

LWV Ohio Statehouse Day – March 19, 2013

LWVO Lobbyist Report

Land Use Report

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As the 129th General Assembly ended and the 130th began, we can say that no land use problems have been solved, and little worthwhile legislation was introduced. Fracking continues to be very controversial, making a big footprint in the environment (including water); but in this stressful economic period, environmental issues are not a top priority.

In the last year, implementing legislation for the Great Lakes Compact, Ohio's **HB 473**, was passed and signed in June, although amidst considerable criticism. A year ago we reported on 7 bills that had been introduced about oil/gas/fracking; by the end of the legislative session, 5 of them had progressed to their first hearing, and now all will have to be reintroduced (or forgotten). Only **SB 315**, the energy bill, was passed & signed. The League testified against giving credit to Combined Heat and Power toward the State's renewable energy goals, but our recommendation was not reflected in the final bill.

There appears to be no action on redevelopment of vacant properties and local brownfields. The OEPA is doing a study on the Black River watershed, which has been named an Area of Concern by the International Joint Commission (Canada & the USA), the goal being restoration of water quality.

At the end of January 2013, the chair of the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee said (quoted in Hannah) he expects to deal this year with "water quality, animals, and the oil and gas industry", making it a big year. And in a speech to the oil and gas producers he said that they should expect a friendly reception (Hannah's Week in Review 1/25/13). We shall see.