



NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Public Statement for the League of Women Voters Water Forum, 2012

I would like to thank the League of Women Voters for again demonstrating their willingness to participate in robust public debate regarding the public water system managed by the City of Asheville. The rich 92 year history of the League, its commitment to educating the public on complex issues as well as its nonpartisan stance on those issues, allows for constructive public discourse and increased community awareness.

The work of this League during the last public debate on this subject is considered widely to be the most well thought out and thorough review of this matter. As most will recall, it occurred as a result of the cancellation of the regional water agreement 15 years prior to its maturity by the City of Asheville. The regional upheaval and distrust that has created - remains to this day and has created much acrimony within our community.

As a result, the League's study at that time recommended the formation of a "truly independent Regional Water Authority". The careful attention to detail on how to form the authority and its operation is exceptional and will be considered by the Legislative Committee during our review of the systems management history. Of particular interest in the League's work is the manner to which accountability was created by the election of certain authority members. The approach suggested was not only unique; it was very practical and eminently fair to all classes of water users.

In closing, there are only three potential outcomes based on this study. 1) The City will continue management of the public water system; 2) The creation of an independent regional water authority or 3) Combining the system with MSD, which is already successfully functioning as an independent regional authority. The debate should focus on these outcomes; however, I would be remiss if I did not address the issue of privatization. There is an element in the City suggesting privatization of the public water system is under consideration. Nothing could be further from the truth. As a lifelong resident of this area and city taxpayer, I would never agree to privatize this public asset. Consequently, I do not object to and will pursue the creation of legislation insuring it will remain in public control in perpetuity thus ending any concern regarding that unfounded accusation. Kind regards this evening. Tim Moffitt