



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF PENNSYLVANIA**

226 Forster Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102-3220
717.234.1576

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May 26, 2010

Dear Senator:

As President of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania, I am following up our recently completed state-wide study of natural gas extraction Marcellus Shale. I request that you:

- **support a severance tax.**

This is not a new tax. Consumers of natural gas in Pennsylvania already pay a severance tax to other states that produce the gas they use.

A severance tax will not hamper the development of natural gas extraction from Marcellus Shale. Oil and gas industries in the top producing states have paid such a tax for years without impacting growth.

Taxpayers continue to bear the burden of cleaning up after the coal and timber industries. A severance tax can prevent the industrial costs of environmental degradation created by natural gas extraction from being passed on to state and local governments.

Given these tough economic times, our Commonwealth needs revenue. However, a finite resource, such as natural gas, should not be used to pay for ongoing expenses in a General Fund for years to come. While we recognize the challenges of balancing the ailing State budget, money from such a tax should primarily be used to preserve and protect our natural environment, to support local communities faced with the boom and bust economy of drilling, to monitor the impact of these processes on our environment and public health, and to conduct research to develop more effective, efficient, and environmentally-friendly energy producing processes.

The future of Pennsylvania and its taxpayers depend on your prudent judgment. Thank you for your consideration of the need to establish a severance tax in our Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Olivia Thorne'.

Olivia Thorne, President,
League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania