

Corporate Mining Handout Overwhelmingly Unpopular

Written by Wisconsin Conservation Voters, Ryan Billingham
Friday, 22 September 2017 14:20 -

<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/metallic-sulfide-mining-runoff-s5.jpg>



Public Opposition to Tiffany's Senate Bill 395 Intensifies.

MADISON – Sen. Tom Tiffany's reckless handout to corporate mining interests – Senate Bill 395 – is overwhelmingly unpopular, according to new polling and vigorous citizen action.

The Prove It First mining law – the primary target in Sen. Tiffany's bill – has protected Wisconsin's natural resources from America's most toxic industry, metallic sulfide mining, for two decades. If passed, the legislation will repeal the law and rollback additional environmental protections.

[In a poll conducted last month](#) by the River Alliance of Wisconsin **72 percent** polled want to keep current state protections in place;

70 percent

prioritize the health and safety of Wisconsin's drinking water over any economic development from sulfide mines; and

64 percent

believe weakening water protections is too risky for Wisconsin's families and public health.

"Mining lobbyists and out-of-touch politicians appear to be the only people in favor of ditching protections that have kept our waters safe for decades," said River Alliance of Wisconsin Executive Director Raj Shukla. "This bill threatens local real estate, restaurants and taverns, recreational tourism, and agriculture so that foreign-owned mining companies can profit. It's not smart, it's not wanted and it's dangerous. The legislature should bury this mining bill."

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After a recent public hearing in Ladysmith at which Sen. Tiffany – the chair of the Sporting Heritage, Mining, and Forestry Committee which held the event – brought in pro-mining activists from as far away as Alaska and Canada, the public’s opposition to the bill is intensifying.

As of today, the public has generated more than **6,600 emails, letters, and phone calls to legislators** in opposition to the bill. That includes more than **200 local elected officials** who signed [a letter opposing the bill](#) presented to legislators on Tuesday.

“Local elected officials are sounding the alarm about the potential damage to their communities now that Senate Bill 395 is withering under the light of public scrutiny,” said Kerry Schumann, executive director, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters. “Senate Bill 395, or more accurately, the Industrial Acid Mining Bill, runs roughshod over communities across the state.”

Despite the mounting opposition, now that it has had a public hearing, Sen. Tiffany’s committee can call a vote on the bill with just a 24-hour notice, potentially paving the way for a floor vote in the Senate.

To ensure the public understands the destructive potential of the bill – a coalition of more than a dozen state, regional, and local environmental and conservation organizations and tribal communities is working to halt its progress.

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Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Clean Wisconsin, Midwest Environmental Advocates, Sierra Club, The Nature Conservancy, the Menominee Nation, the Mole Lake Sokaogon Chippewa, the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and several regional and local groups are working each day to protect Wisconsin's natural resources by shining light on this potentially disastrous bill.

"People know you can't put a price tag on their drinking water," said Amber Meyer Smith, vice president of programs and government relations, Clean Wisconsin. "The Prove It First law has been instrumental in protecting Wisconsin's water, and we're committed to defending this common sense law."

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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/>