

**Testimony by the League of Women Voters of Texas
to the State Board of Education, November 19, 2008**

Chairman McLeroy and State Board of Education Members:

The League of Women Voters of Texas appreciates this opportunity to provide input on revisions to the K-12 science curriculum in Texas.

The League of Women Voters of Texas supports a statewide, standardized curriculum that provides the academic rigor students need to succeed in college and careers throughout the nation and the world. In addition, the League believes that our curriculum should be developed with broad input from Texas educators from K--12 to university levels. They know best what practices will help our students succeed on the many state and national standardized tests they must take.

These are the reasons why the League endorses the proposed new science curriculum standards for grades K-12 drafted by work groups of teachers and educators appointed by the Texas Education Agency. This curriculum uses the scientific processes of observation, analysis, and the ability physically to test concepts.

The draft curriculum from the work groups supports instruction in evolution, the scientific concept that is widely endorsed by scientists throughout the world. It is critical to understanding of the biological sciences. The students in our state must be well versed in this concept to compete in the global market.

The approach taken by the work groups is to be commended for drawing on the expertise of recognized scientists and experts. A definition of science from the National Academy of Sciences clarifies that supernatural concepts do not belong in the public school curriculum. Language that matches new standards from the Science Teachers Association of Texas requires students to “analyze and evaluate scientific explanations using empirical evidence, logical reasoning, and experimental and observational testing.” Not included is unscientific language about strengths and weaknesses of scientific theories.

Texas is the home of NASA, as well as many high-tech industries and internationally renowned medical facilities and universities. Let us adopt a science curriculum and textbooks that will prepare Texas students for work at such world-class employers.