2. The state and localities should consider the creation of the following funding mechanism to preserve and create affordable housing:

- State Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program
- State Housing Choice Vouchers

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

3. The state should require that landlords accept Housing Choice Vouchers households provided they meet all the same rental criteria used with other tenants.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

4. Taking into consideration the Dillon Rule, the state should grant all localities in Virginia the right to adopt mandatory inclusion zoning policies.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

5. Taking into consideration the Dillon Rule, the state should grant localities the right to enact eviction mitigation measures such as bans on evictions and utilities shut offs during extreme weather and other declared state of emergencies.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

6. State laws should provide more tenant protections including extended pay-or-quit periods or mandatory grace periods.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

7. State laws should seek to mitigate the impact of evictions to include limiting late fees and supporting the expungement of eviction records.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments: