

## **The Fairfax County Democratic Committee Urges the Virginia General Assembly to Continue the Ban on Uranium Mining**

### **Background**

The Virginia General Assembly has been considering legislation to repeal Virginia's longstanding ban on uranium mining.

Uranium mining is allowed in some western states with mostly dry climates, but is banned in most states with wet climates or large population centers as the radioactive material can make its way into rainwater.

The uranium industry has spent millions of dollars lobbying Virginia legislators.

Fairfax Water released a study of this issue in December and found uranium deposits are located in the Piedmont and Blue Ridge areas of Virginia which are in the watersheds for the Occoquan and Potomac rivers.

Fairfax Water passed a resolution opposing uranium mining in Virginia saying "even if the probability of a major tailings release is small, the adverse consequences of such a release will be catastrophic to the water supply for downstream jurisdictions and entities in Virginia."

The City of Virginia Beach is also opposed to uranium mining with their water supply downstream from a proposed site in Pittsylvania County.

In 2011, some statewide environmental groups made endorsements only of legislative candidates who would publicly oppose uranium mining under all circumstances.

### **Action**

The Fairfax County Democratic Committee:

1. Thanks the Fairfax Board of Supervisors for appointing the members of the Fairfax Water Authority who led this study and for the Board of Supervisors consistent leadership on important environmental issues;
2. Commends the Fairfax County Water Authority for putting the time and resources into this study needed to make these important findings
3. Urges all of our delegation to the General Assembly to oppose lifting the ban on uranium mining
4. Urges the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to join the 20 other localities already opposing uranium mining after the Fairfax Water study indicated "significant" risks to Fairfax County's water supply if the ban were lifted.

Links:

<http://www.fairfaxwater.org/current/12%2013%2012%20Fairfax%20Water%20Resolution%20on%20uranium.pdf>

<http://www.commonhealthva.org/uraniummap.pdf>

<http://www.commonhealthva.org/facts.html>