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League of Women Voters of the Huntington
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League of Women Voters of the Huntington Area

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Martha Woodward, 1st VP, woodward@marshall.edu
Wendy Thomas, 2nd VP, wxtomas@frontier.com

WV Prepares to Utilize Funding for Climate Change Initiatives

NYOKA BAKER CHAPMAN

West Virginia's recent legislative session passed significant bills that will have a direct impact on working toward zero-greenhouse emission goals. Bringing these bills into law was a bipartisan achievement that will allow our state to utilize federal funding directed toward climate change initiatives. Although there are pros and cons attached to these bills, they place WV in a position to 'go bold' to initiate large scale industrial projects that could help us to reach IPCC goals.

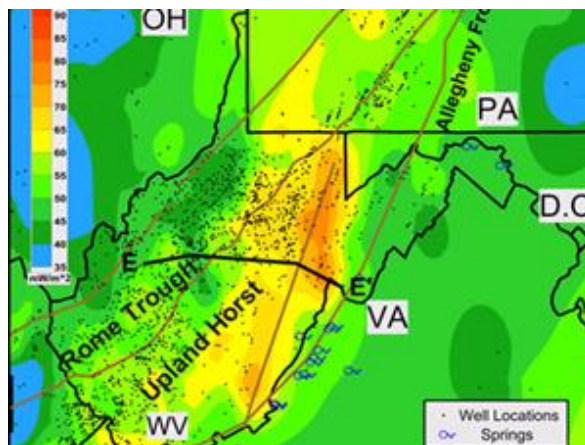
SB 4, lifted the ban on the construction of nuclear energy facilities. Although storage of nuclear waste is still at issue as well as the retirement of such facilities, nuclear energy is still a zero-greenhouse emissions option. SMRs (small modular reactors) are the likely nuclear energy sources that would be brought into use.

HB 4491 achieved passage, which establishes requirements for carbon dioxide sequestration, the storage and capture of CO₂. As of this date though, CO₂ sequestration projects have not been successful, but as CO₂ is a commodity, perhaps the price will go up and create an incentive to advance the technology as so many products can be manufactured from carbon.

HB 4098 also became law, which sets a regulatory structure for the development and availability of geothermal energy. [See](#)

<https://www.thinkgeoenergy.com/smu-suggests-geothermal-potential-of-up-to-18900mw-in-west-virginia/>

H.B. 4084 paves the way for Advanced Recycling and has been passed into law and will enable WV to utilize and regulate advanced recycling technologies to create new plastics and help solve problems of solid waste disposal.



Per the American Chemistry Council: <https://www.americanchemistry.com/chemistry-in-america/news-trends/press-release/2022/west-virginia-passes-advanced-recycling-law-paves-way-for-job-growth-and-environmental-protection>

“Advanced recycling reduces the need for fossil raw materials, helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and can bring good jobs to the state. In short, it is a win for the environment, business and West Virginia.”

HB 3082 will stabilize funding sources for the WV DEP Division of Air quality.

HB 4566 will create the Economic Enhancement Grant Fund, the purpose of this bill is to create a Grant Fund with the West Virginia Water Development Authority and authorize them to make grants to cover all or a portion of the costs of water, sewer, economic development and tourism projects.

The WV Public Energy Authority held a meeting on 4/27. The focus was on the current reliability and dependability of the use of coal for energy production and how the impact of renewable transitions can affect consumers. Tax credit parity and reduction of CO2 was discussed in relation to preserving a future for coal in products and energy production into zero emissions models by utilizing new technologies. Qualifying projects to get money from the US Dept of Energy was discussed. Techno economic studies were discussed to keep energy available for grid stability via grants. Rate payer impact was an underlying concern.

Also, at the meeting Isabelle Branco-Lo discussed large scale battery technology. This was an industrial perspective on energy storage. Their batteries are currently being utilized at the Laurel Mountain wind farm. There was a Q & A regarding on and off grid storage systems. The use of lithium was a talking point. Their batteries are being made though at this time in China. This dialogue presented a difficult reality as so much renewable energy is dependent on a successful ability to store available power.

