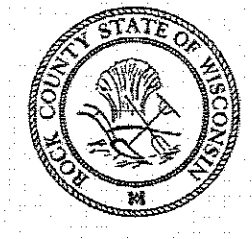


**ROCK COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

Office of the Rock County Clerk  
51 South Main Street  
Janesville, WI 53545

Lisa Tollefson, Rock County Clerk  
Lisa Mianecki, Deputy



Office (608) 757-5660  
Fax (608) 757-5662  
[www.co.rock.wi.us](http://www.co.rock.wi.us)  
[tollefson@co.rock.us](mailto:tollefson@co.rock.us)

STATE OF WISCONSIN)  
  ) SS  
COUNTY OF ROCK            )

**This is to certify that this Resolution is a true and correct copy of the original as passed by the Rock County Board of Supervisors at a meeting of said Board held in the Rock County Court House, Janesville, Wisconsin, Thursday, February 25th, 2016.**

**Given under my hand and Official Seal of the County of Rock, State of Wisconsin, this 2nd of March, 2016.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Lisa Tollefson", written over a horizontal line.

**Lisa Tollefson  
Rock County Clerk**

**(SEAL)**

**RESOLUTION  
ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Supervisor Jeremy Zajac and  
Supervisor Thomas J. Brien  
INITIATED BY



Randy Terronez  
DRAFTED BY

County Board Staff Committee  
SUBMITTED BY

February 12, 2016  
DATE DRAFTED

**Opposition to Senate Bill 432/Assembly Bill 554 Allowing for Privatization of Water  
Utility**

1 **WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 432/Assembly Bill 554 proposes changes to allow communities that operate  
2 water utility systems to transfer ownership/management from the public sector to the private sector; and,  
3

4 **WHEREAS**, the bills could result in out-of-state and potentially multi-national companies to assume  
5 control of municipal water supplies with less oversight; and,  
6

7 **WHEREAS**, privatization of water utility systems often leads to declining quality of service, higher  
8 water rates, less accountability and oversight as private companies do not face elections or have to  
9 disclose operational information; and,  
10

11 **WHEREAS**, current law requires:

12 A. A thorough review and approval by the State's Public Service Commission which would  
13 evaluate the water utility value, proposed conditions of sale/lease prior to holding a  
14 referendum;

15 B. A referendum prior to selling or leasing publicly owned water utility systems, with the ballot  
16 language to include factual information about the costs and conditions of the sale/lease. This  
17 procedure ensures citizens agree to a change in the ownership or operation of a publicly  
18 owned water utility system; and,  
19

20 **WHEREAS**, proposed legislation would put the burden on citizens to petition for a referendum and  
21 places the Public Service Commission review and approval after approval by a local referendum; and  
22

23 **WHEREAS**, the privatization of municipal water utility systems is a means to profit from what should be  
24 a public good and a basic human right and the State should be working to strengthen, not weaken the  
25 ability to protect valuable resources such as our public drinking water.  
26

27 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Rock County Board of Supervisors, duly  
28 assembled this 25<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2016, does hereby oppose Senate Bill 432/Assembly Bill  
29 554; and,  
30

31 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Clerk be directed to send a copy of this resolution to  
32 Rock County's legislative delegation, the authors of the bill, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

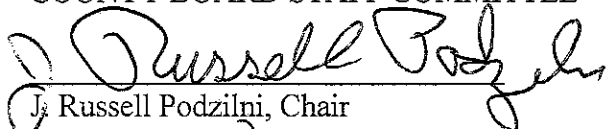
33 If in the event the bill passes, the Rock County Board of Supervisors asks the governor to veto the bill.

34

Respectfully submitted,


16-2B-492


COUNTY BOARD STAFF COMMITTEE

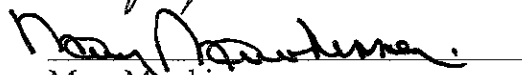
  
J. Russell Podzilni, Chair

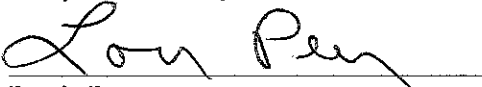
  
Sandra Kraft, Vice Chair

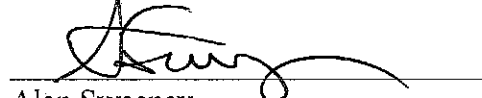
  
Eva Arnold

  
Henry Brill

  
Betty Jo Bussie

  
Mary Mawhinney

  
Louis Peer

  
Alan Sweeney

  
Terry Thomas

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Matter of policy.

  
Josh Smith  
County Administrator


FISCAL NOTE:

This resolution is advisory only and has no direct fiscal impact on Rock County operations in and by itself.

  
Sherry Oja  
Finance Director

LEGAL NOTE:

Advisory only.

  
Jeffrey S. Kuglitsch  
Corporation Counsel

## Senate Bill 432

This bill makes changes to current law. One of the most significant changes is the way a sale of utilities are approved. Under the proposed legislation a referendum is not required for the proposed sale unless within 30 days the municipality adopts the ordinance or resolution required under the current law, a petition requesting the referendum is filed with the municipal clerk. The petition must be signed by a number of the municipalities qualified electors that is at least 25% of the votes cast in the municipality for governor in the last election ( in the case of Janesville that would be 19,836 signatures). If a petition is not filed within the deadline, no referendum is required and the municipality must submit the proposal to the PSC for approval.

There is only one municipality that is owned by a private corporation. Superior's base charge is \$51 per quarter more than double the average \$21 for major water utilities in the state.

When base charges and the amount charged per gallon are taken into account, the average quarterly bill for a Superior customer using 5,000 gallons of water is \$152 a month compared with the state average of \$73.