



February 8, 2016

LOPPW Statement on Senate Bill 432

SB 432 would take away the rights of a community to be fully informed about the sale of their public drinking water supply to a profit-making corporation until it is practically too late to have a public voice. The privatization of water could affect accountability to keep our water safe, the quality of service, public sector jobs, and the cost for water and sewage.

According to Food & Water Watch, **“Investor owned utilities typically charge 33 percent more for water and 63 percent more for sewer service than local government utilities.** Food & Water Watch compiled averaged statewide water and sewer rates survey data from dozens of states and found that typical annual household bills were much higher when service came from for-profit, private utilities. Private ownership increased drinking water bills by 4 percent in Alaska to 75 percent in Delaware; and sewer bills by 7 percent in West Virginia to 154 percent in Texas.” <http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/insight/water-privatization-facts-and-figures>

We already have seniors deciding between whether they should buy food or medication and working adults taking on more than one or two jobs and still living in poverty. Those struggling to make ends meet now would have to struggle even more with higher water bills.

The request for this legislation did not come from constituents in Wisconsin, but a Pennsylvania corporation, Aqua America. Here is one report that includes citizen concerns about water bills and water quality in areas where Aqua America has made inroads: *Aqua America: A Corporate Profile*
<https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/sites/default/files/Aqua%20America%20Profile%20IB%20May%202014.pdf>

Wisconsin is rich with water. We want to keep our public voice vital whether engaging with public utilities or private corporations to care for God's creation of water and for one another.