

Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters: Sportsmen and elected leaders speak out against sulfide mining bill

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MADISON – This morning, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, local elected leaders and tribal leaders called for legislators to put a stop to the destructive Industrial Acid Mining Bill – AB 499 – ahead of a public hearing.

“According to the EPA, sulfide mining is America’s most toxic industry,” said Ryan Billingham, communications director for Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters. “The process creates acid mine drainage, a nasty brew that contains arsenic, mercury, sulfuric acid and other neurotoxins and carcinogens. This acid mine drainage is permanent. Once the process starts, it does not stop.”

The legislation – and its Senate counterpart SB 395 – would repeal Wisconsin’s gold standard Prove It First mining law, a proven protector of the state’s natural resources from the harmful effects of sulfide mining.

“Wisconsin’s Prove It First mining law has been safeguarding our woods and waters for over two decades. AB 499 is a risky proposal that could jeopardize some of our largest economies – agriculture, tourism, and outdoor recreation,” said Michael Kuhr, vice

chair, Wisconsin Trout Unlimited.

Earlier this month, Sen. Tiffany's committee approved token amendments to the bill in an attempt to hoodwink the public, which overwhelmingly opposes the bill. No amendments can make this bill better when it includes the repeal of Prove It First.

"Wisconsinites will be the ones left to clean up the mess, and local officials will be the ones required to continue to provide clean water to our constituents," said Heidi Oberstadt, 4th district alderwoman for the City of Stevens Point. "I hope that my legislators can stand up for our district and help me make sure we have clean water in Central Wisconsin."

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.