

January 13, 2019, 3:00pm

170 Main St, Greenfield, MA

LWVFC Consensus Meeting re: Study of the Ballot Process in MA

- Working through the study guide, we will try to reach consensus on each question.
- 7 minutes per question
- Need consensus- overall essence of position, not votes

First part of meeting = explanation of process. For definitions and full explanation, see PDF packet/presentation provided

- We are only considering statewide citizen-initiated ballot q's, not those brought forth by other means
- Discussion of history of initiative and referenda process in MA
- Outline of processes (see PDF)
 - Question re: the difference between non-binding resolutions and initiative/referenda (NBR come through the legislative process)
 - Question re: As few as ten registered voters can bring forth a proposed amendment
 - Unanswered question: What happens if the legislature takes up the question but then votes 'no' as proposed? What happens next?
 - Questions re: court challenges. How long can they take?
 - Clarification of point: the number of signatures needed are based on percentages of voters
- Overview of recent elections and the processes the questions went through to get to the ballot
 - Discussion of recent proposed initiatives that were withdrawn: minimum wage, family leave, and tax holiday
- Overview of how the process looks in other states
 - MA involves legislature, some states do not
- Ballot question finance
 - Clarification of point: there could be a flurry of spending toward the end of the process that the voters may not be aware of until after the vote

Consensus report in different file submitted to state League. Included in paper archives.

