

**June 24, 2011**

Governor Jack Markell  
Tatnall Building  
William Penn Street, 2nd Floor  
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Governor Markell,

Under your leadership, Delaware can lead the transition to a clean energy economy. The missing keystone is an aggressive greenhouse gas emissions target and a plan to prepare Delaware for the impacts of climate change. Therefore, we are asking you to issue an executive order that creates a strong comprehensive energy and climate plan that lowers Delaware's greenhouse gas emissions and makes Delaware more resilient to the dangers of climate change for generations to come.

The closely related issues of energy and climate change pose the most serious economic, scientific, technological, security and ethical issues of our time. Fossil fuels, on which our modern society is largely based, are finite. Adequate supplies are becoming increasingly expensive and dangerous to produce. Increasing populations and rising expectations – particularly in the developing world – are increasing energy demand and prices. The burning of fossil fuels, which all contain carbon, is increasing concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere at an ever increasing rate, changing the world's climate, and threatening food and water supplies, human health, lives, and property and the survival of species of plants and animals around the world. Delay in dealing with the problem will only increase the future costs and dangers, as well as reduce the opportunities for economic development that could come to Delaware if it is seen as an environmental leader, and a good location for green businesses.

Delaware is particularly vulnerable to sea level rise because of its long coastline and the fact that it has the lowest average elevation (about 60 feet) of any state in the nation. Sea level rise at Lewes was about a foot during the past century but is likely to be 2-5 feet or more during the coming one – depending on how rapidly the U.S. and other major emitters reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and how rapidly Greenland and Antarctica lose their ice as the Earth warms.

We have far-sighted leaders, a supportive legislature, and centers of excellence in energy policy and renewable energy development at the University of Delaware and at a number of companies. We believe that the health of our economy and even our future viability as a state depend on how well we manage the transition to the new green sustainable energy society. We would like to see Delaware become a leader in that effort. Though we are small, we are nimble, and can demonstrate that it is possible to build our economy, protect our environment, and improve the health and welfare of our people – convincing others to do the same.

The outlines of an energy/climate change plan for the transition came out of a 6-month study by the Energy/GHG Subcommittee of the League of Women Voters of Delaware. Supporting information can be found in a summary on the League's web site. The plan was refined through

a series of consensus meetings in all three counties and adopted by the League Board in March. Since then it has been endorsed by a number of other organizations and individuals, whose names appear at the end of this letter.

***The League of Women Voters of Delaware supports an aggressive and comprehensive energy use/climate change plan for Delaware. Some key points that should be included:***

- ***Accelerate bringing new green businesses, jobs and industries to Delaware, and investigate emerging energy technologies.***
- ***Set targets and a timetable for reducing Delaware's total greenhouse gas emissions.***
- ***Plan for extensive adaptation measures at all levels of government for climate change impacts that cannot be avoided---especially sea level rise.***
- ***Support public education and outreach; expand renewable energy and climate change in Delaware curriculum standards.***
- ***As Delaware calculates energy costs, full life cycle analyses\* with all externalities\*\* must be included.***
- ***Social and economic justice must be considered in implementing energy and climate change policy.***

*\*Life cycle analysis is a technique to assess environmental impacts associated with all the stages of a product's life from cradle-to-grave (i.e., from raw material extraction through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, use repair and maintenance, and disposal or recycling).*

*\*\*Energy externalities are external costs and benefits--health, environmental, security, and infrastructure—associated with the production, distribution, and consumption of energy that are not, or may not be fully incorporated into the market price.*

Thank you for your leadership and your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Carol D. Jones, President  
League of Women Voters of Delaware