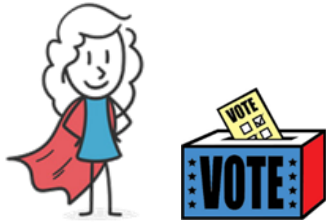


# LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF THE HUNTINGTON AREA

## November 2024 E-Mail Bulletin

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Wendy Thomas, Co-President, [wxthomas@frontier.com](mailto:wxthomas@frontier.com)

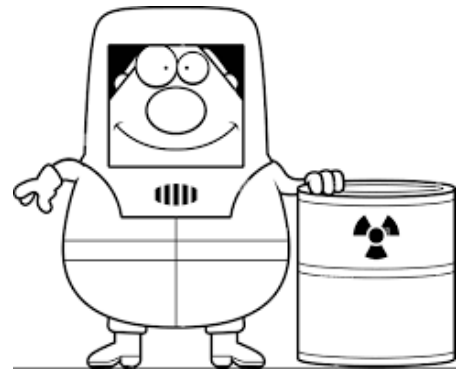


### Voting is my super power!

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## WV HB 208 Passed During the Special Session, But Radioactive Waste is Already Here

*Nyoka Baker Chapman*



WV House Bill 208, also known as the Radiation Control Act, was effective from passage on 10/09/2024. WV will now be a state in agreement with the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The Bill, sponsored by Delegates Hornbuckle and Hanshaw, did not seem to have been adequately debated and appears to have been rushed through the special session. The bill gives the West Virginia Department of Health the power to regulate radiation storage and disposal. It would also allow the state to enter into agreements with other states to manage radioactive waste.

[https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Bill\\_Status/Bills\\_history.cfm?input=208&year=2024&sessiontype=2X&btype=bill](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Bill_Status/Bills_history.cfm?input=208&year=2024&sessiontype=2X&btype=bill)

Although it is well known that exposure to radiation can cause cancer and other health issues, and that water pollution can be a pathway for radiation exposure, the WV legislature disregarded those concerns. The new Department of Health will be charged to manage the oversight of nuclear/radioactive waste disposal. As to whether or not they will have the ability to do so remains at issue. As to who will be responsible for filling in the policies between the lines seems to be open ended. The fact that radioactivity can be abundant in fracking waste and that the laws and their penalties per the original codes were not enforced for decades makes the passage of HB 208 unsurprising. Perhaps this action will be a shield for the already major fracking waste (brine) storage issues in West Virginia.

Although the Fairmont Brine Processing site in Fairmont WV ceased operations around March 1, 2018, it has left an infamous legacy of pollution that includes continued radioactivity. Per the EPA: *By-products created from the process include wastewater treatment sludge and filter cake material. Produced fluids from fracking operations can contain Technically Enhanced Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials, known as "TENORM".*

[https://response.epa.gov/site/site\\_profile.aspx?site\\_id=16192#:~:text=Site%20Overview%3A,Processing%20\(FBP\)%20in%202012](https://response.epa.gov/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=16192#:~:text=Site%20Overview%3A,Processing%20(FBP)%20in%202012). Fracking can release radioactive materials and heavy metals from shale deposits into the wastewater, also known as brine or flowback. These materials can include radium and radon, which are naturally occurring in the bedrock.

Pollutants from fracking operations continue to inch further into urban environments where many have assumed they were safe. <https://wvri.wvu.edu/news/2024/03/14/-landfill-tea-steeps-fracking-waste-near-suburban-communities>

**Per AI:** Fracking wastewater in West Virginia is disposed of in a few ways:

***Underground Injection:*** Wastewater is injected into deep wells designed for this purpose. The method can be safe if done with proper safeguards. In West Virginia, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's (WVDEP) Office of Oil and Gas regulates underground injection control (UIC) permits for wells that inject liquid waste.

***Landfills:*** Solid fracking waste is accepted at landfills, such as Westmoreland Sanitary. However, inspection reports have found that Westmoreland Sanitary has failed to dispose of waste safely.

