

the more than 145,000 members organized in over 1200 local Leagues in the 50 states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

Since my first opportunity to represent the League of Women Voters before this committee in 1966, our members—in their home communities and in their states—have continued their work for stronger laws, for better enforcement, and for additional financing to mitigate water problems.

As many of you know, League stands are the outgrowth of study, discussion, and consensus by League members in local meetings. Leagues have agreed upon the principle of shared financial responsibility in water resources development. For this reason, the League of Women Voters prefers to see local governments make a strong effort to bear the cost of good waste management; and League members often back this preference by hard work to pass local sewer and treatment facility bond issues. We encourage state assistance to lower jurisdictions. Since 1960, we have steadily supported federal grants for sewage facility construction. League members are convinced that construction of municipal secondary treatment plants must go on at an accelerated rate.

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1968

The League of Women Voters of the United States agrees with the aim of H.R. 15907 to provide a practical method of financing the federal share of treatment facility construction costs during the current period of financial stringency. We are well aware that parts of the bill are meeting strong opposition from spokesmen for local and state officials. We anticipate modifications by this committee.

REASONS FOR SUPPORT OF H.R. 15907

Money is the main problem

Meeting the cost of building and improving treatment plants far overshadows other difficulties in cutting down water pollution from city sewage.

The Congress, guided by this committee, set \$700 million as the amount the federal government needs to spend in fiscal 1969 to stimulate adequate investment by state and local governments. Through the leadership of this committee, the incentive feature of the construction grant program was retained and re-emphasized. If the full authorization had been appropriated, the League would have favored continuing the present grant program unchanged. After all, the removal of the dollar ceiling and the higher percentage of project cost offered by the federal government in the Clean Water Restoration Act went into effect less than a year ago.

But, in reality, these increases never materialized. Although 23 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have passed legislation authorizing a state share of 25 to 30 percent, the \$203 million appropriated for the construction grant program has been so inadequate that the incentive offered by the Clean Water Restoration Act has been almost no incentive at all. Only states able to undertake prepayment of the federal share in expectation of reimbursement can get leverage out of the promise implicit in the percentages of the Clean Water Restoration Act. State legislatures that met after the President's budget was sent to Congress in 1967 had scant reason to authorize appropriation of matching state funds.

The state Leagues tell us of the bitter feeling among officials and citizens who worked for passage of state legislation authorizing state matching grants. When help is offered, expectations are raised; when help is snatched away, people cannot avoid feeling betrayed.

Under present circumstances, we do not expect the Appropriations Committees to appropriate the \$700 million authorized for fiscal 1969 or even the \$450 million we wanted for the present fiscal year. The League, therefore, supports installment payments of the federal share. We do this in the hope that the Appropriation Subcommittees will regard with favor—

- the relatively small additional amount (above the \$225 million for the continuing grant program) needed to pay the 1969 installment of the federal share of principal and interest under the contract system;

- the large amount of treatment facility construction that could be generated if states utilize this contract method for their larger projects.

Success from standard setting depends on construction

Setting standards to meet the requirements of the Secretary of Interior does not reduce pollution. The enforceable plan to achieve those standards will not