

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WESTCHESTER
STATEMENT ON
THE TAPPAN ZEE HUDSON RIVER CROSSING PROJECT**

The League of Women Voters of Westchester (LWVW) commends the process pursued by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), the New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA) and MTA Metro North Railroad (MNR) during consideration of the Tappan Zee Bridge-I-287 Corridor Project in the past few years. Discussions with the stakeholders advisory groups (SAWGs), on which League members served, were thorough, open and inclusive, and those in charge were responsive to suggestions made. We hope this process will continue under the Federal Highway Administration and the NYSDOT with the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project unveiled locally on October 25, 2011.

As to the substance of the new project, the League has strong reservations about it as it now stands. A Tappan Zee Bridge that improves and expands car traffic without encouraging mass transit and making related east- and west-bound highway improvements is inconsistent with our needs. As many have already said, it is backward looking at a time when we are increasingly aware of the problems of urban sprawl, new environmental considerations and growing economic inequalities. We appreciate the fact that a bird in the hand — with the prospect of quicker federal approval and the creation of jobs — is inviting. But such effects are short-term, while the limitations of this particular project would be with us for the foreseeable future. We must and can do better.

Accordingly, the LWVW urges the Federal Highway Administration and NYS authorities to rethink and revise the proposal to accommodate a mass-transit component. Then, we could proceed to build a bridge we can live with for the long term. Hopefully, sufficient engineering and planning has already been completed to permit prompt modification to the current proposed structure and enable us to take advantage of the accelerated federal process.