

Death by a Thousand Straws Bill on Assembly Floor Thursday

Written by Wisconsin Conservation Voters, Kerry Schumann

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Bill pushed by Big Ag to advance the interests of their thirsty clients at the expense of the state's valuable groundwater and the many people who rely on it.

MADISON, WI - The Assembly Committee on Environment and Forestry held an executive session committee vote on Tuesday on the Death by a Thousand Straws bill, AB 874. The high capacity well bill was voted out of committee by a 7-6 vote, and will be on the floor of the full Assembly on Thursday. In response, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Executive Director, Kerry Schumann, issued the following statement:

“From the start, the intent of the Death by a Thousand Straws Bill has been clear. Big Ag has lobbied legislators to advance the interests of their thirsty clients at the expense of the state’s valuable groundwater and the many people who rely on it.

Today, in the year 2016, there are people whose drinking water wells are running dry and lakes and rivers are drying up because high capacity wells are over pumping our groundwater supply. Yet, Death by a Thousand Straws moves forward and heads to the floor of the Assembly later this week.

We are very concerned that, despite an outpouring of opposition from thousands of Wisconsinites, including many who are directly impacted by loss of groundwater, legislators chose to listen to special interests rather than their constituents. We have a real groundwater crisis in this state and Death by a Thousand Straws not only refuses to address this problem – it makes it so we can never reach a commonsense, bipartisan solution.

The people of Wisconsin – especially those affected by careless and irresponsible groundwater management – deserve better.”

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Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters was disappointed to see Representatives Mursau, Krug, Czaja, Kitchens, Swearingen, Edming, and R. Brooks vote in favor of AB 874 during the executive session committee vote. Representatives Mason, Milroy, Hebl, Stuck, Considine, and Allen voted against the bill.

Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters is calling on members of the Assembly to stand in opposition to Death by a Thousand Straws and with their constituents who have taken action thousands of times and urged their decision makers to vote no on this bill.

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Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to electing conservation leaders, holding decision makers accountable, and encouraging lawmakers to champion conservation policies that effectively protect Wisconsin's public health and natural resources.

You can follow legislation impacting natural resources on our Conservation Vote Tracker, a real-time accountability tool that provides you with a complete picture of what conservation issues are in play and how legislators are performing: <http://conservationvoters.org/vote-tracker/>