



Wisconsin Safe Energy (WiSE) Alliance

NEWS RELEASE

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Budget Committee Removes Community Safeguards from Tar Sands

MADISON: In one sweeping motion, the State Joint Finance Committee removed critical safeguards for communities and landowners when it comes to oil pipelines.

The budget motion prohibits towns and counties from requiring environmental cleanup insurance on pipelines. This comes right after Dane County required just such insurance on an Enbridge tar sands pipeline. **“This is putting taxpayers on the hook for a billion dollar bailout,”** explained Peter Anderson with 350 Madison. **“Given the likelihood of a spill from Enbridge’s tar sands pipelines, Dane County has currently required environmental insurance in order to guarantee they won’t be liable to pay for those clean-up costs. By removing this ability, no other county will be able to protect itself in this manner and tax payers will be responsible for these clean-up costs.”** According to Mary Beth Elliott of 350 Madison, **“This is particularly concerning, in that Enbridge, a \$43 billion dollar Canadian company, was responsible for the biggest inland pipeline spill in US history, and plans to pump tar sands at the unprecedented rate of 1.2 million barrels daily through Wisconsin, dwarfing the proposed Keystone pipeline.”**

Additionally, the budget motion adds Enbridge, a Limited Liability Partnership, pipelines to the list of projects under the condemnation authority of the Public Service Commission. **“This motion doesn’t just remove the ability of Towns and Counties to protect themselves from tar sands spills. This bill paves the way for farmers and other landowners in Wisconsin to be forced to assume the risk of these pipelines,”** said Elizabeth Ward of the Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter.

“Citizens are concerned about expansion of this Country’s largest tar sands pipeline and their local government has tried to address those concerns. Yet, instead of obtaining the environmental insurance necessary to reassure the public, Enbridge ran to the legislature to sneak a special exemption into the budget,” said Carl Whiting with the Wisconsin Safe Energy (WiSE) Alliance. **“The budget committee sided with a 43-billion-dollar special interest over the concerns of Wisconsin citizens. This back-door removal of common-sense protections doesn’t just jeopardize our water, our air, and our safety. It undermines our democracy.”**

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Wisconsin Safe Energy (WiSE) Alliance is a coalition of community members, leaders, and organizations concerned about the safety, land, and environmental threats posed by proposals to expand tar sands throughout Wisconsin, especially along Enbridge’s Line 61 tar sands pipeline.