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Wisconsin GOP Push Fast Path to Water Privatization

Working families oppose the Fast Path to Water Privatization Act (AB 554)

(MILWAUKEE, WI) -- Wisconsin Republicans are fast-tracking toxic legislation that jeopardizes our democracy, silences public employees who are the safeguards of our publicly owned utilities, and all but gives away our water and sewerage systems to out-of-state and perhaps even foreign corporations. Our communities are safer when unionized public employees – not CEOs – are the stewards and guards of our most precious resources.

The Fast Path to Water Privatization Bill, Assembly Bill 554 & Senate Bill 432, was introduced at the behest of a single out-of-state water utility corporation, Aqua America, just two months ago. Aqua America is a \$5 billion company, guided by its commitment to extract profit out of water utilities.

"One need not look any further than Flint, Michigan to see the poisonous results that mismanaged water systems can have on our families and communities," said **Phil Neuenfeldt, President of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO**. "The safety and affordability of our water system is of huge importance to each and every Wisconsin resident, young, old and in-between. The Fast Track to Water Privatization Act paves the way for politicians to sell our municipal water systems, without any public input, to the highest bidder and takes away local control from Wisconsin residents."

"Private water companies buy water systems in the hopes of profiting big from what should be a public good and basic human right," said **Stephanie Bloomingdale, Secretary-Treasurer of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO**. "We've seen the appalling consequences of cutting costs and eroding public accountability in public water systems in Flint, Michigan. Wisconsin residents deserve the right to have a say in the sale of our vital public water services. Silencing the voices of Wisconsin voters with this toxic legislation is undemocratic and not the Wisconsin way."

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