

ENERGY

(Further Guidelines and Criteria, LWVUS Impact on Issues, 2010-2012, pp. 48)

In 1995-97, we continued our support for energy conservation, by serving on a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Collaborative Cooperative Process (CCP) team to re-license the St. Lawrence Dam for the New York Power Authority (Hydropower).

The CCP team process is an experimental idea to regulate sources requiring a FERC license. It allows all interested parties to present issues of concern at the onset—allowing changes only for grammar, content, or consolidation, and only with the consent of the interested party. All interested parties means that if you show up or submit a written statement, you are an official interested party. The purpose is to reduce controversy, limit litigation, and promote understanding. This process should decrease time and money spent on the regulatory process. Several small projects were successful; several were less successful. The team process to re-license the St. Lawrence Dam was the largest project. League principles got quite a workout, mainly because League is the only organization that studies the open process.

Deregulation of the electric utility industry is an area of significant concern at both the state and local levels of League. Trying to sort through the process is difficult because of all of the interests involved. New York continues to have some of the highest utility rates in the country primarily due to the regulatory process and the impact of air pollution. One of the issues addressed in the 1997 Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act was the purchase of electric vehicles; the state was a pioneer in this area. Since gasoline powered vehicles are the largest source of air pollution, the state has taken an active role in encouraging other low emission vehicles with its support for natural gas-powered buses and cars.