

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS LAKE ERIE BASIN COMMITTEE (LEBC)

The LEBC represents and works with state and local Leagues in Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York on matters relating to the Great Lakes, in particular to Lake Erie. The purpose of the LEBC is:

To coordinate the activities of the local Leagues of Women Voters in the Lake Erie Basin so that by study, agreement and action in a concerted manner they may have the greatest possible effect on the wise use of the basin's water resources.

POSITION STATEMENT

The goals of the League of Women Voters Lake Erie Basin Committee are:

- **To preserve and restore Lake Erie and its tributaries through pollution control, abatement and prevention;**
- **To improve planning and management of water and related land resources; and**
- **To achieve the objectives of the 1978 United States-Canada Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.**

Lake Erie Basin Committee positions by consensus are:

Position on Water Resources and Water Quality

- 1. Support of public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.**
- 2. Support of potable, swimmable, fishable domestic water supply as highest priority use of Lake Erie's water.**
 - a. Improved municipal and industrial waste treatment; treatment of all water discharged into the lake from municipal and industrial sources; monitoring water quality; adequate training for operating personnel.**
 - b. Control of run-off from community development, agriculture and highway use.**
 - c. Prohibition of solid waste disposal in Lake Erie or tributaries.**

POSITION STATEMENT (continued)

- 3. Support of improved coordination and regional cooperation between the United States and Canada. Planning and administration along watershed lines and across political boundaries. Modernization and enforcement of legislation and regulations.**
- 4. Support of emphasis on prevention of water pollution from all sources: air, land use, agricultural, dredging, and nuclear and hazardous materials and wastes.**
- 5. Support of education, recognizing that all environmental problems are inter-related, that conservation is an environmental principle and that many jurisdictions are involved—international, national, state and local.**
- 6. Support of adequate financing for pollution abatement, including incentives to governments and industries.**

The natural resources position of the League of Women Voters of the United States calls for promotion of an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest by recognizing the interrelationships of air quality, energy, land use, waste management and water resources.

Position on Phosphate Detergent Ban

1. Support of a ban on phosphorus in home use detergents, for the following reasons:
 - a. Excessive phosphorus loading is a major factor in eutrophication of Lake Erie.
 - b. Nearly all the phosphorus in detergents is biologically available. Addition for clarification: Too great a loading of nutrients into a natural water system can affect all the biota in the system. Increased nutrients result in increased growth of plants, creating dense shade, causing death of vegetation. Additional nutrients will then be released from decomposition of dying plants, encouraging increased growth of algae.
 - c. Costs of phosphorus removal at municipal treatment plants are high.
 - d. Reduction in the amount of sludge improves the treatment process in terms of more efficient settling, sludge disposal, and energy conservation.
 - e. Nonphosphate detergents are widely available to the public at comparable cost.

Position on Drilling for Gas and/or Oil in Lake Erie

1. Support of a ban on drilling for gas and oil in Lake Erie for the following reasons:
 - a. Lake Erie's use for drinking water supply must have priority over all other uses.
 - b. Possible economic benefits are offset by inescapable risks of further degradation of water quality in the lake.
 - c. Resolving our nation's energy problem must begin with elimination of waste and over-consumption, more efficient utilization of fuels currently being produced and in the safe, orderly development of alternate energy sources, particularly wind and sun.
 - d. Lake Erie oil and gas reserves ought to be the very last such reserves to be developed.

INTER-LEAGUE GROUPS

IMPACT ON ISSUES 2005-2007

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Nuclear Issues - Power Plants and Radioactive Waste

The Lake Erie Basin Committee will follow the LWVUS guidelines in memorandum sent to all Leagues in the United States dated April 1, 1980.