To: Lynn Gordon, President, League of Women Voters® of Virginia  
From: M.H. Dorsett, AICP, Principal Planner, Cambria Planning Group  
Date: 2 May 2013  

**re: League of Women Voters® Comments on EPA Fracking Study.**

We strongly recommend that the League of Women Voters of Virginia sign on to the LWVPA / LWV Comments on the EPA Fracking Study.

Based on our preliminary assessment of: 1) EPA Fracking Study and the Summary of Technical Round Tables; 2) Potential impacts on hydrologic systems in terms of quantity, flow, stream health, and potential degradation, including in the Chesapeake Bay, and the drinking water supplies in the Northern Shenandoah and Washington D.C. Metropolitan Areas, including the District of Columbia proper, Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax County, and Prince William County (see attachment #1); 3) and the current LWVVA natural resource positions concerning the maintenance and and protection the quality of drinking water sources.

There is no indication that the Technical Round Tables examined externalities created by fracking in upland areas and impacting downstream locations. Rather, the available information suggests that they looked at localized impacts and attempted to address localized concerns. Because the majority of fracking operations occur in upland areas, the emphasis on localized impacts and local remediation suggests that far more work is left to do before we have a full understanding of the environmental impacts of fracking.

While there are no current fracking operations in Virginia, fracking in the Upper Potomac Watershed, located primarily in eastern West Virginia, may potentially have an impact on water quality and quantity downstream. According to the Potomac Riverkeeper program, the United States Forest Service is currently reconsidering their ban on fracking in the George Washington National Forest. The Northern portion of the George Washington National Forest, which provides a significant buffer for both the North and South Branches of the Potomac River and their tributaries, was established to protect the drinking water quality and supply in the northern Shenandoah Valley and lower Potomac River Watershed. In short, Virginia does, in fact, have a stake in the fracking debate and should lend their voices to LWV efforts to improve the understanding of and the regulation of fracking operations.

Sincerely,

M.H. Dorsett, AICP