



Date: September 20, 2004
To: LCV Education Fund
From: Anna Greenberg and Mike Bocian

RE: LCV EDUCATION FUND SOUTHWEST PROFILES SURVEY¹

In this final stage of research employing LCV Education Fund's Southwest Environmental Voter Profile modeling (SmarTargeting), Greenberg, Quinlan, Rosner Research (GQR) explores the views of registered voters that the modeling process has identified as environmental activists, as well as those who rank lower on the environmental activist scale. In other words, we drew a sample of registered voters from the top ten percent of the environmental activist scale and compared them with registered voters in the middle and bottom of that scale to determine (1) what makes environmentally aware voters distinct and (2) how does LCV Education Fund best communicate with them.

GQR found that registrants in the "top decile"² are more likely to be environmentally aware than lower decile registered voters, meaning that they are more likely to be concerned about the environment, to view the environment as a reason to vote and favor regulation to protect the environment. They stand out, in other words, as excellent targets for LCV Education Fund communications in the short- and long-term.

This does not mean that SmarTargeting passes a cost-benefit analysis in all situations – the initial investment in the modeling exercise needs to be weighted against the model's performance and the nature of the contacting program - but it does enable us at

¹ Results are based on a survey of 1000 registered voters (distributed evenly in Arizona, Nevada and New Mexico) completed between September 1st and 8th, 2004 with a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percent. The sample is made up of 498 interviews from the top decile of the SmarTargeting model, 252 interviews in the deciles 2 through 5 and 250 interviews in deciles 6 through 10.

² All registrants are ranked on an environmental scale, which is divided into ten equal parts. Each part is labeled as a decile, and the top decile represents the top of the model or the most likely to be environmental activists.

least to identify registrants significantly more likely to hold favorable environmental views without screening each one of them individually.

Other important findings include:

- **LCV Education Fund can refine its targets within the top tier.** Within the top decile, the LCV Education Fund can further refine its targeting. The strongest environmental activists are older women, college educated and urban, consistent with the findings of the original modeling exercise.
- **Water is a dominant issue in the Southwest.** Overall, registered voters in the Southwest are very concerned about water. They are primarily worried about the lack of water in the region, but also water pollution. Air pollution is almost of equal concern, especially in Arizona.
- **Energy independence is a resonant theme across voting blocs in the Southwest.** The strongest message for all registered voters in the Southwest and registered voters in the top deciles is reducing dependence on foreign oil. But this is not strictly speaking an environmental message. It taps into a range of values and concerns such as patriotism and high gas prices, as well as renewable, environmental friendly sources of energy. There may be good opportunities to use an energy independence message, but LCV Education Fund should recognize that registered voters may embrace investment in renewable energy on the one hand and support increased domestic drilling on the other.
- **A corporate polluter framework is very strong among environmental activists.** Along with the energy independence message, a corporate polluter framework, which asserts that polluters must pay for cleaning up their own mess, such as the containments and toxics in the water and air, is very strong among environmental activists. As we saw in the focus groups, corporate polluting makes these environmental activists very angry and focus group participants understand instinctively how corporations evade regulations.

Targeting Strong Environmental Activists

The modeling exercise assigned every registered voter in the Southwest with a probability of being an environmental activist, which means they hold a set of attitudes that makes them disposed to voting because of environmental issues, favoring environmental regulation, holding positive views towards environmental groups and having a sense of urgency about cleaning up the environment. Clearly the modeling was successful in this regard – registered voters in the top decile are distinct from registered voters in the lower deciles; in all of these respects, they hold much stronger environmental views. It is important to recognize that this was not a foregone conclusion – the modeling exercise sought to predict voters' likelihood of holding pro-environmental views, but it was

entirely possible for the modeling to not work. On a range of measures, the top decile shows strong environmental tendencies:

- On a composite environmentalist scale,³ registered voters in the top decile garner the highest rating with 17 percent qualifying as strong environmental activists compared to 10 percent in the middle deciles and 10 percent in the bottom deciles.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST SCALE				
<i>(Percent Responding)</i>				
	TOTAL	Top Decile	Middle Deciles	Bottom Deciles
Strong Environmental Activist	14	17	10	10
Soft Environmental Activist	55	55	51	57
Anti-Environmental Activist	32	28	39	33

- Registered voters in the top decile are more likely to vote because of the environment, with 45 percent saying “I am a strong environmentalist and often vote because of environmental issues” describes them well. This is compared to 30 percent in the middle deciles and 35 percent in the bottom deciles.
- Registrants in the top decile are also more likely to favor environmental regulation with 22 percent agreeing that “the laws protecting the environment are not strong enough and stronger laws need to be enacted” compared to 20 percent in the middle deciles and 14 percent in the bottom deciles.

³ A scale based on responses to a group of questions to create a scale. The questions include: Calling oneself an environmentalist (“I am a strong environmentalist and often base my vote in elections on environmental issues”), Regulation to Protect the Environment (“The laws protecting the environment are not strong enough and stronger laws need to be enacted.”), Pro-environment Consumer Behavior (Buying food that has not been chemically treated, such as organic food; Buying products made of recycled material whenever possible; Using public transportation, such as buses and trains.), and membership in an environmental group.

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION				
<i>(Percent Responding)</i>				
	TOTAL	Top Decile	Middle Deciles	Bottom Deciles
The laws protecting the environment are not strong enough and stronger laws need to be enacted.	20	22	20	14
The current laws are tough enough but they are not enforced	48	49	43	50
The current laws and enforcement of those laws are fine and should be left alone	21	16	29	23
The current laws protecting the environment and enforcement of those laws are too strict and need to be relaxed	5	5	3	8
Total Stronger/Enforcement	67	71	63	65
Total Status Quo/Too Strict	26	21	32	30

- Registered voters in the top decile are more likely to think the environment is getting worse than those in the bottom deciles.

THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT				
<i>(Percent Responding)</i>				
	TOTAL	Top Decile	Middle Deciles	Bottom Deciles
Gotten better	10	9	9	14
Gotten worse	38	41	39	31
Stayed the same	47	46	45	52

- It is interesting that in some cases, registered voters in the bottom deciles display some pro-environment attitudes. What distinguishes them from the top decile is their lack of support for policy reform. In other words, they value the environment and might even vote because of the issue, but they are less supportive of regulations to protect the environment. GQR suspects that this group represents the more conservationist and conservative side of the environmental movement. Based on the demographic questions, this group is disproportionately male and blue collar and likely enjoys the environment for recreational activities including hunting and fishing. Certainly with the exception of the energy independence mes-

sage, which strictly speaking is not about the environment, all of the messages are weaker with this group.

What Environmental Activists Worry About and How to Talk to Them

It comes as no surprise that voters in the Southwest are deeply concerned about water. Their primary concern is lack of water, but they are also very concerned about water pollution and contamination. As we saw in the focus groups, the environment breaks through most strongly when it is connected to people’s health and safety. Contaminated drinking water and the impact in particular on women of childbearing age and children is of deep concern to these registered voters. There is little differentiation among Southwest registrants on the centrality of water; registered voters across the environmental activist scale rate this issue number one.

TOP ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS				
<i>(Percent Responding)</i>				
	TOTAL	Top Decile	Middle Deciles	Bottom Deciles
Lack of water	47	48	42	47
Air pollution	27	28	25	28
Water pollution	25	26	22	24
Urban sprawl/Overdevelopment	23	24	24	19
Safe drinking water	14	11	17	18
Preserving wilderness	10	9	12	9
Reduce dependence on foreign oil	10	8	11	11
Forest fires	7	7	6	7
Disposal of nuclear waste	7	5	13	4
Disposal of toxic wastes	4	3	5	6
Global warming	4	3	5	5
Ozone depletion	4	3	5	5

But when communications in the Southwest were explored, clearly just pointing out the problem with water is not sufficient. LCV Education Fund’s strongest message, in fact, has nothing to do with water. These voters are very open to a message that calls to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, including increasing investment in and reliance on renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power. Clearly this message taps into many values including patriotism and concerns about the standing of the United States in the world, as well as a concern about the environment.

When GQR tested messages that are more narrowly focused on the environment, the corporate framework is key. This framework asserts that Washington, DC sides with corporate polluters instead of ordinary people and allows them to avoid cleaning up their

waste. Among top decile registrants, the corporate message is tied with energy independence as the strongest message and it is especially strong with top decile women. Water, of course figures into this message as a primary example of the consequences of corporate polluting. A straightforward water message trails energy independence, and the relationship with the land is the least powerful message, though it performs better with the top decile.

TOP ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGES <i>(Percent Responding "Very Convincing")</i>				
	TOTAL	Top Decile	Middle Deciles	Bottom Deciles
The United States is receiving too much oil from the Middle East and not focused on making America energy independent	42	44	35	45
Elected officials care too much about corporate interests and are making tax payers pay to clean up corporate pollution	39	43	32	39
There is limited water here and mercury emissions are getting in the water and food	38	38	42	34
One-in-twelve women have high levels of mercury in their blood and the government is delaying the standards	34	33	35	34
We have a special relationship with the land here and elected officials are not working to protect our land	34	39	28	31

Who Are the Environmental Activists?

Environmental Activists are not all that distinct from non-environmentalists on demographic measures. There are a few groups that emerge as stronger targets within the top decile, but overall there are minor differences between the environmental activists and the other two groups in the survey. If anything, environmental activists are women, are slightly more educated, and are more urban. The bottom deciles, on the other hand, trend towards men, less educated, and rural voters.

Women represent a majority in the top decile (59 percent), while men constitute a bare majority in the bottom deciles (52 percent). There are fewer seniors in the top decile (20 percent); most seniors fall in the bottom part of the model (42 percent), but this does not mean environmental activists are young. Rather many environmental activists just fall in the 50 to 64 age range, as part of the baby boomer generation (38 percent). While

LCV Education Fund’s environmental activists are slightly more college educated (53 percent), the bottom deciles are much less college educated (33 percent). Perhaps the greatest difference lies in where environmental activists live: a majority of the top decile lies in urban areas (52 percent), while only 32 percent of the bottom deciles lives in urban areas.

PROFILING ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS				
<i>(Percent Responding)</i>				
	TOTAL	Top Decile	Middle Deciles	Bottom Deciles
<u>Gender</u>				
Women	44	41	43	52
Men	56	59	57	48
<u>Age</u>				
18 to 29 years	8	8	9	6
30 to 39 years	13	13	16	10
40 to 49 years	19	20	21	16
50 to 64 years	31	38	25	24
Over 64 years	28	20	29	42
<u>Education</u>				
HS or Less	26	23	20	38
Some College	28	23	36	28
College Graduate	48	53	44	33
<u>Area Type</u>				
Urban	46	52	46	32
Suburban	19	18	21	19
Exurban	2	3	2	-
Rural	33	26	30	49
<u>Race</u>				
Anglo	80	81	79	81
Hispanic	14	15	14	14