

**Public testimony at Sacramento City Council meeting
February 3, 1009, Item 16
Workshop: Report Back on Charter Reform and City Governance
Structures**

My name is Roseanna Torretto. I am president of the League of Women Voters of Sacramento County. The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization (of women and men), encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

I am here to address the process of looking at the city charter and governance structure for options for change. I am not here to address any particular change. The League would take a position on a change only after careful study. Tonight I intend to address only the process of examining whether the charter needs changing and, if so, in what form. The League strongly recommends a process which includes in-depth community dialogue. One way to implement this would be the charter reform commission suggested by Councilmember McCarty. We believe that such committees can take a broad look at the issues, identify problems that can be solved, recommend specific changes, how changes would be implemented, and how changes would be evaluated (to see if the problems were indeed solved). League representatives have participated in such commissions in the past and would be willing to participate again.

The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.