

# Energy Report Consensus

## League of Women Voters of Pullman

By Alice Schroeder, President and Recorder for the discussion  
Discussion was at the Dec. 3, 2012 meeting with about about 16 members present.  
Consensus approved by the Pullman LWV board on Jan. 23, 2013

### 1. Of the following list of characteristics of energy usage and production, which 2 - 4 do you consider the most important?

- a. Locally generated power
- b. Energy efficiency
- c. Level and results of current research
- d. Requirements for use of the renewable
- e. Level of resulting greenhouse gas emissions
- f. Level of dependency on few sources
- g. Reliability
- h. Cost
- i. Capacity (availability) of resources
- j. Competition for resource usage, e.g. water, land, navigation, rare minerals
- k. Environmental effects, e.g. wildlife, plant life, land, water, air
- l. Noise

e. Our top priority is e—(reducing the) level of greenhouse gas emissions.

b. In many ways this includes b. Energy efficiency.

j. & k. This was closely followed by j and k, which we felt could not be separated.

c. is very important because it provides the facts. Does the option actually limit green house gasses: should support go only to research or is the option ready for commercial use? (We feel it is important to avoid sponsoring more techniques like corn alcohol that do little to decrease or, actually increase, green house gas emissions.)

h. Finally, h is important. Both types of cost need to be considered. The total cost to society (health, environmental degradation, etc.) as well as the cost to the consumer. We noted that because new technologies almost always have a large initial cost it is important for the League to advocate for help for low income individuals when new technologies are implemented.

### 2. Which of the above 1 - 2 do you consider to be the least important?

f. & l. All of the above are important. Dependence on a few sources of energy and noise are least important at the moment, but they should be watched so they don't become important.

### 3. Based on your list of most and least important characteristics above and the choices below where should League put its support when it comes to renewable energy use and production? Please rank.

- a. Wind --**High**--
- b. Solar --**High**
- c. Biomass/Bioenergy (wood) \*\*
- d. Wave --**Low**
- e. Tidal --**Low**
- f. Geothermal --**Low**
- g. Hydropower **High**—although most sites are in use, maintenance and upgrading are important.

\*\* Biomass/Bioenergy is complex. The League should support efforts to capture the energy in waste biomass, both wood products and household and business waste, rather than letting it simply add green house gases via decay or open burning. The League should not support proposals that would divert such "waste" from enriching the soil or use in other products. It definitely should not support proposals that would likely encourage the growth of trees or other

plants for direct use to produce electricity or heat.

**Biofuels** were not on this list. Fuels are an important contributor to green house gas emissions—almost 50% of the green house gas emissions in Washington. The League needs to advocate for efforts to solve this problem including conserve fuel, find fossil fuel replacements that lower green house gas emissions, and develop transportation that can use other sources of energy.

**4. The Smart Grid will be expensive, and may possibly raise privacy concerns. Do you consider those to be problems?**

The smart grid is necessary if wind and solar energy are to be used effectively. It is also very important to increase conservation of energy without requiring large sacrifices from the public and to reduce the occurrence of blackouts. We feel that the cost will be worth it and pay for itself over time. While most of the group was not concerned about privacy, a strong minority was. We all concurred that it is important to urge strong security regulations for any data that is associated with individuals.

**5. Are there trade-offs you personally would be willing to make in your daily use of energy? If so, please list up to 3 or 4 your group would be willing to consider.**

On an individual level we are willing to drive less, turn the heat down, use low energy requiring lights and purchase appliances that use less energy. We look forward to appliances that can be programmed to turn on when energy use is low.

**Most important:** This question brings up **conservation and conservation education**, the 1977 positions. Throughout our discussion, **conservation and conservation education remained our top priority**. This included: stressing local generation of energy as this cuts the waste of transport and transmission and gives users an incentive to conserve; and encouraging governmental regulations and incentives for conservation such as green building codes, fuel efficient automobiles, lighting use and appliances that are both energy efficient and do not draw energy when not in use. **Conservation education** is important to convince most people to support these efforts. We realize that low income individuals may not have the funds to invest in energy efficient practices. Therefore regulations and subsidies that reduce the impact on low income individuals of the costs involved in using renewable energy sources are important.