

League of Women Voters of South Carolina
Talking points for League Advocacy Day, February 23, 2011

Education/Early Education and Child Welfare

We must invest in our future and that means investing in our children. There is no way around it. To invest in the future we must:

- Invest adequately in every child's education, beginning in the early years. (Keep funding for 4k for at-risk children high on your priority list. Consider extending beyond the original 37 school districts.)
 - Completely overhaul the education funding system to get more “bang for the buck,” more efficiency, and more effectiveness. There is NO BETTER TIME for this overhaul than right now.
 - Do not dilute or divert funding for our public schools. (Tuition tax credits and school vouchers divert and dilute funding for our public schools. These are the schools upon which our neediest children will always rely.)
 - Invest in needy families. (The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program at DSS. The agency has already lowered payments from \$270 to \$216 per month for the average TANF client effective February 1, 2011. The TANF program is a safety net for needy parents as well as a path to employment.)
 - Invest in protecting our children who are most vulnerable. (Invest in child protective services. DSS received 27,000 reports in 2009-2010. The Child Protection Program assures safety and care for children who have been abused and neglected.)
 - Invest in health care for our children. Healthy children arrive at school ready to learn and grow into healthy, capable adults.
- If South Carolina wants to earn and keep a seat at the table of the global economy we must invest in the future and that means investing in our children. There is no way around it and certainly no cheap way around it.
 - The countries that have made the biggest leaps forward in the global economy – China, India and Qatar, for example – understand that reality and invest accordingly. China is expected to be the world's largest economy by 2020.
 - Our children – ALL OF OUR CHILDREN - are our future...the future of South Carolina. There is no escaping this reality.