

Governor Scott McCallum
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 7863
Madison WI 53707

July 11, 2002

VETO ENTIRE WETLAND EXEMPTION PROVISION

Dear Governor McCallum:

The budget repair bill passed by the Wisconsin Legislature contains an exemption from state law for a single entity in Wisconsin to be able to fill a 15-acre wetland. Although that exemption language is very general and could apply to any corporate entity in the state, it was originally intended for Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc. of Arcadia, as you know. We understand that you have received over 1000 citizen comments opposing this wetland fill exemption. This exemption makes a mockery of state law—of course citizens are outraged!

In his letter to you dated June 28, 2002, Mr. Ronald Wanek of Ashley Furniture states,

“While we encourage communities on a statewide basis to seek the benefits of this proposed legislation [wetland exemption provision], **Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc. will not ask the City of Arcadia to adopt a resolution or seek the exemption.**” [emphasis ours]

Since the original exemption was targeted at Ashley Furniture, and since Ashley has clearly indicated that they will not be seeking the exemption, there should be no reason to retain this provision in the budget.

We, the undersigned representatives of state environmental organizations, respectfully request that you veto this special exemption provision in its entirety. To do so would:

- acknowledge the need to be fair and equitable to all corporations--large and small- in the State of Wisconsin;
- recognize that there is a legal process in place for all citizens and corporations of the state to apply for a permit to fill a wetland;
- recognize that it is inappropriate to include important, non-fiscal policy in the budget;
- be consistent with your pledge in 2001 to protect our state's wetlands that you so aptly did through the new “isolated wetlands” law.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

1000 Friends of Wisconsin
Dave Cieslewicz, Executive Director

Clean Water Action Council
Rebecca Caters, Executive Director

Kickapoo Valley Stewardship Alliance
Mark Kastel, Member, Steering Committee

League of Women Voters of Wisconsin
Julie Arneth, President

Madison Audubon Society
Karen Etter Hale, Executive Secretary

Northern Thunder
Tom Wilson, Wetlands Protector

River Alliance of Wisconsin
Todd Ambs, Executive Director

Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter
Caryl Terrell, Legislative Coordinator

Wisconsin Association of Lakes
Donna Sefton, Executive Director

Wisconsin's Environmental Decade
Elizabeth Wessel, Executive Director

Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters
Bill Pielsticker, President

Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group (WISPIRG)
Kerry Schumann, Executive Director

Wisconsin State Council of Trout Unlimited
Jon Christiansen, Chair

Wisconsin Stewardship Network
Todd Hanson, State Coordinator

Wisconsin Wetlands Association
Charles S. Luthin, Executive Director