



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NEW JERSEY

LWVNJ Comments at Westfield Rally in Support of RGGI

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey supports keeping our state in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Greenhouse gas reduction can not be achieved in isolation. Air pollution doesn't respect political or geographic boundaries. Ten Northeastern states, including New Jersey, have signed on to RGGI. New Jersey should continue its commitment to the other northeastern states as they lead the nation's efforts to reduce green house gas emissions and create clean energy jobs.

Quarterly auctions of CO2 credits have raised \$952 million dollars since 2009, most of which has funded programs that encourage energy efficiency and provide assistance for low income households in the participating states. RGGI provides social, economic and environmental benefits to our state.

In the absence of stringent national action to cut down on greenhouse gases, regional action is our best hope for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The reduction of CO2 emissions, the hundreds of millions raised for energy efficiency projects and energy assistance to limited income families, proves that RGGI works. That is why the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is so significant. Withdrawal from RGGI is not an option.

A RGGI, Inc. report published in February of last year credits the cap and trade mandate with the reduction more than **84,000 tons** of CO2 emissions, and states that through 2010 “the **New Jersey: Clean Energy Solutions Capital Investment (CESCI) Loan/Grant Program** has awarded \$29.6 million in CO2 allowance proceeds to 12 large-scale energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, which represent 29.6 megawatts (MW) of new, clean electric generation capacity - enough to meet the equivalent needs of more than 19,600 New Jersey households each year....”

It's critical that NJ continues to participate in this effort. The Global Warming Response Act of 2007 requires stabilization of statewide greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, followed by a further reduction of 80% below 2006 levels by 2050. If New Jersey withdraws, these mandates will likely go unrealized, a slap in the face to one of the most important environmental laws established by the New Jersey Legislature.

Presented by:
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