***Reuse:*** Treated wastewater can be reused for hydraulic fracturing or drilling.

***Discharge:*** If the water quality is good enough, it can be discharged west of the 98th meridian for agricultural or wildlife use

**Recommended for further reading and review relating to the storing and disposal of radioactive fracking waste:**

<https://wvpublic.org/how-w-va-oil-and-gas-industry-leaves-behind-radioactivity/>

**Petroleum-238** is a worthy read with a 5 Star rating on Amazon. The book was written by Justin Noble, an investigative journalist who was a guest speaker at the LWVPA 2023 Shale and Public Health Conference. <https://www.shalepalwv.org/2023-shale-public-health-conference/> There is a video that is available on this webpage in which he discusses the Fairmont facility, which he attributes as being WV's Chernobyl.

<https://oberlinreview.org/32845/news/justin-nobel-environmental-journalist-author-of-petroleum-238/>

<https://www.desmog.com/2023/09/19/radioactive-fracking-waste-west-virginia-veolia-antero-clearwater/>

[https://www.amazon.com/Petroleum-238-Dangerous-Secret-Grassroots-Fight/dp/B0CN79JL43/ref=tmm\\_hrd\\_swatch\\_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=](https://www.amazon.com/Petroleum-238-Dangerous-Secret-Grassroots-Fight/dp/B0CN79JL43/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=)

Federal tax dollars have been earmarked to help address the tragedy at Fairmont. [https://www.timeswv.com/news/local\\_news/epa-oks-3-1-million-more-time-to-clean-up-fairmont-brine-plant/article\\_a543d94a-6191-11ef-bbb8-fbb68090ec14.html](https://www.timeswv.com/news/local_news/epa-oks-3-1-million-more-time-to-clean-up-fairmont-brine-plant/article_a543d94a-6191-11ef-bbb8-fbb68090ec14.html)

**Other Bills that Passed During the Recent Special Session Can Be Found Here:** [https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Bill\\_Status/Bills\\_Subjects.cfm?year=2024&sessiontype=2X&btype=bill](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Bill_Status/Bills_Subjects.cfm?year=2024&sessiontype=2X&btype=bill)



## LWVUS New Study, The Federal Judiciary

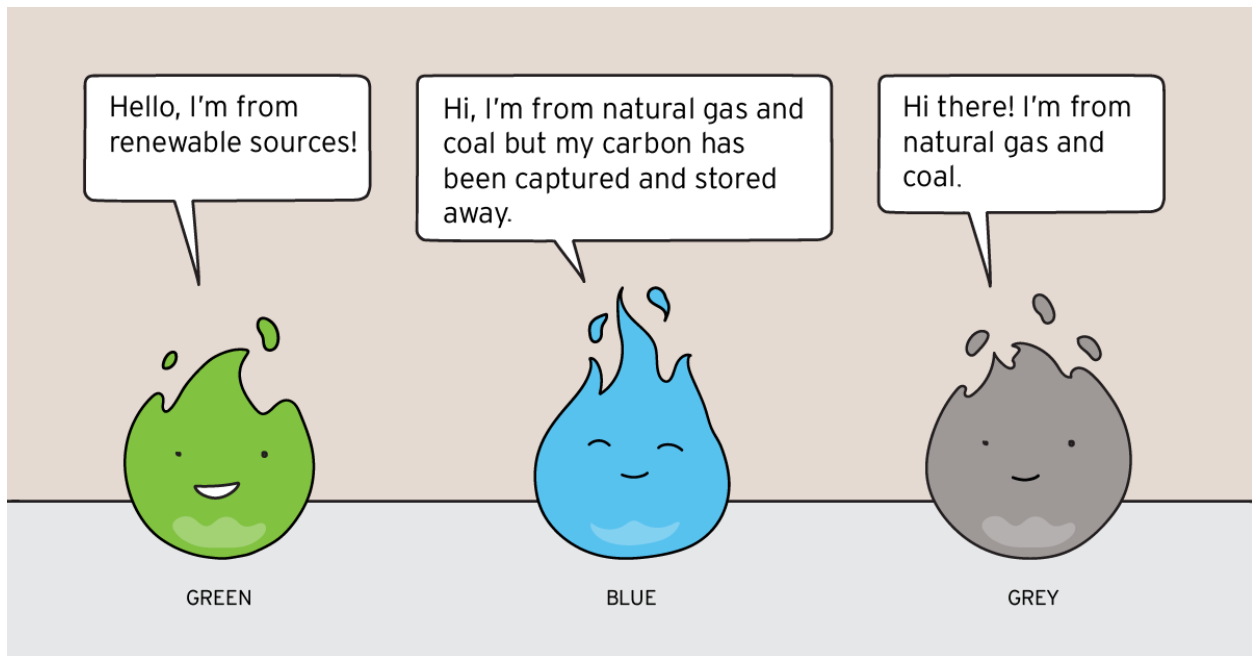
Betty Barrett

For the first time in several years, there will be a new LWVUS study on the calendar for next year. As a message arrived after the 2024 Convention told us recently:

“At the 2024 LWVUS Convention, Leagues overwhelmingly agreed to conduct a new national study on the Federal Judiciary. The study will be completed in a shortened time frame — conducted in just one year, with the final position set to be announced at LWVUS Council in June 2025.”

