



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NEBRASKA

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Natural resources Committee

Testimony for LB 1070

Senator Schilz and Committee Members

Since 2010, the League of Women Voters has sought to reduce the environmental impact of mining processes that contaminate and pollute our natural resources. From our studies, the League has concluded that hydraulic fracturing and storage of the resulting wastewaters poses a threat to drinking water, public health and safety. There is especial concern about future liability issues, because often oil and gas company liability is paid for by taxpayers and not the wastewater producers and storage companies themselves. In Nebraska, there is more at stake than drinking water. Our entire agricultural economy is dependent upon the aquifer at every phase of operation. Leaking fracking wastewater could be catastrophic, and the liability should be fully on the industry, not with State or Federal disaster funding.

The League supports locating disposal facilities in areas posing least public risk and so encourage wastewater to be housed in areas posing the least threat. Wastewater storage in close proximity to sources of drinking water, whether they be surface or underground is a concern. With the upsurge of seismic events in Oklahoma, one of which was most recently felt in some southern Nebraska counties, and the correlation of the increased incidence of earthquakes with the increase of fracking and pressurized storage facilities, it is urgent that we address this issue now, and not at some time in the future when our aquifer becomes contaminated.

As hydraulic fracturing has expanded throughout our country, communities have been forced to make decisions without access to reliable information about the potential risks to health, safety and the environment. It is befitting that our Legislature and other duly elected officials make laws and establish safeguards to protect our land, water and public health from the possible contamination and pollution resulting from wastewater spills and leakage. Setting standards for minimum levels of liability insurance for both the drilling and disposal of wastewater is prudent for the protection of our most valuable natural resources. Restricting wastewater storage facilities to areas away from our drinking water is also prudent. I urge you to vote for LB 1070.

Wastewater from drilling is brackish saline solution containing some concentration of toxic chemicals. If you would not drink it, feed it to livestock or use it for irrigation, you do not want it in our aquifer.

Respectfully,

Janece Mollhoff, Natural Resources Director

League of Women Voters of Nebraska