



October 13, 2017

To: The Honorable Bob Kulp and Assembly Committee on Labor
Regarding: AB 499

Dear Chairman Kulp and Committee Members,

I am representing the Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin, a statewide advocacy ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We advocate for just policies, especially related to hunger and poverty and care for God's creation, based on our social statements and Christian scripture.

The Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin speaks against AB 499. We caution against creating public policy that treats the earth as a boundless warehouse. One of Wisconsin's most valuable natural resources, our water. We need to keep the current law that protects our fragile drinking water, lakes, rivers, wetlands, wild life and public lands from the toxic waste that sulfide ore mining produces.

We can take for granted the valuable resource of water in our state, but our lakes and streams are fragile as is the eco-system dependent on them. Hard rock mining, in particular sulfide mining, exposes sulfide ores to air and water that can pose a dire threat to both air and water, especially water. The acid itself can create long-term damage to the environment and create health problems.

There is a good reason that 20 years ago Wisconsin created a law to require mining companies provide specific proof a sulfide mine can run for 10 years and be closed for 10 years without polluting groundwater and surface waters with acid drainage. Acid Mine Drainage is a long-term pollutant that forms multi-colored sediments in the bottom of streams and can disrupts the growth and reproduction of fish or kill aquatic plants and animals. Please don't diminish protections against this type of pollutant for the sake of a short-range vision for jobs that the mining industry does not have a good track record of creating in abundance or for the long-term. We also have other industries to protect. Trout angling in the drift less area relies on clean water - and it has an economic impact of \$1.6 billion annually!

Thank you for taking time with our concerns and for your consideration. Please stand with Wisconsin and keep regulations on sulfide mining strong to protect our valuable natural resources.

Sincerely,

Pastor Cindy Crane

“The world and all that is in it belongs to the Lord; the earth and all who live on it are His.”
Psalm 24:1