[West Virginia Public Energy Authority - Public Meeting April 27, 2022 - YouTube](https://www.oconnellelectric.com/projects/laurel-mountain-wind-farm/)
<https://www.oconnellelectric.com/projects/laurel-mountain-wind-farm/>
<https://westvirginia.gov/industries/energy>

There are currently two vacancies on the WV Public Energy Authority. Although recommendations have been put forth, no selections have been made yet by Governor Justice at the time of this reporting. As this group continues it has the potential to be a steering committee for WV's energy future. There are concerns that additions to this group should have a strong background in science and environmental justice.

WV could benefit greatly from another round of funding from a modified version of a Build Back Better reconciliation package. As to whether or not current senate negotiations will make this possible is unknown. West Virginia has laid the ground work to embrace it's zero-greenhouse gas emissions responsibility and is staged to use all resources available toward prosperous outcomes for all stakeholders. Consumers, workers, industry and the environment itself must achieve an equilibrium of sustainability.

One of the best sites to stay abreast of real time environmental projects in our Appalachian area is Downstream Strategies. [Home - Downstream Strategies](#)

When Women Won the Right to Vote: An American Fiction

Martha Woodward attended the virtual annual meeting of the Morgantown League to hear the speaker, Dr. Lisa Tetrault of Carnegie-Mellon University, who spoke on WHEN WOMEN WON THE RIGHT TO VOTE: AN AMERICAN FICTION. She pointed out that nowhere in the Constitution is the right to vote granted to anybody; it's all "Thou shalt nots" as in "shalt not denyaccess." She says that the framers of the Constitution finally threw up their hands in resignation as they tried to write language about voting to suit all the Colonies. They "punted" according to Dr. Tetrault, leaving voting regulation to each state.

Dr. Tetrault led the group through the tortuous history of suffrage for all Americans to remind us how we came to the mess we are in today. She compared dealing with voting rights to the game of Whack A Mole, saying that the states come up with bad legislation and then it gets beaten down only to pop up again in some other form. Vigilance and action are key.



West Virginia Suffragist Memorial Committee

The West Virginia Suffragist Memorial Committee was established by the legislature and appointed by Governor Jim Justice in 2021. The goal of the committee is to establish a memorial on the State Capitol grounds to celebrate West Virginia's role in securing the right of women to vote. The committee wants to hear from you, the public with ideas on the concept and design of the memorial. The committee wants the memorial to be both educational and inspirational to all who utilizes it. Additional information on the memorial can be found on the website <https://www.westvirginiassuffragistmemorial.com/>. Renate Pore, committee chairperson is available to make organizational presentations. She can be reached at renatepore@gmail.com or 304-444-9681.

Should the West Virginia Suffragist Memorial be . . .

- Educational
- Inspiring
- Hopeful
- Promote equality
- Promote leadership
- Highlight the importance of voting

What are YOUR thoughts?



LWVWV Council Meeting 5/21/22

NYOKA BAKER CHAPMAN

Special guest speaker, Renate Pore, Chair of the WV Suffragist Memorial Committee gave an informed report, history and view of various existing suffrage memorials and invited league members to provide their ideas for the WV project. Comments were made during the discussion that followed. Actual plans for the design of the memorial have yet to be fully considered and finalized. The committee has a website where the public can provide input. You can visit their website at [West Virginia Suffragist Memorial](#) to learn more and contribute to this project. Our own Wendy Thomas, co-president of our local Huntington Area LWV chapter is on the WV Suffragist Memorial Committee.

The LWVWV reconvened following to take on issues from Board portfolios in the afternoon. A primary issue that presented was the difficulty in getting responses from candidates to participate in forums or even generally answer questions for voter information. At this time there seems to be no clear policy regarding candidate forums from the WV Secretary of State's office. Guidance about how to address 'empty chair' forums due to one candidate's declining to participate and the opposition candidate being given an opportunity to publicly answer questions remains at issue. This discussion will continue as efforts are made to engage candidates prior for the general election in November.