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**Testimony of the Leagues of Women Voters of Delaware, New Jersey, New York and
Pennsylvania before the Delaware River Basin Commission
March 15, 2017**

Good day: I am Nancy Hedinger, President of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey. On January 17, 2017, the League of Women Voters of Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania sent a joint letter to the Delaware River Basin Commissioners as a call to action to protect and preserve access to safe drinking water from the Delaware River Basin, relied upon daily by 15- 17 million Americans. This testimony draws on that letter as an exhibit for the record.

Preservation of safe drinking water represents a matter of national security and a precursor to Americans' well-being and America's economic sustainability. To this end, the League urges the Commissioners to continue indefinitely the moratorium on gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing operations in an around the Delaware River Basin.

Currently, gas drilling operations bring a short-term economic boost with long-term risks, and potentially irreversible impacts to drinking water. Such impacts include contamination of the Delaware River and bay with dangerous materials ranging from carcinogens like benzene, through highly toxic metals such as arsenic and cadmium and radioactive elements that are not removed by standard water treatments.

The Environmental Protection Agency, in a 2016 report, and peer-reviewed scientific studies from 2009 – 2015, demonstrate the risks and adverse impacts to drinking water associated with gas drilling.

Gas industry annual 10-K reports to shareholders acknowledge such hazards as gas leaks, spills, uncontrollable flows of natural gas or well fluids, migration of gas into fresh groundwater sources, build-up of naturally occurring radioactive material, explosions and fire, resulting in injury, death, property damage and environmental pollution. These companies are neither fully insured nor fully insurable, so citizens potentially bear the associated costs, risks and hazards. How can this be acceptable?

A national compilation with 21,700 entries titled *The List of the Harmed* reflects personal accounts coupled with news reports of illness, death, and property-related loss resulting from the same hazards these annual reports disclose to shareholders.

What about people whose voices have been silenced? A report recently revealed that the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection suppressed disclosure of 9,442 citizen-reported fracking complaints, over 4,100 of which involve adverse impacts to drinking water.

The League of Women Voters gives voice today to the 15-17 million people who rely daily on you to keep our drinking water safe for the long-term. We urge you to continue indefinitely the moratorium on gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing in the Delaware River basin. Thank you.

Submitted By

Nancy Hedinger, President

League of Women Voters of New Jersey