

League of Conservation Voters
Testimony to the 2016 Democratic National Convention Platform Committee
June 17, 2016

Members of the Democratic National Convention Platform Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Madeleine Foote and I'm the Legislative Representative at the League of Conservation Voters. It is an honor for LCV, on behalf of our more than 1.3 million members, to inform the Committee about our top environmental priorities that we believe should be included in the 2016 Democratic Party Platform. These priorities include: reducing the pollution that is warming our planet, adapting to a changing climate, ensuring that all communities have access to clean water and clean air, investing in the clean energy economy, protecting public health from toxic chemicals, creating a fair, democratic and just society, and preserving the special places and wildlife we hold dear.

President Obama and his administration have made incredible progress in advancing environmental protections, especially on the issue of climate change. As we look to the future, we must continue to build on this progress. We have a moral obligation to protect our planet, and the Democratic Party should lead the way in ensuring that we leave a clean and safe planet for generations to come.

The urgent need for action to tackle climate change has never been more clear, and the Platform should support taking aggressive measures to reduce the pollution fueling climate change, including from power plants, the oil and gas sector, and cars and trucks. The Platform should commend the historic international climate agreement forged in Paris, and recognize the threats the climate crisis poses to communities across the country, especially to low-income families and communities of color.

We must also accelerate our transition to clean energy and leave most fossil fuels in the ground. We urge the Platform to recognize that the management of federal lands and waters should protect our natural heritage while advancing the production and distribution of clean energy. We should also end taxpayer subsidies for the oil and gas industries, and defend and extend clean energy tax incentives while expanding access to clean energy for all communities.

The tragic situation in Flint, Michigan has demonstrated that we cannot take safe drinking water for granted. Cities across the U.S. have experienced elevated levels of dangerous lead in drinking water, and like so many of our environmental challenges, these impacts disproportionately fall on those most vulnerable. Protecting and providing safe drinking water to all communities should be a platform priority, as should supporting the Clean Water Rule and funding for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure.

Toxic chemicals have become pervasive in our homes, bodies, and environment, and science continues to link exposure to chemicals to increases in chronic health problems. Fortunately, Congress recently passed legislation to give the Environmental Protection Agency new tools to reduce the impacts of chemical exposure on those most vulnerable, including pregnant women,

children, workers, and others who are disproportionately exposed. We must support the EPA taking bold actions to restrict and remove dangerous chemicals from the marketplace.

America's public lands and open spaces are some of our nation's most prized possessions. The platform should encourage landscape-level conservation, while continuing to protect our wildlife and invest in critical conservation programs, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund. We must also continue to bolster the diversity of the sites, stories, visitors and workforce of our national public lands so that all people in this country feel welcome in them.

In conclusion, we encourage the Platform Committee to make safeguarding our environment one of the central pillars of the Platform and we thank you for the opportunity to testify today.