LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF TEXAS

TESTIMONY
State Board of Education, Science Curriculum,
Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
March 25, 2009

The League of Women Voters of Texas appreciates this opportunity to provide input on the latest 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 their chosen careers. In addition, the League supports a curriculum that is developed with broad input from Texas educators from K-12 to the university level.

For these reasons, the League urges you to:

- Support the final, December 2008 draft of the proposed curriculum standards for science in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills--*without amendments*--which was prepared by curriculum writing teams. This draft does not attempt to weaken instruction in the scientific concept of evolution, as does the proposed draft that was published in the February 13, 2009, edition of the *Texas Register*.
- Show your confidence in the draft prepared by teams of educators and scientists, who were appointed to draft the science standards. They are uniquely qualified to develop a rigorous science curriculum that will prepare Texas students for any college or career.

In addition, the League urges you to:

- Oppose the addition of any language in the final curriculum that would weaken instruction in the widely endorsed scientific concept of evolution—for example, requirements to teach "strengths and weaknesses."
- Oppose amendments approved by the board in January that would weaken instruction on scientific theories about common ancestry. These include amendments to high school courses in biology, TEKS 7(B), requiring students to "analyze and evaluate the sufficiency and insufficiency of common ancestry"; and in earth and space science, TEKS 8(A), requiring students to "assess the arguments for and against universal common descent."

Texas is the home of NASA, as well as many high-tech industries and renowned medical facilities and universities. Let us adopt a science curriculum and textbooks that will prepare Texas students to work for these world-class employers, or for any national or international employer of world-class caliber.