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March 4, 2021

To: [Senate Committee on Energy and Environment](#)  
Senator Lee Beyer, Chair

Re: [SB 392](#) – Study of natural gas fugitive emissions - **Support**

Our testimony in support of SB 392 is consistent with the national League’s position, “Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment” with a focus on demanding pollution prevention, as well as positions on justice and public safety for all people. At the 2018 National LWV Convention, the following “Climate Test” resolution passed almost unanimously: “The League of Women Voters supports a set of climate assessment criteria that ensures that energy policies align with current climate science.” The Oregon League is fully engaged in all aspects of study and implementation of EO 20-04 as the state devotes its resources to meet goals to reduce greenhouse gases as quickly as possible. In our view, SB 392 would play an important role in that effort and we ask that you consider voting for a Do Pass motion.

Unquestionably, state, national, and global efforts to reduce carbon emissions are essential to any hope we have of avoiding progressively greater climate catastrophe, but the science is conclusive that natural gas is not, in fact, a safe alternative to oil, coal, or other fossil fuels. The Oregon Global Warming Commission [reports](#) (p. 33) that natural gas “is the second largest source of emissions in Oregon from both electricity generation and direct use.” Natural gas is not a green “bridge fuel.” The [U.S. Energy Information Administration \(EIA\)](#) notes that burning natural gas releases less CO2 than other fossil fuels; however, when it is released as methane gas without combustion, it is a much more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon. “Methane [CH4], the [primary component](#) of natural gas, is a powerful greenhouse gas—[25 times stronger](#) than carbon dioxide (CO2) over a 100-year time horizon and *72 times stronger over a 20-year horizon* [italics added],” according to the [World Resources Institute](#).

But those reported emissions aren’t the extent of it. The EIA acknowledges that “. . . natural gas leaks into the atmosphere from oil and natural gas wells, storage tanks, pipelines, and processing plants[.]” And a growing body of [information](#) reveals that the extent of this leakage is far greater than is tracked and reported, especially on a state-by-state level, and incomplete understanding of its role presents a considerable challenge to our efforts to reduce emissions. The study called for in SB 392 would surface the significant range of credible research that supports that statement. Our strategy to meet our goals will need to include focus on emissions of CH4 from natural gas, not just carbon emissions. The next 25 years are critical.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation and **we urge you to support SB 392.**

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LWVOR President

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