



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**  
**1890 Dixwell Avenue, Suite 203**  
**Hamden, CT 06514-3183**  
**203-288-7996 Fax 203-288-7998 www.lwvct.org**

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**CGA Environment Committee**

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**Support for:**

**HB-6329: AAC HYDRAULIC FRACTURING WASTE IN CONNECTICUT**

Comments submitted by Gary Bent, Global Warming/Climate Change Specialist LWVCT

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The League of Women Voters of Connecticut is a non-partisan statewide organization comprised of 1525 members in 27 local chapters who are committed to effective public policy and the active participation of citizens in their government.

To: Senator Kennedy, Senator Miner, Representative Demicco and distinguished members of the Environment Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut urges the committee to pass the ban on fracking waste. Nine Connecticut towns have passed ordinances to ban fracking waste, and ten more are in the process of considering such a ban. The State should completely ban fracking waste.

The forms that fracking waste can take are waste water, sludge, and rock cuttings. The largest form of waste is the waste water that comes up from the hydraulic fractured wells. This water is over ten times saltier than sea water, contaminated with chemicals (some of them carcinogenic), heavy metals, and radioactive material. It is a major task to clean this water so that it is potable.

The oil and gas companies in Pennsylvania have over 500 million gallons of waste water to dispose of each year. One possibility is centralized waste treatment plants (CWT). The EPA has guidelines and standards for CWT plants. The guidelines and standards were developed before fracking waste water became an issue. They are supposedly working on standards for CWT plants to accept fracking waste water. The Pennsylvania DEP has stringent requirements for CWT plants to receive fracking waste water since 2012. There are only a few Pennsylvania CWT plants qualified to receive the waste water. In 2012, only 6,615 gallons of fracking waste water was treated at CWT plants out of 854 million gallons of fracking waste water produced. The cost of treating waste water at a CWT plant that meets Pennsylvania standards is about five times greater than injecting into dry wells which is why so little waste water is treated that way. The bottom line is that a CWT plant with the technology to produce clean water from waste

water is an expensive method. For Connecticut companies to accept waste water and be competitive, the DEEP regulations may not be stringent enough to guarantee that our water supply is safe.

Even though New York has banned fracking, its citizens are having a much harder time banning fracking waste entering the state. In 2014, 460,000 tons of fracking cuttings, sludges, and muds were dumped in their landfills, 4286 gallons of waste water was sent to their landfills for storage in barrels, and 42,546 gallons of produced water was spread on their roads.

If safe disposal sites for fracking waste could be found, there is always the threat of improper disposal by bad actors. In 2013, two different fracking waste water haulers in Ohio were charged with illegal dumping of untreated drilling sludge and produced water into surface water. Similar charges were brought against a Pennsylvania wastewater treatment facility. Previously, more than 1,000 incidents of illegal dumping of fracking wastewater in farmland and waterways were reported in North Dakota. Illegal dumping is of particular concern because cows and other grazing farm animals are continually exposed to soil and water; a 2012 study found a link between illegal dumping of fracking wastewater and farm animal deaths and birth defects. Another fear is that contamination could migrate into the human food chain through meat and dairy products.

For these reasons, LWVCT urges you to pass the ban on fracking waste

**LWVCT therefore, supports House Bill No. 6329 and urges its passage.**

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments.