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**Acid Mining Bill Moves Forward, Endangers Wisconsin's Clean Water Economy**

"Senators Tiffany, Testin and Moulton are gambling with Wisconsin businesses and the clean water they rely on," stated Raj Shukla, executive director of River Alliance of Wisconsin in response to a party-line 3-2 vote today to pass Senator Tiffany's Acid Mining Bill (SB 395) out of committee.

River Alliance of Wisconsin believes the amendments to SB 395 that were approved today are as weak as the rationale for the original bill. Our position has not changed on SB 395. None of the amendments fulfill our long-standing commitment to protect the environment and local businesses. River Alliance of Wisconsin remains strongly opposed to this bill because of the threat it poses to our waters, the economy, and Wisconsin's way of life.

Discussions about the SB 395 today made it very clear that we will be leaving taxpayers at risk of paying for the cleanup when Wisconsin becomes the laboratory for unproven mining technologies.

"Our current Prove it First law require mining companies to prove in advance that any sulfide mine has operated safely. This bill now allows companies like Aquila Resources to claim to have the technology to be capable of operating safely. 'Capable' is far from proven and not worth the risk," stated Shukla.

SB 395 still repeals the Prove it First law. Wisconsin's sulfide mining laws were approved 20 years ago in a bi-partisan effort to protect our waters. None of the amendments honors the success of the "Prove it First" law; since its inception, Wisconsin has not introduced sulfide mine pollution like sulfuric acid and cyanide into local waters and surrounding communities. Governor Walker, Senator Darling and others worked with Democrats and the entire environmental community to pass this common-sense compromise. Senator Tiffany, Senator Testin and the bill's co-sponsors have chosen a different route and colluded only with industry lobbyists and selected sympathizers. The environmental community has registered in opposition to this bill.

Wisconsin's agriculture and tourism industries require clean water to thrive, especially in Northern Wisconsin. Every sulfide mine in a water-rich environment has polluted. This bill puts the Wisconsin we love at tremendous risk, with any benefits going to foreign investors and out-of-state corporations. Mines that pollute local resources risk local businesses that sustain communities. Per the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Wisconsin is home to about 4,000 (seasonally adjusted) "Mining, Logging, and Construction" jobs; far less than the nearly 285,000 "Leisure and Hospitality" jobs that support the tourism industry. We cannot sacrifice local businesses and local water quality to enrich out-of-state mining companies that can promise just a few temporary jobs in return. And we shouldn't bet that out-of-state mining companies will prevent local damage based on a *hope* that technology is "capable" of protecting Wisconsin communities.

Our economy depends on clean water for agriculture, tourism, and other local businesses. We put it all at risk with short-term mining projects that could cause decades of environmental and economic damage.

This bill profits out-of-state mining companies and jeopardizes existing local businesses and the Wisconsin way of life.

**About the River Alliance of Wisconsin:**

Formed in 1993, River Alliance of Wisconsin is a statewide non-profit, non-partisan citizen advocacy organization that works to protect and restore Wisconsin's rivers and watersheds. The organization's membership includes more than 2,500 individuals and businesses and more than 80 local watershed groups - one of the largest memberships of statewide river groups in the country. For more information, visit [www.wisconsinrivers.org](http://www.wisconsinrivers.org).

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