



**Environment Committee
Public Hearing
March 4, 2009**

Submitted by: Lynn Taborsak, Climate Change Specialist
Comments in opposition to SB 794

On behalf of the 2,100 members of the League of Women Voters of Connecticut, we ask you to reject the proposed change in how proceeds from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative auctions may be used.

In 2007, the legislature very specifically directed that the proceeds from these quarterly auctions should be invested in "*energy conservation, load management, and Class I renewable energy programs*". We feel very strongly that the auction proceeds are best used for these purposes. They provide ratepayers, businesses, and municipalities with programs that lower both their energy use and energy costs.

In addition, the original bill actually required that the DPUC maintain a *minimum* two to one payback ratio of ratepayer funds, that is, to achieve at least a \$2 savings for every ratepayer dollar. This is a much better return than the loose change that is anticipated in SB 794.

We know that the legislature can change the law and allow the proceeds from RGGI auctions to be used for any worthwhile purpose. However, it is worth noting that the most recent legislative study "Preparing for Connecticut's Energy Future [December 28, 2008] suggested that "*legislation be adopted to guarantee funding provided through ratepayer charges must be used to support such programs and not diverted to offset state deficits or for any other purposes.*"

Simply stated, diverting auction proceeds to a rebate program raises a red flag. It substitutes speculative, short-term relief for real long-term energy savings.