



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
GARY HEBL
46TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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REP. HEBL CIRCULATES BILL TO REPEAL WISCONSIN IRON MINING LAW CHANGES
Environmental Changes Jeopardize State's Natural Resources, Haven't Led to New Jobs

(MADISON) – Rep. Gary Hebl (D-Sun Prairie) today began circulating legislation to undo harmful environmental changes contained in 2013 Senate Bill 1, legislation that stripped many of Wisconsin's environmental protections in order to cater to a single mining company that has since left the state without creating any jobs.

LRB 1864 would repeal Wisconsin Statute Ch. 295, Subchapter III, which created special, relaxed rules for iron mining in Wisconsin. Some of the more destructive provisions of this subchapter include:

- § 295.40 includes a legislative finding which states that when considering a mining permit, the DNR should presume that significant adverse impacts to wetlands is **necessary**. Previous code stated that the DNR should presume significant adverse impacts to wetlands to be **unnecessary**.
- § 295.605(4)(b) Allows the filling of a lakebed or other navigable waters.
- § 295.75 requires iron mining laws be given priority over other environmental laws.
- § 295.56 creates loopholes to environmental regulations.
- § 295.58(1)(a)(4) contains subjective language on public health and safety.
- § 295.51(8) creates a prohibition on the regulation of mining waste.

“A West Virginia coal mining company was able to convince the legislative majority to abandon our state's environmental legacy and repeal generations-old environmental standards,” Hebl said. “That company – which paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to organizations that benefited Gov. Walker and legislative Republicans' campaigns – has now abandoned the state. It is time to do right by our environment and restore our previous conservation standards.”

Under the guise of major job creation, Gogebic Taconite (G-Tac) was able to lobby Republican legislators to weaken environmental standards. However, after the United States Army Corps of Engineers declared that Wisconsin's mining permitting process was too unrealistic and untenable, G-Tac announced it was abandoning its plans.

“If a company is going to attempt to mine in Wisconsin, that company should be required to live up to our previous, stronger environmental safeguards,” Hebl said. “As we have seen already, it is not worth it to potentially sacrifice our world-renowned natural resources in order to bend the knee to a mining company.”

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