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THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
of New York State

MEMORANDUM IN OPPOSITION OF:
S.6171/FOLEY

**TO: SENATE CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES
& COMMISSIONS COMMITTEE**

DATE: JUNE 1, 2010

Subject: An Act to amend the public authorities law, in relation to removing the debt ceiling cap.

The above reference legislation would amend the Public Authorities Law to remove the cap on the statutory debt ceiling for the Town of Islip's Resource Recovery Agency, currently set at \$50 million, and eliminate the requirement found in current law that any additional Agency debt first be approved by the voters of the Town of Islip.

The *League of Women Voters of New York State strongly opposes* this legislation because it would take away the right of voters within the Town of Islip to vote on proposals advanced by the Town's Resource Recovery Agency to incur new debt on its garbage incinerator.

We view any reduction in direct civic engagement as a diminution of democracy.

Moreover, this legislation would not only take away direct voter oversight over the indebtedness of the Agency, but would remove the ample debt ceiling of \$50 million in the current law. As a result this legislation would mean that a public Agency could issue unlimited debt without first seeking voter approval.

We note that transparency and accountability of public authorities is a longstanding issue of concern for the League and other government and fiscal watchdogs. This legislation represents a step backward in terms of public authority accountability and public oversight of these state-created entities.

The League of Women Voters of New York State strongly recommends that you oppose this legislation.