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A RESOLUTION to Protect Public Health from Frac Sand Mining

Industrial mining for sand has exploded in Wisconsin over the last three years. Half of Wisconsin has sandstone formations. There are over 115 industrial mines in western and central Wisconsin, and many more permitted and proposed.

Citizens' concerns about air pollution, heavy hauling activity damaging roads, declining property values in mine and transport areas, the loss of farmland, round-the-clock noise, water pollution and drawdown of groundwater by sand processing plants must be addressed.

Airborne silica dust is known to cause cancer. Five states regulate the smallest, most dangerous particles, including Minnesota. Because silicosis takes 20-60 years to develop, it is crucial to act now to protect frac sand workers and nearby residents from exposure to silica dust.

Neither counties nor the DNR have the ability to adequately regulate and monitor sand mines under existing rules.

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Wisconsin Conservation Congress directs the DNR to establish an air quality standard for PM 2.5 silica dust emissions as set by other states so that enforcement to protect public health is possible, increase staffing to allow adequate inspections of sand mining facilities, issue on-the-spot fines for observed violations, and work to educate local communities about sand mining and effective local rules.

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