Morgantown League member Judy Ball is a member of the committee. A webinar announced on November 20, the committee has completed study materials. Some of our Huntington members listened and will report soon. If you have not participated in national studies, I can tell you they are interesting and intense and valuable. We will want to include this on our Huntington Area League of Women Voters calendar for 2024-25.

The federal judiciary has been a focus of controversy for the last several years. We are seeing the Supreme Court heavily criticized after several new members were appointed, along with some long-time members. Many new federal judges have been appointed by both recent administrations. Keep on the lookout in the next several months.



## The Hydrogen Paradox

*Nyoka Baker Chapman*

WV's proponents of the Inflation Reduction Act were shocked to see blue hydrogen projects as a component of the bill, having assumed that only green hydrogen would be generated to meet future demands. Red state senators whose representatives did not vote for the bill in congress, were influenced to acquire a financial foothold for fossil fuels in a clean energy future and their votes helped achieve the passage of the bill.

Green hydrogen is produced through a process called electrolysis, where water is split into hydrogen and oxygen using electricity generated from renewable sources like solar or wind power, resulting in zero carbon emissions during production; essentially, the key aspect of "green" hydrogen is that the electricity used to power the electrolysis process comes from clean, renewable sources.

Blue Hydrogen is only successful as being 'clean' when there is a simultaneous capturing of the carbon dioxide emissions that result from the steam forming of methane. The captured carbon dioxide is then stored underground. Unfortunately, carbon capture technologies have had many failures and challenges in the past. Natural gas is still required to provide the methane needed to create hydrogen from the steam methane reforming (SMR) process.

Transporting hydrogen will require special pipelines that are resistant to allowing the gas to permeate through the alloys that contain them. As well, those pipelines will create special handling when it comes to connecting them and making sure that leakage does not occur.

The tremendous amounts of natural gas that will be needed to fuel these projects continues to be a thorn in the side of WV citizens who are already dealing with the existing issues of fracking and fracking waste. At the top of the natural gas pyramid are corporate entities like Antero Midstream and MarkWest Energy Partners who also sell WV's natural gas on the international market, including to developing countries. The additional demands of fueling methane to Hydrogen hubs adds another veiled dimension into the natural gas paradigm. ARCH2 could be a quagmire of untested technologies and unexpected compromises for the State of WV. More methane faster is still the underbelly of the Appalachian Regional Clean Hydrogen Hub.

<https://www.arch2hub.com/>

<https://www.energy.gov/oced/appalachian-hydrogen-hub-arch2>

As the next administration has tossed the idea of pulling back money for projects and allocations in the Inflation Reduction Act, it will be difficult to say if halting federal support for the development of hydrogen as an energy source will be at issue, though it is possible. One of the new administration's advisors, Elon Musk, is not a hydrogen fan and has remarked on the inadequacies of fuel cell storage technologies for automobiles. Applications for hydrogen and market demand are expected to rise, yet the price of hydrogen may rise as well.

Despite possible setbacks, the dedication to meeting climate change goals of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050 are still acknowledged by industry leaders and energy providers who have committed to a cleaner future. Their commitments made will continue, despite those who do not respect the Earth's inevitable climate reality. As to whether or not U.S. government funding will be available to help achieve those goals is now in question.

