



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NEW JERSEY

January 11, 2012

Ms. Elisabeth MacNamara
League of Women Voters
1730 M Street NW #1000
Washington, DC 20036-4508

Dear Elisabeth:

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey joins with the League of Women Voters of New York to request that the LWVUS add the Fracturing Responsibilities and Awareness of Chemicals ACT (HR 1084/S 587) to its list of priorities for advocacy in 2012.

The FRAC Act restores the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) in a way that will further ensure safe drinking water for all Americans. We believe that LWVUS should be at the forefront of information gathering and policy development on this very important topic.

The FRAC Act will achieve the following:

- Require disclosure of the chemicals used in the process of hydraulic fracturing for natural gas extraction, but not the proprietary chemical formula. Disclosures would be made available to the public online.
- Protect proprietary chemical formulas. Oil and gas companies would have to reveal the chemicals, but not the specific formula.
- Include an exception requiring disclosure of proprietary chemical formulas to a treating physician, the State, or EPA in emergency situations where the information is needed to provide medical treatment.
- Repeal a provision added to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 exempting the industry from complying with the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA).

Time Magazine declared in its Person of the Year Issue (12/14/11): **“The biggest environmental issue of 2011 — at least in the U.S. — wasn't global warming. It was hydraulic fracturing...”** On January 9th, a headline in Bloomberg Business News read: **“Fracking Moratorium Urged by U.S. Doctors Until Health Studies Conducted”**, and in an earlier edition, another Bloomberg headline declared: **“Health Effects of**

Fracking for Natural Gas Need Study, Says CDC Scientist”.

Fracking is front page news and is certain to be an election issue In 2012. As *politico.pro* (<http://politico.pro/zpb2/cd>) points out, **“Fracking will probably get its turn in the 2012 presidential limelight, regardless of what happens to Rick Santorum's White House hopes. That's the consensus from people on both sides of the shale gas debate after last week's Iowa caucus surge by Santorum, a former senator from gas-rich Pennsylvania”.**

The issue of hydrofracking is becoming increasingly prominent and worthy of concern. In the late 1980's, LWVUS was heavily involved in the passage of the expanded Safe Drinking Water Act (1986) “to ensure safe drinking water for all Americans”. At the 2010 LWVUS Convention, delegates agreed that fracking, “poses a threat to drinking water and other water resources”, and as a result, “state Leagues have taken the lead in working to block these mining processes that release contaminated and polluted waters”. The truth is, this is a national issue.

We believe that LWVUS should take a strong proactive approach to effectively address this emergent issue, as it did so well when it rolled out the Clean Air Promise campaign. We hope that a resounding call to action by the LWVUS in support of the FRAC ACT on behalf of all citizens will ensure that the purity and safety of our drinking water will never be compromised.

Please refer to the attached letters from Elizabeth Radow and Toni Zimmer for additional justification for this request. We have been working closely with the Leagues of Delaware, New York, and Pennsylvania on the issue of hydrofracking in the Delaware River Basin and on the New York DEC's Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) on the Oil, Gas and Solution Mining Regulatory Program. This legislation is vital to the protection of our drinking water and our health.

Sincerely,



Toni Zimmer, President, LWVNJ

cc: Lloyd Leonard, Director of Advocacy (LLeonard@lww.org)
Judy Duffy, Advocacy Chair (JDuffy@lww.org)
Jessica Jones, Grass Roots Lobbyist (JJones@lww.org)

Attachments: Letter from Elizabeth Radow, President, LWV of Larchmont / Mamaroneck, NY
Letter from Toni Zimmer, President, LWVNJ