THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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TESTIMONY OF FRANCES GEMMILL, PRESIDENT

At the Public Hearing of the DC Zoning Commission, on the Georgetown Boathouse Proposal, on Monday, May 19, 2003 at 6:30pm in Room 210 of the One Judiciary Square building at 441 Fourth Street, N.W.

The League of Women Voters, a national non-partisan organization, works to promote the public interest at national, regional, state, and local levels of government. The League takes action by addressing governmental bodies when League members reach agreement or consensus on an issue. The League of Women Voters has strong positions at the local and national level supporting the preservation of open space and unique natural features of the city. Without a doubt, the undeveloped area along the Potomac River, west of the Key Bridge provides a valuable resource to our city asopen space in an urban setting. As the Georgetown Waterfront Park & C&O Canal National Historic Park Plan states, "Above Key Bridge is one of the main scenic treasures of the Nation's Capital."

Because the League believes in full public review of the environmental, social and economic impacts of major developments such as the Georgetown boathouse proposal, we ask that you not rezone the property tonight. Instead we recommend proceeding with completion of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The 1995 Environmental Assessment (EA) is outdated and was not an assessment of the specific proposal before you. A new environmental review is an appropriate means of addressing issues with full opportunity for citizen participation. These issues include but are not limited to:

- details on the full scope of the current proposal which were apparently unavailable for the 1995 EA.
- impact on users of the C&O Canal, Capital Crescent Trail and neighbors
- impact on historic sites
- direct and indirect effects on the water quality of the Potomac River
- alternative sites which may be more desirable at this time
- mitigation measures
- assessment of the number of vehicle trips per day and per week for boathouse activities

An EIS would address the many concerns of neighbors and boaters, as well as bikers and hikers on the C&O Canal and Capital Crescent Trail and other citizens who treasure this urban open space. Since the proposed development would permanently remove public parkland from our national park system, result in loss of wetlands, and impact views of this historic area, we urge that you defer this decision until a new environmental review of the proposed development is available.

Thank you.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-30
Exhibit 304

The League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia is a non-partisan, community-based political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-30
EXHIBIT NO.304