## Incoming Funds Allocated for the State of WV/Grant Opportunities



*Nyoka Baker Chapman*

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, a press release was issued from the U.S. Dept of Interior that the 'Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than \$140 Million to Address Legacy

Pollution, Revitalize Communities in West Virginia'.  
<https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-140-million-address-legacy-pollution-0>  
<https://www.doi.gov/grants>

As of November 19, an announcement regarding the federal allocations to address legacy pollution had yet to be posted from the office WV Governor Jim Justice. Releases were made though for other projects and allocations.  
<https://governor.wv.gov/news/Pages/default.aspx>

**Grant Opportunities** continue to be available for those who need funding for special projects. Grants through the state of WV can be found at <https://grants.wv.gov/grants/Pages/default.aspx>. A simple search can direct you to find assistance in your area of concern. The site notes: *"In order to provide stakeholders with more visibility into upcoming funding opportunities, state agencies are publishing a list of anticipated dates for upcoming Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) for key programs. This list is not comprehensive and will be updated periodically with additional programs and revised dates as appropriate."*

In collaboration with the EPA, the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative will award \$40 million in grants, originating from the Inflation Reduction Act, to fund eligible projects in historically disinvested communities throughout EPA's Region 3 (includes **Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia**, and 7 federally recognized tribes).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program - Region 3 Request for Applications (RFA) will be administered by the **GHHI**. This PDF lists information about requirements and eligibility for applicants. -<https://www.greenandhealthyhomes.org/wp-content/uploads/RFA-Final-08122024a.pdf>

Simple searches can provide directions to where organizations and eligible entities can go to fund projects for our communities. We, the people, must be increasingly responsible to create them.



## We'd Like to Know

Dear League members,

Many people in the United States are unpacking the results of the General Elections, and are concerned about the divide it reflects within our electorate. What does this mean for the future of our country? Some are jubilant about the MAGA victory and



others are concerned about how it will affect our democracy and the social causes held important.

The LWV strongly supports all aspects of the US Constitution and encourages all citizens to do likewise. We will continue to support League causes.

We would like to hear from you, our members. Your comments can help guide and encourage us. Please submit your thoughts for inclusion in our next newsletter. There have been many excellent commentaries trying to understand what this election means for the future of the United States. Perhaps you just want to direct us member towards worthwhile books, podcasts, news stories, etc. We can compile your messages and include them in the next newsletter. Although we will need to know which members have submitted letters, we can keep your identity private in the newsletter, if you request.

We are a stronger organization when we hear from you.

Thank you!

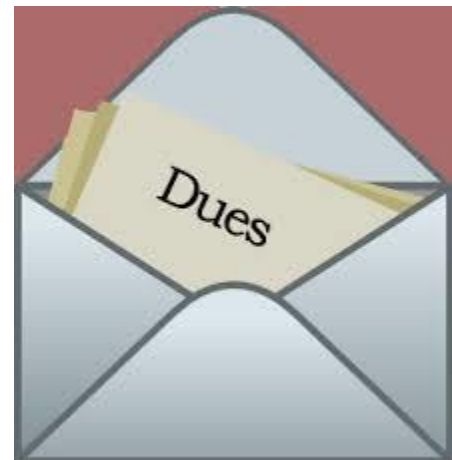
LWVHA email [LWVhuntington@gmail.com](mailto:LWVhuntington@gmail.com)  
LWVHA c/o Marcia Daoust  
15 Elwood Avenue  
Huntington, WV 25705

## DUES NEWS

Earlier this fall, the Huntington League mailed personal dues reminder notes to our member, and we have had a tremendous response. Thank you! As members, you helped fund our LWV voter service activities this fall. (Did you see our LWV VOTE signs and billboard?)

For those members who have yet to renew your membership, we look forward to receiving your check before January 2025. Below is the membership form. If you lack access to a working printer, just include the needed information in a letter with your check.

Thanks,  
Marcia Daoust  
Membership chair, [lwvhuntington@gmail.com](mailto:lwvhuntington@gmail.com)



**MEMBERSHIP FORM - LWV OF THE HUNTINGTON AREA**

League membership is open to all men and women aged 16 or older. Single membership is \$50.00. Two memberships in the same household are a total of \$75.00. Students may join for free. Please pay by cash or a check made out to the LWV of Huntington.

Mail dues to: LWVHA c/o Carolyn Bagby, 79 N Bradley Foster Dr., Huntington WV, 25701.

Please write "Dues" on your payment, if paying for dues by check.

Please include the following information with your payment.

Name:

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Email:

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Address:

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Phone number for local League use. \_\_\_\_\_ (This is optional but increases LWVHA effectiveness.)

Amount paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

MY AREAS OF GREATEST CONCERN:

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NOTE: When you join the local League, you also become a member of the LWV United States & LWV WV. (We do not share your personal information with any other organization besides LWV.) Most communication from the Huntington League is by email.

Please indicate if you are a student. (Students are exempt from paying dues.)